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# THE ROLE OF TEACHER SUPPORT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT, IN GRADE 7 LEARNING AREA ENGLISH IN GAUTENG.

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**A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Education.**

**Johannesburg**

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## Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| ACE | Advanced Certificate in Education |
| ANC | African National Congress |
| AS | Assessment Standard |
| CA | Continuous Assessment |
| CEPD | Centre for Education Policy Development |
| COSATU | Congress of South African Trade Unions |
| C 2005 | Curriculum 2005 |
| DET | Department of Education and Training |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| ELT | English Language Teaching |
| HSRC | Human Science Research Council |
| FDE | Further Diploma in Education |
| FETC | Further Education and Training Certificate |
| GETB | General Education Training Band |
| INSET | In-Service Education and Training |
| L1 | Language One – Internal language of description |
| L2 | Language Two - External language of description |
| LO | Learning Outcome |
| LSM | Learning Support Materials |
| NAPTOSA | The National Association of Professional Teachers Association |
| NCS | National Curriculum Statement |

| | |
|---|---|
| NEPI | National Education Investigation Policy |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| NTB | National Training Board |
| OBE | Outcomes-Based Education |
| ORF | Official Recontextualizing Field |
| PBI | Practice-Based Inquiry |
| PRESET | Pre-Service Training |
| PRF | Pedagogic Reconceptualising Field |
| SACHED | South African Council of Higher Education |
| SADTU | South African Democratic Teachers Union |
| SAOU | Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie |

**Abstract**

When Curriculum 2005 was introduced into South African schools in 1998, it was considered too cumbersome in design and its language too complex. In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministerial Review Committee (2000) it was revised into the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). The language was simplified; it was streamlined to critical, developmental and learning outcomes and assessment standards. Teachers were expected to produce these outcomes and provision was to be made for improved teacher orientation and training, learning support materials and provincial support to teachers in schools. The study looks at how the RNCS is being provided for in terms of the support structures and programmes available to teachers working in the Learning Area of English in Grade Seven within the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9). Firstly, by identifying the competences expected from teachers and secondly, by trying to establish the extent to which these structures and programmes are effectively assisting teachers to achieve the required competences and learning outcomes.

Key Words
RNCS
Teacher support
Teacher learning
Support materials
Languages – English
Grade 7

**Declaration**

I, Sandra Lilian Stewart, declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters in Education in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

…….

Sandra Lilian Stewart

Fifteenth day of February 2007.

**Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my husband for his belief in me and the love and support which he has provided throughout the writing of this report.

I also dedicate it to my family with sincere thanks for their encouragement at all times.

**Acknowledgement**

I wish to acknowledge the invaluable role played by my research supervisor and mentor, Dr Maropeng Modiba. She has given so generously of her time and wisdom and has proved to be the most caring and patient teacher. Her guidance, constructive criticism and leadership have been an inspiration to me. Her dedication to education and to her students is highly commendable and exemplary. I am deeply grateful for her attention to detail and expectation of work of a high standard. She encouraged me to aim for excellence and spurred me on to produce work of which we can both be proud. Thank you, teacher!

# Chapter One

## 1.1 Introduction: Background to the new Curriculum Policy

In post-apartheid South Africa, a revision of the system of education was necessary if social, economic and political change was to succeed. A main thrust of the curriculum change was to increase and enhance the capacity of teachers to deliver and manage the teaching and learning process. There had previously been nine separate education departments with a teaching force that was very diverse in competency and qualification skills. The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) advised that major changes in education and training were needed if teaching and learning were to be transformed and normalised. Syllabus revision and subject rationalisation started by the National Education and Training Forum (1994) aimed to establish a single, national core syllabus. Accompanying the curriculum change was a move towards an outcomes-based education. This change in curriculum and methodology has major implications for teachers and teacher training in a democratic South Africa.

The basis for curriculum transformation and development in a democratic South Africa is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No 108 0f 1996). Ten fundamental values from the Constitution: democracy; social justice and equity; non-racism and non-sexism; ubuntu (human dignity); an open society; accountability; respect; the rule of law; and reconciliation, were included in the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (Department of Education, 2001).

When Curriculum 2005 was introduced into South African schools in 1998, it was considered too cumbersome in design and its language too complex (Chisholm, 2005). In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministerial Review Committee (31 May, 2000) the language was simplified and the design features were streamlined and reduced to critical outcomes, developmental outcomes, learning outcomes and assessment standards. The National Curriculum Statement revised out of Curriculum 2005, expected teachers to produce these outcomes and assessment standards. The Review Committee recommended that in the implementation of the revised curriculum, provision be made for improved teacher orientation and training, learning support materials and provincial support to teachers in schools.

**1.2. Origins of the RNCS**

The introduction of a new curriculum (RNCS) and a new learner-centred teaching methodology Outcomes-based education (OBE) had major implications for teachers and teaching and policy implementation. I would like to begin by tracing the roots of the RNCS from conception to implementation, as I believe that this will create a better understanding of the challenges and difficulties facing teachers in curriculum reform in contemporary South Africa.

Post-apartheid curriculum reform was intended to be socially transformative as indicated in the White Paper on Education and Training (1995) and the necessary democratic framework was to be developed to bring this about (DoE, 1995, 2000). The reform of the curriculum took place in three main stages. These were the removal of racial and sexist elements to 'cleanse' the curriculum; the introduction of OBE; and the Review and Revision of C 2005, which resulted in the Review Committee Report (DoE, 2000b; Chisholm, 2005; Jansen, 1999a). The RNCS has its roots in NEPI (National Education Investigation Policy), CEPD (Centre for Education Policy Development) and Curriculum 2005 (C 2005).

National Education Investigation Policy (NEPI)

NEPI is significant as it represented the first initiative at reconceptualising the education system prior to democracy and because OBE was not included in the discussions (Cross et al., 2002). The major drawback in this initiative is that the complexity and constraints of policy implementation, such as resources and teacher capacity were not taken into account (Sehoole, 2000).

Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD)

The CEPD has its roots in the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme Basic Document and the 1994 ANC Policy for Education and Training. It was to be a policy statement that supported democratic values. The drawback in this initiative was that it was more symbolic and visionary than based on the practicalities of available resources and finances and this inhibited implementation (De Clercq, 1997; Christie, 1999).

Curriculum 2005 (C 2005) & Outcomes-based Education (OBE)

C 2005 was designed as a progressive alternative to the repressive system of education under apartheid. Integral to C2005 was the introduction of Outcomes-based Education. OBE had its roots in the National Training Board (NTB) and labour unions (COSATU) and was to be used as a vehicle for a national training strategy to improve both skills and accreditation of the labour force, which would then encourage increased wages and mobility (Christie, 1994; Jansen, 1999a, Spreen, 2001). What is of interest in this discourse is the little relevance it actually had to theories of curriculum reform, education and pedagogy at this stage. It was rather rooted in social reconstruction and upliftment (Rensburg, 2000 cited in Cross, Mungadi & Rouhani, 2002).

Outcomes-based Education (OBE)

OBE also represented a major paradigm shift from a content-based, authoritarian, teacher-centred approach to an outcomes-based, progressive, learner-centred approach, which integrated education with training (Cross *et al*, 2002). Critiques of OBE focused on areas of concern, which in turn helps us to understand the difficulties experienced by teachers in putting policy into practice. Concerns were raised regarding OBE's labour origins and its borrowing from Western educational policies without due consideration, consultation or research being given to transferability and context specificity (Christie, 1999; Kallaway et al., 1997; Jansen, 1999a). Educational systems tend to be context specific and are socio-culturally based. OBE was used out of its original well-resourced, Western world setting and placed in an under-resourced setting with a large contingent of under-qualified teachers (Crossley & Watson, 2003). When borrowing concepts from other countries, it is prudent to establish the successes and failures of the approach before applying them out of context (Jonathan, 2000; Kallaway et al., 1997).

Apart from the shortcomings regarding knowledge and pedagogic concepts, there were also shortcomings of OBE at implementation level. There was poor coordination between curriculum development, teacher development and learning materials (Potenza & Monyokolo, 1999), which affected effective implementation. Workshops were irregular, training was top-down, learning materials such as textbooks were delivered late or not at all, and relevant OBE materials were in short supply (Christie,

1999). Although the educational policies were based on best international practice and local values they were too idealistic (Sayed & Jansen, 2001: Cross et al., 2002) and had inherent weaknesses regarding strategies for implementation. Critics believe that these process shortcomings – rushed pace of introduction, inadequate resources and unprepared teachers - reflect the poor planning of the implementation of C 2005 and the lack of consideration which was given to the available resources such as schools and teacher capacity (Cross et al., 2002; Christie, 2006).

C 2005 & OBE expected too much of the teaching force and further marginalized previously disadvantaged teachers (Harley & Wedekind, 2004). Teachers found the language and terminology complex and difficult to understand. This approach presupposed teachers who were well prepared with good content and conceptual knowledge and a high level of skills, which was not the reality on the ground. (Cross et al., 2002). OBE is more compatible with schools, which are well resourced, and teachers who are highly qualified (Jansen, 1999a).

New norms and standards for teachers were also introduced which added pressure on teachers to improve their professional skills (Cross et al., 2002). The norms & standards document expects teachers to build up knowledge and acquire new knowledge through experimentation, inquiry, discussion and reflection (Confrey, 1990). C 2005 was viewed as a political tool for the advancement of progressive, nation-building policies of the new democratic government. The ANC, Teachers' unions and academics were the three major role players in the construction of C 2005. Their voice, positioning and power bases led to the development of a curriculum, which was based on human rights and outcomes (Chisholm, 2005).

The Review Committee (31 May 2000)

The new curriculum (C 2005) led to contestation, crisis and controversy (Chisholm, 2005). The Review Committee which was set up to address the shortcomings of C2005 blamed the design and implementation process for its failure. The shortcomings included: lack of conceptual clarity and unclear structure; obscure language and terminology; inadequate orientation, training and development of teachers and insufficient reinforcement of support; the consistency and quality of learning support materials was variable, and learning materials were often

unavailable, not received by schools timeously and not effectively used in classrooms; shortage of staff and resources; and inadequate attention being given to the structures and functions of the curriculum by education departments at national and provincial level (Chisholm, 2005; Cross et al., 2002; Brodie, Lelliot & Davis, 2001).

The Review Committee recommended that attention be given to: a national teacher education strategy which would include teacher preparation, training and development and curriculum trainers at regional and district levels as it was evident that well-resourced schools and well-trained teachers were required; the production of relevant learner support materials (particularly textbooks and Learning Support Materials); budgeting for the curriculum; curriculum functions which needed to be better organised and methods of reinforcement; time frames as the pace at which reform was being implemented was being rushed; and the need for regular monitoring and management of the reform process (Cross et al., 2002; Chisholm 2005). OBE was a problematic and contentious issue as it did not appear to be working at a classroom level (Jansen & Christie, 1999; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999) and its focus seemed to be vocationally orientated because of its labour and economic links to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (Samson & Vally, 1996; Chisholm & Fuller, 1996; Govender et al., 2003).

Some issues that needed to be addressed by the Review Committee (2000) regarding the policy statement of C 2005 are still problematic today – in-service teacher training and skills, learning materials and resources at schools. Lessons that are to be learnt from the mistakes made with C 2005 are that educational reform needs to be realistic and pragmatic and cannot be indiscriminately applied. Prior to implementation, it should be clearly established as to what the schools are capable of achieving with regard to their own particular situation and circumstances. There cannot be a unilateral, blanket reform process without consideration being given to resources available and teacher capability (Jansen, 1999a; Cross et al., 2002; Chisholm, 2005).

**Figure 1: Changes to the terminology in C 2005 and RNCS:**

| Curriculum 2005 | Revised National Curriculum Statement |
|---|---|
| Cross-Field Critical Outcomes | Critical Outcomes |
| Learning Area | Learning Area |
| 66 Specific Outcomes | 36 Learning Outcomes |
| Assessment Criteria<br>Range Statements<br>Performance Indicators | Assessment Standards |
| Phase Organiser<br>Programme Organiser | Theme |
| Macro Plan | Whole School Planning |
| Meso Plan | Learning Programme (Phase Planning)<br>Work Schedule (Grade Planning) |
| Micro Plan | Lesson Plan |
| <u>Learning Areas:</u><br>Language, Literacy and Communication<br>Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics & Mathematical Science<br>Human & Social Science<br>Technology<br>Natural Science | <u>Learning Areas:</u><br>Languages<br>Mathematics<br><br>Social Sciences<br>Technology<br>Natural Science |

<u>The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Grades R-9 (Schools)</u>

The RNCS consists of eight Learning Areas Statements, which include Learning Areas and the principles of outcomes-based education (OBE), human rights, caring for the environment, inclusivity and social justice. The eight Learning Areas include: Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology, Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Life Orientation and Economic and Management Sciences.

A Learning Area is described as:

> … a field of knowledge, skills and values which has unique features as well as connections with other fields of knowledge and Learning Areas.
> (DoE, RNCS Grades R-9 [Schools], Overview 2002: 9)

Each Learning Area Statement includes Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards for each grade. A learning outcome describes what learners should know

(knowledge, skills and values) and what they should be able to do (competence) in each grade. Assessment Standards describe the minimum level of what learners should know and demonstrate to achieve the learning outcomes in each grade. The grades are divided into Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3), Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) and Junior Secondary Phase (Grades 7-9). The RNCS is to be implemented in the schools by means of Learning Programmes.

Learning Programmes

A Learning Programme provides the framework for planning across a phase. It incorporates the planning, organising and managing of classroom practices for the whole phase. It is a:

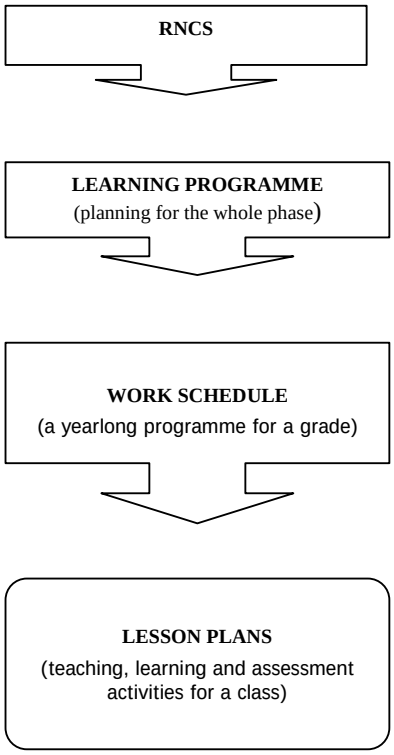
> … structured and systematic arrangement of activities that promote the attainment of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards for the Phase.
> (RNCS Overview, 2002)

The DoE (1997: 11) described learning programmes as "the sets of activities in which a learner is engaged in the achievement of specific outcomes". The purpose of a learning programme is to translate the RNCS into a phase-long plan that will provide details regarding:

- The sequencing of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards across the phase to ensure a coherent teaching, learning and assessment programme;
- The core knowledge and concepts selected to be used to attain the Learning Outcomes;
- The context that ensures that teaching and learning is appropriate to the needs that exist in the community, school and classroom;
- The time allocation and weighting given to the different Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards in the phase.

  (DoE, Guidelines for the development of Learning Programmes: 2003).

**Figure 2: The Learning Programme broken down into Work Schedules and Lesson Plans.**




The National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) proposed the development of a new curriculum for Grades 10-12, which was to be based on principles of access, redress, equity, credibility, quality and efficiency. The review and modernisation of the Grades 10-12 school programmes in 1999 was to reconceptualise and rewrite the interim syllabi into Learning Programmes, which were to provide a broad range of career options for learners. The review intended to establish the Learning Outcomes for Grades 10-12 (General); redesign the Grade 10-12 Learning Programmes for the Learning Outcomes; develop programmes, which would equip educators and administrators with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective and efficient implementation of Learning Programmes; and lay the foundations for the introduction of C 2005 in Grades 10-12 (General). The curriculum for Further Education and Training was to prepare learners for further learning and build on the foundations laid by the phases of the RNCS, prepare learners for the workplace, develop democratic citizens, and contribute to economic and social development.

The NCS Grades 10-12 (General) is based on the principles of:

> … social transformation; OBE; high knowledge and high skills; integration and applied competences; progression; articulation and portability; human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice; valuing indigenous knowledge systems; and credibility, quality and efficiency.
> (DoE, NCS Grades 10-12, [General] 2002 Overview)

The Matriculation or Senior Certificate is now known as the Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC). This certificate is aligned with Level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The purpose of the FETC is to equip all learners with knowledge, skills and values to enable them to participate as democratic citizens; to provide access to further education; to facilitate mobility from places of learning to the workplace; and provide employers with a profile of learners' competences. Subject choices were streamlined to address inequalities and achieve parity for all learners and have a strong vocational leaning as they are aligned with the twelve fields of the NQF. These fields are: Agriculture and Nature Conservation; Arts and Culture; Business, Commerce and Management Studies; Communication Studies and Languages; Education, Training and Development; Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology; Human and Social Studies; Law, Military Science and Security; Health Sciences and Social Services; Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences.

The subjects are categorised into six Learning Fields for Grades 10-12. The six Learning Fields are: Languages; Arts and Culture; Business, Commerce, Management and Service Studies; Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology; Human and Social Sciences and Languages; and Physical, Mathematical, Computer, Life and Agricultural Sciences. A learning Field such as Languages (Fundamental) contains the following subjects – All Home Languages, First and Second Additional Languages. Arts and Culture contains the subject choices of Dance Studies, Design, Dramatic Arts, Music and Visual Arts.

### 1.3. Statement of Purpose

My own area of research within the domain of curriculum inquiry would be the need for teacher support and guidance during curriculum change and implementation. I was very interested in finding the values or benefits that designers attached to the support they have provided as the policy mediators for the implementation of the RNCS. The study also focused on what they considered to be problems with regard to the support. Specifically, I gave attention to the Junior Secondary Phase (Grade 7) and focused on the Learning Area of Main Language (English). Grade 7 is usually included in the Primary School level in South Africa.

### 1.4. Aim of the Study

My initial interest in Curriculum Studies was inspired by my own teaching experience and having to implement the Revised National Curriculum Statement. Although teachers were provided with written literature about the curriculum statement very little practical experience, information and assistance was given regarding its implementation. One of the critical areas, the actual teaching methods to be used (a learning-centred approach, cooperative groups, group work, working in pairs etc) would have been rather foreign to some teachers and ongoing workshops regarding this aspect of the curriculum would have been very helpful.

As a Head of Department of English in a primary school in the private sector, I had subordinates who were expecting guidance from me and because of the concerns and anxiety which they expressed, I became interested in looking at the support provided to see the extent to which it complies or not with the expectations of the RNCS. In doing so, I hoped to gain a better perspective of why teachers feel the way they do, despite the support provided. As a specialist in language studies, I focused on English as a learning area because I have both the disciplinary and professional training in this field. I chose to work at this level of schooling as it is a bridge between primary and secondary schooling and it would be insightful and useful to clarify what is happening at this critical stage of the learners' transition into the Further Education and Training Certificate band.

The aim of the study was to establish the appropriateness of the support provided by the support materials when assessed against the outcomes expected in the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools), 2002. The six Learning Outcomes and accompanying Assessment Standards, stipulated in the Languages Learning Area of the curriculum statement, were used as the unit of analysis.

What is a Learning Outcome? A learning outcome describes the knowledge, skills and values that learners should know and be able to demonstrate in a particular Learning Area. In the Learning Area of Languages: English - Home Language, a Grade Seven learner (student/pupil) is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

Learning Outcome One: Listening

The learner will be able to listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.

Learning Outcome Two: Speaking

The learner will be able to communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations.

Learning Outcome Three: Reading and Viewing

The learner will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.

Learning Outcome Four: Writing

The learner will be able to write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes.

Learning Outcome Five: Thinking and Reasoning

The learner will be able to use language to think and reason, as well as to access, process and use.

Learning Outcome Six: Language Structure and Use

The learner will be able to know and be able to use the sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts.

The teacher uses the Assessment Standards for each Learning Outcome to assess the competence level of the learner. An example of an Assessment Standard is:

> We know this when the learner listens to and appreciates expressive, imaginative and narrative texts.
> (Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002: 96).

It is apparent from this statement that the language used is rather vague and the prescribed outcome in the Learning Area of English is difficult to assess.

In terms of the major trends in debates about the role of the teacher in curriculum reform, theories on improving teacher capacity reflected a need for teacher support through in-service training and support materials; professional development; educational research to evaluate the reform process; learning communities; curriculum teams which are school-based; and curriculum specialists to advise schools, management, and teachers.

The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002), Grades R-9 (Schools) in South Africa envisages teachers who are qualified, competent, dedicated and caring and who will be capable of fulfilling the roles described in the Norms and Standards for Educators of 2000 (Government Gazette No. 20844).

Teachers are seen as:

> Mediators of learning, interpreters and designers of Learning Programmes and materials, leaders, administrators and managers, scholars, researchers and lifelong learners, community members, citizens and pastors, assessors and learning area/phase specialists.

The predominant concept is that curriculum reform requires input from teachers as well as curriculum specialists if theory is to be translated into practice (Jackson 1992: 23; Tyler, 1949 & Schwab, 1978, cited in Jackson, 1992). Underpinning this concept is the principle that teachers, as agents of change, need to be equipped with the necessary skills to implement the curriculum successfully (Kelly, 2004; Hargreaves, 2003; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). The significant implication of this principle is that often the knowledge and skills base of the majority of teachers is inadequate to reform expectations and needs to be upgraded. I believe that in the case of South Africa, this requires ongoing, intensive in-service training courses supplemented with

the provision of the necessary learning materials and resources to be used in the classroom.

### 1.5. The Research Question and Sub-questions

1. How are the Grade 7 English support materials assisting teachers in achieving the learning outcomes as stipulated in the National Curriculum Statement revised out of Curriculum 2005?

1.1. What is the correlation between the support materials and the policy requirements?

1.2. If collaboration is vital to curriculum reform, are support materials a product that has fostered and valued collaboration with teachers as informants in the design process?

1.3. How are support materials addressing both the visible and invisible criteria of the content as proposed by the Revised National Curriculum Statement?

1.4. Do support materials contribute to the practical, reflexive and foundational competences expected by the new Norms and Standards (2000) for teachers?

### 1.6. Rationale

Writing in the context of South Africa, Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) argue that it is unrealistic and impractical to expect teachers to possess and put into practice the competences implied in the RNCS without training or support in the required skills. The skills that are required are: the ability to understand and interpret learning programmes provided by the DOE; to design their own learning programmes; to analyse barriers to learning which may be overcome by the design and creation of innovative learning programmes; to prepare lessons that take in to account the needs of the learners as well as new teaching methods/approaches; to understand how these learning materials can be utilised to create more flexible and invidualised learning environments; and to evaluate and adapt learning programmes and materials through learner assessment and feedback from learners. In short, new policy expects a very

sophisticated degree of curriculum literacy from teachers. Professional development initiatives have to help develop and/or reinforce this literacy. This study is therefore conducted to find out the extent to which Taylor et al's concern is being addressed by teacher support materials used for the English Language Learning Area.

Robinson (2003: 22) argues that it is difficult to implement a 'sophisticated policy reform within a context of difficult educational and social circumstances". According to her at neither the conceptual level, nor at the policy implementation level, was the ability of the teacher to 'make sense of the task' taken into consideration by policy, in particular regarding the prescribed roles of educators. Therefore it is important for the policymakers to follow the implementation process closely because if teachers are not able to understand the requirements or identify with the policy then its goals may not be fulfilled. Concepts such as practical, foundational and reflexive competences that are essential to the implementation of the policy requirements need to be clearly understood. Robinson isolates four categories that should be used to understand how teachers experience policy reform. They are: personal motivation; professional interaction or communities of practioners; systematic support or a reform-supportive infrastructure; and the global, national, social, political and economic contexts. Informed by these insights, examining the curriculum support materials would be useful to ascertain whether they encourage teachers to interact professionally and begin supportive structures in which they can collaborate with their colleagues, discuss and clarify for each other the requirements of the policy and what is essential for translating them into effective teaching strategies.

Nsibande & Modiba (2005) support the need for clarifying conceptual underpinnings of policy in teacher development programmes. They found that limited understanding constrained the effective promotion of the continuous assessment programme Swazi teachers were expected to implement. In this study, support materials were examined to find out whether or not they engaged with the concepts implied in the RNCS, guided the teachers on how to identify principles inferred in it and then assisted them in translating such principles into practices that fulfil the requirements of the critical outcomes of the English language as a Learning Area.

According to Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) a reciprocal relationship or partnership between schools and universities can lead to the creation of a deeper understanding of teaching and schooling. The school can provide the site for further educational research by the university and the university can provide in-service training and further professional development opportunities. If theory and practice can be integrated in this way, there is an opportunity to produce theory, which is more practically and contextually based and practice, which is more broadly informed and theoretically grounded.

In the case of this study, policy mediators design the materials used. Examining materials and interacting with their designers, helped me understand whether or not there was a partnership described by Darling-Hammond in their creation. Even though this study was not looking specifically at university/school partnerships, it considered the English language support materials as crucial for reflecting how their design was a product of a partnership between the designers and teachers or structures to which they belonged. This was important as a basis of determining whether or not sufficient meaningful learning opportunities were provided to teachers to reflect on new concepts and determine their implications for teaching.

Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995: 597) further assert that the challenges facing teachers in educational reform today are that:

> The vision of practice that underlies the nation's reform agenda requires most teachers to rethink their own practice, to construct new classroom roles and expectations for student outcomes, and to teach in ways they have never taught before – and probably never experienced as students. The success of this agenda ultimately turns on teachers' success in accomplishing the serious and difficult tasks of *learning* the skills and perspectives assumed by new visions of practice and *unlearning* the practices and beliefs about students and instructions that have dominated their professional lives to date. (emphasis in original).

In this study an attempt was made to establish how support materials urged teachers to rethink their own practices, teach in new ways that they had not contemplated before, and assisted them to understand new skills and perspectives promoted by the RNCS.

Elmore (1995: 23) emphasizes that changes need to begin with the teacher's knowledge and skills because the empowerment of the teacher in the form of professional development, rather than structural changes, leads to changes in pedagogy. The view is invaluable to any attempt aimed at assessing the relevance of In-Service Education and Training (INSET) to teachers. In this study, what Elmore says, provided grounds for establishing how support materials compel teachers to reflect on their taken-for-granted view of effective practice.

According to Darling-Hammond (1996) the problem facing schools today is not necessarily declining school quality but rather the pressure on teachers to prepare students from diverse backgrounds and capabilities at levels of competence prescribed by a standardized curriculum. I wished to find out how support materials dealt with issues related to the diversity of learners who have to be taught since post 1994

According to Tomlinson (2003: 61), when material writers address the curriculum a coursebook must not only be informed by curriculum aims, objectives and learning outcomes but also by the context, needs and capabilities of the teacher who has to put it into practice. What the support materials are actually demonstrating to us is what needs to be foregrounded when policy is to be delivered. Tomlinson (2003: 62) argues that editors should address questions about the use of coursebooks by both teachers and learners; the way in which they are structured for use; and the context in which they will be used. He further (Tomlinson, 2003: 108) asserts that writers should use this as a framework to guide the materials development process. Frameworks should be more "principled, coherent and flexible" to provide a more theoretical justification for the different stages and sequences of the materials development process. This issue is also addressed by Prowse (cited in Tomlinson, 2003: 107), who maintains that writers need to make mention of the pedagogical principles or frameworks which they may use as a guide to ensure that their writing is coherent and consistent. This underscores Bernstein's (1996) concern with the principles that underpin the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication and how they need to be made explicit and transparent. Applied to this study, his view is implies that in writing materials, the language used in them, that is, L2, should illustrate to teachers how content can be recontextualised to clarify its underpinning

concepts. As carriers of L2, materials need to engage these concepts and associated procedures of what is taught to make the pedagogic code relevant to them transparent to teachers.

Albeit, developing materials for language teaching is a complicated process as it involves a number of stakeholders differently positioned within the curriculum development process. A coursebook [textbook] needs to address the needs of teacher, learner; publisher, writer; and the syllabus requirements. Richards & Rogers (1995, cited in Tomlinson, 2003) and Tomlinson (2003) argue that the syllabus, learners, teachers and instructional materials should drive the materials development process when translating language teaching into practice. Hopkins (1994) and Roxburgh (1997) highlight the need for teacher skills and viewpoints to be considered by material writers (cited in Tomlinson, 2003). It is important to be aware of teachers and learners as the target users since teachers may need extra training to assist them in using the coursebook there:

> … needs to be a clear sense of the target teacher group in terms of their language ability, education, teacher-training experience, willingness to try new things and time available for preparation". Tomlinson (2003: 138)

Tomlinson (2003: 142) further suggests that curriculum developers, materials developers and teachers should use feedback to interact in an open dialogue. Feedback from both evaluation and piloting is useful to publishers for improving and revising materials. This would be in keeping with the empowerment principles advocated by Fetterman (1998) where all stakeholders are involved in the three stages of developing a mission statement, taking stock and developing strategies; and documenting and negotiating progress. Feedback would be integral to this process.

According to Ball & Cohen (1996: 6) although the textbook has the potential to influence the work of teachers and to provide a common curriculum particularly where school systems are fragmented or unequal, in practice, curriculum materials have played an uneven role in education. They suggest there are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, that insufficient consideration is given to how teachers' need to learn how to use the new materials. Secondly, teachers play an important role in shaping the curriculum in fundamental ways and their practice is strongly guided by their

beliefs and values, understanding of the material, their own role and how they view their students. They therefore select and adapt materials to suit their own students and classroom context. In this way, the materials become 'ingredients' rather than 'determinants' of the curriculum and a 'gap' is created between what the designer intended and what occurs in practice. A third reason is that textbooks are frowned upon by teachers in favour of their own original teaching materials and as a reflection of their good teaching and professional autonomy. "This hostility to texts, and the idealized image of the individual professional, have inhibited careful consideration of the constructive role that curriculum might play" (Ball & Cohen, 1996: 6). Here textbooks are seen as tools of conservation, constraint and control of knowledge that undermine a teacher's creativity and imagination.

A closer look at the relationship between teachers and textbooks reveals that the designers tend to ignore the role of the teacher in the use of the textbook and focus on the learner because there is an assumption that "curriculum materials can operate nearly independently on students (Dow, 1991 cited in Ball & Cohen, 1996: 7). There is little or no dialogue or consultation between teachers and designers (Ben-Peretz, 1990, cited in Ball & Cohen, 1996: 7). What these authors are advocating is that designers need to pay closer attention to the *enacted* curriculum and not set the curriculum materials apart from teachers and learners in the classroom. This would require designers to consider the interactive role played by teachers, students and materials in the enacted curriculum when they design their materials.

A framework for textbooks, which Tomlinson finds interesting, is that of Jolly and Bolitho (1998: 97-97), which includes identifying the need for materials; exploring that need; the contextual realization of materials; the pedagogical realization of materials; the production of materials; the use of materials by students; and finally the evaluation of the materials against the objectives. Another framework, which Tomlinson recommends, is that of Penaflorida (1995: 172-9) who uses the 6 principles of materials design identified by Nunan (1988). They are that there should be a clear link between materials and the curriculum; text and task should be authentic; interaction should be promoted by the materials; materials should focus on the formal elements of the language; the development of learning skills should be encouraged by the materials; and learners should be encouraged to apply their

learning in the world outside the classroom. In contrast, Hall (in Hidalgo et al., 1995: 8) argues that the preliminary step to writing materials for language teaching is to ask the important question: “How do we think people learn the language?” (Cited in Tomlinson (2003: 110).

According to Tomlinson (2003: 50, 51), if teachers’ books are to provide guidance they should have notes which are useful and explicit; there should be sufficient guidance; and tape scripts if not in the coursebook, answer keys, vocabulary lists, structural/functional inventories, a description of the unit template; and a rationale and lesson summaries should be included. They may also include mini lesson plans, extension activities and photocopiable materials. The materials should also cater for different teaching styles and teacher personalities. Allowance should be made for the teachers who are not first language English speakers and their perspectives and preferences should be taken into consideration.

Teachers’ guides should also provide for choice and teachers should be encouraged to present the lessons in different ways. The materials should allow opportunities for teachers to adapt and localize to suit their context. They should allow for teacher agency so that the teacher can add, delete, change and improvise where desired and also have a choice and control over the content. Teachers’ guides should also allow for reflection and encourage innovation and experimentation especially with regard to implementing curriculum change. The teacher should be encouraged to be creative, imaginative and exploratory and also to reflect on and evaluate the lessons provided. Carlos Islam & Chris Mares (cited in Tomlinson, 2003: 86) argue that:

> A good teacher’s guide will supplement materials with useful alternatives and adaptations, but where this does not happen or a teacher does not have the teacher’s guide, adaptation will become part of the creative dialogue between teachers and published materials.

But Tomlinson (2003: 101) disagrees and argues that because evaluation and adaptation are important in the learning process, this should not be left to chance but should rather be built into the development of the materials. He further asserts that time and training should be set aside so that teachers can develop these skills.

Ball & Cohen (1996) view the teacher's guide as being able to provide *in depth support* to the teacher. It should assist the teacher in interpreting what students might say and anticipating their response to the text. Instead of giving a generic answer such as '*answers will vary*', which does not guide the teacher as to the types of answers expected, it should rather provide examples of similar student work and applicable comments from other teachers used to assess the work. A teacher's guide should also support teacher learning by providing more detail about the content. They suggest that the ideas and concepts involved in learning activities should be elaborated on so that teachers have a better idea of what they can do with the content and what possible responses and ideas might emanate from their students.

The authors make an interesting suggestion that the pedagogical values, judgements and motives of the designers, which are usually hidden, should rather be more explicitly stated. In this way, they feel that teachers will be better informed as to the reasons why the content and activities have been selected and presented in a certain way and then teachers might give more careful consideration to content and students' understanding when they use the materials. Ball & Cohen (1996) believe that if materials are well-designed they could be a resource for teacher learning and professional development. They suggest that when new materials are introduced, consideration should be given to the provision of instruction to teachers on how to use them. Teachers should be encouraged to engage with the materials in a manner that would be capacity building by encouraging professional development and improving their teaching performance.

What are the implications for designers of support materials? Ball & Cohen (1996: 8) state that:

> If we want the intended curriculum best to contribute to the enacted one, we must find ways to design the first with the second clearly in view.

This would entail a redrawing of the boundaries (framing) between curriculum materials and teachers and a closer relationship between the enacted curriculum of teachers and how designers construct curriculum materials. If teachers and designers are seen as *partners in practice* then the curriculum and designers' work should be reconceptualised (Bernstein) as sites for teacher learning and curriculum materials

should provide opportunities for teachers to learn. This means that instead of seeing the textbook, as only for the students and the teachers' guide as only an instructional manual for teachers, both should be used as sites for teacher learning. The provision of concrete examples of the type of work expected, student understanding and thinking and what other teachers have done, would also be of assistance to teachers' learning and practice. While allowance should be made for teacher autonomy, creativity and different teaching styles and personalities, pedagogical practices and concepts implicit in the curriculum need to be explicitly illustrated and communicated to teachers.

These are a few of the issues that I have isolated concerning support materials. Firstly, we need to look at how the support materials are addressing the curriculum requirements. Secondly, we need to ask how they are dealing with the requirements of the subject-content. Thirdly, to what extent do they address the understanding of teaching and learning implicit in the curriculum and how do the materials help teachers to realise what they need to do to promote the ideals of the curriculum? The way that support materials engage with each curricular theme reveals the way to facilitate or not the effective implementation of policy requirements and teacher change.

This study hopes that establishing the relevance of teacher support in the successful implementation of a new curriculum will contribute useful data or evidence that can be drawn upon in future efforts aimed at improving curriculum literacy and effective implementation among teachers.

## 1.7. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The literature on professional teacher development shows that In-service (INSET) programmes need to provide ongoing, meaningful opportunities for successful growth. Teachers need to learn these new methods through a collaborative, participatory approach to learning and teaching which envisages an interactive relationship, situated in the community or culture. In the context of under-resourced, over-crowded, understaffed schools in both the urban and the rural areas this would

need to be well organised by the department so that collaboration does not place too many extra demands on teacher time and capacity. According to Krajcik *et al* (1994), the collaborative in-service model of teacher learning has three phases: collaboration (between the teacher developer and the teachers); enactment (teachers put theories into practice in the classroom); and reflection (teachers reflect on their new practices). If this is to occur then teachers must be given opportunities for learning through collaboration, enactment and reflection. However, regarding textbooks, Jackson (1968: 20) is concerned that:

> … many teachers never trouble themselves at all with decisions about how the material they are teaching should be presented to their students. Instead, they rely upon commercially prepared instructional materials such as textbooks to make those decisions for them.

Support materials have an important role to play in curriculum reform because they are in a position to influence teachers' work. Ball & Cohen (1996: 6) argue that they have not had as great an impact as they could because the need of teachers to learn how to use them appropriately has not been fully considered by the designers. Teachers select and adapt materials according to their own 'understanding' of their students' needs, and their own beliefs as to what they consider of importance in their teaching The expectation that teachers need to create their own materials has inhibited the use of textbooks and there has also not been enough research into the relationship that exists between teachers and textbooks. Ball & Cohen (1996) believe that through the process of 'curriculum enactment', whereby teachers, students and curricular materials are jointly engaged, curricular materials could be used to contribute more to curriculum reform. They describe these processes as resulting into crossing boundaries, improved instruction and partners in practice.

According to Ball & Cohen (1996: 7), teacher's guides should assist teachers in learning about their students, their teaching and their Learning Area. Guides could offer examples of students' work, suggestions on different ways to represent ideas and connections between them, and help teachers with the planning of the course work. This is what Ball & Cohen call 'crossing boundaries' and they state:

> When the gap between materials and teaching is very wide - leaving each practitioners to figure out how to deal with students' thinking, how to probe the content at hand, and how to map instruction against the temporal rhythms of the classroom life - teachers must invent or ignore a great deal.

Ball & Cohen also argue that ‘improved instruction’ in the professional development of teachers, should accompany the adoption of new curricular materials. But they argue that this type of support should encourage teachers to investigate and work with the materials. There needs to be a closer working relationship between the textbook developers and publishers, schools and teachers which they refer to as ‘partners in practice’. Curricular materials should be a site for teacher learning and learning by students. Achieving this would entail more research on teachers’ learning and knowledge where the relationship between teachers and texts would be reviewed and clarified. The insights would be drawn on to ensure that materials play a more constructive role in curriculum reform.

In the context of South Africa, Robinson (2003) argues, teachers need to be able to use concepts such as practical, foundational and reflexive competences to understand the policy requirements and to alter existing teaching practices. INSET programmes provided by the various education departments therefore need to be more than just one-off workshops. They should allow for sustained, coherent, ongoing programmes that allow teachers to immerse themselves in a particular area such as reflection or learner-centred teaching until they have mastered the necessary skills. The common viewpoint is that if we understand how teachers acquire and use new knowledge; then policymakers and curriculum material designers will be better informed of effective methods of professional development, which include teachers as active and reflective participants.

Darling-Hammond (1989) considers the partnership Ball & Cohen write about as the strengthening of teacher knowledge and an effective way to improve the overall quality of education. Her view is based on conceptions of teaching as complex work and learning as an interactive, individualized process. Informed by this, she considers effective teacher development as characterised by the following aspects: a culture of inquiry; collaboration; professional networks and client orientation. In a later text, Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) develop this point further by arguing that the professional development of teachers should be integral to school policy. Furthermore, they identify six key principles of teacher development which would assist in effective professional development and in altering teaching practices,

namely: teachers need to be engaged in practical tasks which should be followed by observation, assessment and reflection of the new practice; teachers need to participate in activities which are grounded in inquiry, reflection and experimentation; teachers need to be collaboratively involved in knowledge sharing; teacher development must be sustained, ongoing and intensive; support must be provided through modelling, coaching and shared problem solving; and these should all be connected to other aspects of school reform. In short, what this implies is that the designers of curriculum frameworks have to be aware that teachers deserve an active role in curriculum design and need to be provided with a rationale for adopting a new curriculum (See also Cibulka et al., 2000).

With regard to teacher learning, Cordingley & Saunders (2002) underscore the importance of teachers as adult learners who require learning to be scaffolded until they are able to reach the Vygotskian 'zone of proximinal development' where learning can take place at its deepest level. In the 'zone', teachers are more able to access and interpret research and to adapt it to meet their own contextual needs and in this way would be able to alter entrenched practices.

Goodlad (1996) is concerned about the little evidence in the literature that professional learning experiences, which occur in isolation, lead to an improvement in classroom practices. He also emphasises the need for contextualised teacher development and sees the school as a possible context for the integration of pre and in-service teacher programmes. His view is that the transfer of skills and strategies is improved when these are situated in context and teacher support is more effective when it is classroom-based. A school which is a learning community or community of practice provides an environment or setting for teachers where they can interact with other professionals and collaborate, reflect and share expertise, skills and knowledge. It brings together students, teachers and community members in sharing in the task of adapting to educational change. This contextualized type of learning as 'in situ' or situated learning, is different to the traditional professional development model of external workshops or formal university coursework.

Implicit in the model suggested by Goodlad, is Lave & Wenger's (1991) concept of situated learning or legitimate peripheral participation. The model is compatible with

the idea that learning does not occur in isolation and is socially constructed. According to Lave & Wenger, participatory learning is validated and legitimised through acceptance and interaction with experts or masters and through practice. They describe the members of the community of practice as master and apprentice. The master uses legitimate peripheral participation to familiarise the apprentice with the task. The apprentice gains mastery of the necessary knowledge and skills through the scaffolding of a series of incremental steps and meaningful learning opportunities. Newcomers are encouraged through affirmation of what they do correctly in the development of their storytelling skills.

The general view is that learning in practice and practical experiences which focus on knowledge and skills have an inherent intrinsic reward system and also provide continuity, as participants are able to envisage future career opportunities and opportunities for self-evaluation. Bruner (1999) too asserts that a sense of belonging is fostered when participants become part of the community of practice, which in turn increases the individual's sense of identity.

The collaborative apprenticeship model accommodates teachers at all levels of proficiency and is therefore highly suited to school-based reform. Peer teaching and mentoring is used to support teachers through the developmental stages of learning a new skill such as the designing of learning programmes or understanding a curriculum policy document. According to them, through this process of collaboration and support, teachers will become part of the community of practice to which they aspire. If teachers are to become full members of a community of practice there are certain steps or support structures that need to be put into place and one such structure is professional development. The model demonstrates that direct involvement in activities brings about changes in the social relations within a community of practice. Knowledge and understanding is developed through incremental steps. Modelling is used to improve performance and storytelling. Through practice and example, trial and error, newcomers develop the ability to speak in a manner that matches the prescribed model of storytelling. The importance lies in the ability to talk from within the practice and this is achieved by going through the steps in the process so that a newcomer learns "to talk" and does not learn "from talk" (Lave & Wenger, 1999: 30). The active relationship, which newcomers have with the language of practice,

encourages them to complete the incremental steps towards full membership. Lave & Wenger (1999: 25) suggest that:

> Rather than learning by replicating the performances of others or by acquiring knowledge transmitted in instruction, learning should occur through central participation in the learning curriculum of the ambient community.

To summarise, factors which have been identified in the literature on learning communities focus on the following five elements: supportive and shared leadership; collective creativity; shared values and vision; supportive conditions; and shared personal practice. These elements play a significant role in the process of professional development and therefore are invaluable to anyone involved in curriculum policy mediation for teachers. A model informed by these elements would be important to support ongoing and sustained teacher development reform.

Inherent in the concept of collaboration is the notion of participatory or shared leadership. A participatory perspective on leadership provides a need for reconceptualising and reconfiguring leadership practices in schools. Distributed forms of leadership are viewed as a means of building capacity in schools. Capacity building is seen as a way to bring about improvement in schools and the core of capacity-building model is 'distributed leadership, social cohesion and trust' (Hopkins & Jackson, 2003: 95). This notion of distributive leadership highlights how agency and structure construct leadership practice. Spillane et al (2003, 2004) describe this leadership as 'practice distributed over leaders, followers, and their situation and incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals'. It is shared and through individuals' interaction tasks are completed. Implicit in it is a form of inter-dependency rather than dependency. Distributed leadership points to a move away from the traditional notion of leaders, leadership and leadership development. It challenges the idea of individual leaders and allows for more representation by teachers in schools.

According to Elmore (2002:15) because:

> … in any organized system, competency varies considerably among people in similar roles…organizing these diverse competencies into a coherent whole requires understanding how individuals vary…and how the competence of some can be shared with others.

It is in this sense that complex tasks like teaching and learning need guidance and direction. Therefore distributive leadership uses the skills and knowledge of all participants and creates a common culture, which supports school and teacher development. The advantages of shared leadership is that collective expertise is more stable and professional development occurs naturally as part of the system, collaboration creates a learning community, and long-term stability and continuity of school performance is enhanced. Being involved in learning activities where it is possible to interact with others is not about sharing vision and having agreement on an issue rather it promotes a mental image of what is of value to all.

Gould (1990) defines democratic agency and the disposition to reciprocity as two important features of the participatory democratic personality and suggests that the following are necessary for its development: a concrete form or structure of social interaction; the disposition for reciprocity; and self-developed individuals who expresses their freedom through participation in a democracy. Democratic agency is seen as an essential feature of the democratic personality. It entails the ability of the individual to exercise power freely and on an equal footing with others and to participate in joint decision-making and the carrying out of decisions. Gould describes the following as the character traits needed in a democratic personality: Initiative, disposition to reciprocity, tolerance, social reciprocity, mutuality, flexibility or open-mindedness, commitment and responsibility, and character traits usually associated with women such as supportiveness, sharing, communicativeness, cooperativeness, and concern for community. For her, self-development is related to access and opportunities therefore need to be made available to all teachers.

Reiterating the same points, Gutmann (1987: 44) identifies the sharing of common values and respecting cultural differences as the two aims necessary for educating citizens for democracy. Although the two aspects appear to be incompatible, she proposes that these two aims of securing common values (civic unity) and respecting differences (cultural diversity) be integrated through the principle of mutual respect.

We could thus argue that a reconceptualised notion of autonomy, which includes knowledge and competency, is necessary to enable teachers to participate in a collaborative or shared leadership role in schools. Education in South Africa before democracy would be regarded as repressive because it failed "to teach appreciation and respect for the positive contributions of other cultures" (Gutmann, 1995: 158). This reconceptualised notion of autonomy, which includes knowledge and competency, is compatible with contemporary South Africa's educational vision of promoting core values as a basis for a democratic education.

If curriculum understanding is informed by the concept of agency, and teachers are viewed as agents of change, then our teachers need to be equipped with the skills and competences that will enable them to transform themselves and society. Giroux (1992:160) maintains that teachers should have opportunities to be involved in a discourse of differences, to "work with diverse Others to deepen their understanding of the complexity of the traditions, histories, knowledge and politics that they bring to the schools." If the transformative qualities of education are to be realised, our schools need to provide the opportunities and 'safe spaces' where this can take place.

However, this will not happen if programmes aimed at developing such teachers do not assist them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to create these opportunities. In terms of support provided to teachers, is it support in terms of process or text? Is it supporting the collaborative practices, which are seen as essential to teacher support?

The next section looks at how this study intended to establish the extent to which the support materials used for English teachers promoted teacher agency as curriculum developers expected to implement and develop the cognitive qualities promoted by the RNCS.

**1.8. Research Design**

In the light of writings referred to in this brief literature review provided, and in the context of South Africa where resources are limited and knowledge about teacher

capacity is still unclear, collaborative relationships could provide opportunities for school-based teacher development that would in turn assist in the effective implementation of educational reform and new teaching practices. Sufficient, ongoing workshops and other learning opportunities need to be provided to address the need for improved teacher orientation and training.

The RNCS required a move away from the traditional approach to learning and teaching as one-way transmission where the role of the teacher is that of instructor, directing learning, and the pupil as a recipient, to a learner-centred approach. Teachers needed to be trained in learner-centred methods of teaching. This is a time-consuming process, which has people capacity and budgetary constraints for schools. If the RNCS is to be successfully implemented this requires the development of concepts such as learning communities, teacher professional development, situated learning and collaboration.

Support materials therefore need to create cultures of collegiality by finding ways for the staff to work together on changes needed in their teaching. Teachers need to be organised into communities of learners with teams to facilitate the collaborative apprenticeship model described by Lave & Wenger (1999). Teams with mentors, expert teachers, veteran teachers and novices need to work together on unlearning and learning new skills and practices to improve teacher capacity.

### 1.8.1 Research Approach

Qualitative research methods were therefore appropriate for the study to describe and analyse the support materials and thoughts and perceptions of people involved in their design. According to (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315), qualitative research is based on the assumption that reality is a social construction that influences people's actions, thoughts and feelings. It is also mainly concerned with achieving an understanding from the perspective of participants. A variety of flexible strategies may be employed such as observations, interviews, and artifacts. Terms often used in qualitative research are describe, explore, explain examine, document, understand, discover or generate (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 316).

Qualitative research reports are usually rich with detail and provide meaningful insights into participants' experiences of the world. Several writers for example, Lincoln & Guba (1985), Patton (1990) and Eisner (1991) have identified important characteristics of qualitative research. These are:

- The natural setting or context is used as the source of data. The researcher attempts to conduct research in a manner that will maintain "empathic neutrality" (Patton 1990: 55). Observations, descriptions and interpretations used in data collection are contextually situated.
- The researcher becomes the "human instrument" as the data collector.
- Inductive data analysis is used.
- Descriptive, expressive language is used in the research reports, which allows for the "presence of voice in the text" (Eisner, 1991: 36).
- Qualitative research is interpretive and attempts to discover the meaning in experiences or events and in turn the researcher interprets the meanings.
- Each study is treated as unique.
- The design of qualitative research tends to be emergent rather than predetermined, and as a result researchers focus on this emerging process as well as the outcomes or product of the research. Because the researcher needs to observe and interpret meanings in context, the emergent nature of qualitative research design makes it difficult to finalize research strategies before data collection has begun (Patton, 1990).
- Qualitative research is judged using special criteria for reliability and validity.
- It can yield rich information not obtainable through statistical sampling techniques.

By interacting with designers 'face to face' contextually, I was able to obtain verbal and non-verbal information regarding their perceptions about support materials. Through the use of probing questions I obtained information that would not be available from a statistical sampling technique. In this way I was able to unravel the

rich information that emerged from the data and in this way found out what was considered important in the RNCS. This approach was particularly useful to convey fresh perspectives and more in-depth information about the thoughts and writing of the support materials author. Lincoln & Guba (1985:120) contend that qualitative data is more easily understood:

> If you want people to understand better than they otherwise might, provide them information in the form in which they usually experience it.

### 1.8.2. Research Methods

1. Document Analysis

Document analysis was used to review the support materials that had been provided to assist teachers in the implementation of the RNCS. These documents were looked at as text that addressed the principles of the RNCS. The move to an outcomes-based teaching practice was accompanied by the introduction of new learner support materials (LSM). Schools were to select LSM from a prescribed list approved by the DoE (1998a & 1998b) and described as 'a means of promoting good teaching and learning'. Chisholm (2000) contends that these LSM were of inferior quality, which had a negative effect on the implementation of the new curriculum. Malcolm (2001: 235) points out that even though the design of a genuinely constructivist, learner-centred textbook has been problematic; designers need to take into consideration how to inform teachers about how a textbook can be used. Teachers can use support materials for the selection of content in their planning; or for classroom activities and worksheets for teaching purposes. They need to understand the rationale behind the use of LSM, such as, being easy to use, addressing time constraints and teacher workload and promoting uniformity of standards.

The study aimed to analyse the support materials with regard to whether or not they articulated the social, and historical meanings and language contained in the RNCS; were consistent with the RNCS; ignored issues; or were in conflict or were ambiguous with regard to the RNCS. By looking beyond the sentences and language used to a more interactive dialogue with the text the facets of discourse analysis that I used are those suggested by Slembrouck (2000, cited in Mouton, 2001):

- Looking for meaning in the texts. This required cultural competence and critical distance, to identify contradictions, similarities and recurrent themes. Silences (what people don't say) were not to be disregarded, but considered as equally important for the critical language awareness exercises I was engaged in. As an experienced English teacher at a level at which the study was being conducted, I considered myself to be culturally competent and able to maintain the necessary distance when looking at the materials because as Head of Department, I have been constantly required to reflect on these materials to determine both their suitability for the recorded Learning Area and their use by teachers.

- Analysing in terms of effects. This included purposive sampling and the need to ask the questions what, and why as to their selection. The use of purposive sampling used in the study, involved the selection of research subjects according to suitability, qualifications and experience in providing support materials to teachers implementing the reform processes in post-apartheid South Africa.

As a result the support materials were analysed to establish the extent to which:

1. They mediated the policy as capacity-building tools.
2. The support they provided might be procedural rather than conceptual.

2. Interviews

Data collection involved 'face to face' interviews with support material designers to understand how they conceptualised the teacher support materials as curriculum texts that have resulted from the interpretation of the RNCS and translation of its underlying principles. The RNCS provided for this study a context in which teaching had to draw its rationale in contemporary South Africa, which needed to be clarified if the support materials provided were to assist teachers to implement it effectively.

As curriculum texts, the latter provided details, which highlighted how the designers interpreted the RNCS and communicated this to the teachers

Interviews allowed me to maximise opportunities for objectivity, and for my results to be valid and reliable (Breakwell, 1990: 230). They were useful for the generation of knowledge through the use of informal conversation and also for the social situatedness of the data (Kvale 1996: 11 cited in Babbie & Mouton, 1998). Another reason for the use of interviews is that they allowed me to find out "what others [designers] feel and think about their worlds and [help me to] understand experiences and reconstruct events in which you [I] did not participate" (Rubin, 1995: 1, cited in Babbie & Mouton, 1998). Interviews also allowed flexibility in field-work as they could be used at different stages of the research process. They were used in the initial stages, for piloting and validation of research instruments and also as the main means of data collection. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for flexibility in the interview process itself, and I was able to guide the interviews to make sure that I obtained as much of the relevant information as possible.

An interview schedule of semi-structured questions was used. I recorded the interview by means of a tape recorder. I was allowed to do so by the respondents. Written field notes were also made to capture as much detail as possible. I transcribed the digital voice recordings and the field notes after the interviews.

Cicourel (1964, cited in Babbie & Mouton, 1998) warns of the features that might be problematic in interviews. These are:

- The mutual factors such as mutual trust, social distance and control by the interviewer, which may differ from one interview to the other.
- The respondent may use avoidance tactics if uneasy about the questions.
- The holding back of information by both interviewer and respondent.
- That meaning might not be clearly understood by both parties.
- It is not possible to control every aspect of the interview rationally.

I attempted to overcome these problematic features by putting the participants at ease, explaining the purposes of the study clearly and by trying to create a non-threatening atmosphere. The participants were also informed by the publishers about the ethical

issues surrounding the study and should not have felt compromised. I attempted to probe issues sensitively and tried to not make the respondent feel uncomfortable about answering the questions.

### 1.8.3. Sampling Process

In this study, support materials used as guidance documents for English teachers who have to implement the RNCS, constituted the sample for the study. The sampling process in the study can therefore be described as a purposeful or purposive sample. According to Patton (2002, cited in McMillan & Schumacher 2006: 319), purposeful sampling is when cases are specifically selected for the understanding that can be derived from an in-depth study of the small samples that they contain. By using purposeful sampling, the information that is obtained from a small sample can be utilised in a number of ways as the samples that are chosen are selected on the usefulness of the knowledge and information that they can contribute to a study. Types of purposeful sampling include site selection, comprehensive sampling, maximum variation sampling, network sampling and sampling by case type. (McMillan & Schumacher 2006: 319). Because my study is based on the concept of teacher support, I selected sampling by case type and chose people for my sample who had experience of support material design and could provide me with the information I needed.

Sample sizes are not considered static but may vary from one to forty. According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006), the sample size is assessed according to the following criteria:

- The purpose of the study
- The research problem
- How the data is to be collected
- Information availability

As there are no specific rules laid down regarding sample size, I decided to use a sample size of three because the virtue of purposeful sampling is the rich amount of information, which can be provided even though a small sample is used. I hoped that I would be able to access this rich information from my sample.

I considered my assessment of support materials as part and parcel of the public process before materials were validated and selected for use in the schools. I ascertained from the publishers that before the support materials were given to me that consent would have been obtained from the authors. The designers were asked to participate on a voluntary basis. I assumed that since they shall have consented with the publishers to make materials available to me, they would be prepared to clarify issues of interest to me. In order to ensure that publishers get the consent, I provided the authors with full information about the purpose of the study.

### 1.8.4. Data Analysis

Information provided by designers was not only used to validate the interpretation of the support materials but also to indicate what they considered important in preparing these materials. The analysis started with a management process where interviews were transcribed on to paper. Responses were then coded according to issues, which recurred in the two sets of data and categorised, using views that emerged from examining the data (McMIllan & Schumacher, 2006: 367). On the basis of these categories it was important to establish the extent to which these materials are supporting the RNCS.

## 1.9. Outline of Chapters

**Chapter One: Introduction.**

This is the introductory chapter and deals with the research introduction in terms of the background to the study, the purpose of the study, the clarification of the research questions, the rationale of the study, preliminary literature review and theoretical framework and research design.

**Chapter Two: Background – The new Curriculum Policy in South Africa post 1994.**

This chapter provides a history to the RNCS in general and specifically focuses on the English language as prescribed for Grade 7. It traces the way the new national curriculum in South Africa, the Revised National Curriculum Statement 2002 (RNCS), was developed to strengthen and streamline Curriculum 2005. The RNCS is

seen as a reaffirmation of the change from teacher-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching that had been promoted by C2005. Both C 2005 and the RNCS formed a two-part process in the revision of the national curriculum that preceded 1994. This revision involved three main steps: the removal of racial and sexist elements; the inclusion of Outcomes-based education (OBE); and the review and revision of C 2005. This had major implications for learning and teaching.

**Chapter Three: Bernstein on L1 and L2 as Languages of Description**

This chapter develops the conceptual framework that is based on Bernstein's principles that underpin the transformation of different types of knowledge (intellectual, practical, official, expressive, local) into pedagogic communication. Integral to this is the pedagogic code that he claims is crucial to knowledge, the *social grammar* to communicate it, the pedagogic device and the *meaning potential* that it activates in order to facilitate communication. The notion of an internal language of description [L1], which is conceptual, and an external language of description, which is able to describe 'something other than itself' [L2] is drawn upon. Bernstein's theory is that one language [L2] is being used to access another [L1].

**Chapter Four: Research Design**

This chapter focuses on the research design covering approach, methods, sampling and data analysis. A qualitative approach was chosen as this allowed the use of ethnographic research tools such as interviews and document analysis, to gather data in multiple ways and to pursue issues in depth through probing. *Purposeful* (purposive, judgement/judgemental) sampling and *convenience* (available) sampling were used. Both are forms of non-probability sampling where participants or subjects are selected on their accessibility and who are representative of the topic being researched. A teacher's guide and a textbook were selected as appropriate texts to identify what designers had taken into account when putting them together.

**Chapter Five: Intensive Analysis of Interview Data**

This chapter contains the presentation and analysis of interview research data. Part One looked at the designers' views on support material processes that were undertaken and Part Two analysed data obtained from support materials. This chapter

illustrates the extent to which, in the designers' views, teacher learning and empowerment are important considerations in the writing of support materials for the English language. The focus is on their views about the purpose of the teachers' guides and textbooks they wrote. From the designers' perceptions and opinions, it appeared that they in general did not see themselves as performing a teacher development role. They simply viewed themselves as having a responsibility to producing materials that teachers could draw on to implement policy.

**Chapter Six: Document Analysis**.

The extent to which the teacher's guide clarified the content and pedagogy used in the learner's textbook is examined in this chapter. While language style or form are significant and give access to content in a subtle way, this was not the primary aim when looking at these texts. Rather the style and form - as the *what or representation*- of the content of lessons and the *way it was* communicated as a discourse to promote teaching and learning is analysed. The power relations suggested by the positioning of the reader and the authors' choice of words, how these were organised in the teachers' guide as support material for clarifying the textbook written for the learners was also studied.

**Chapter Seven: Summary of the Study**

This chapter is a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

### 1.10. Ethical Issues

I attempted to ensure that the physical, social and psychological welfare of the subjects/respondents were protected and that their dignity and privacy was honoured. I tried to pre-empt any foreseeable repercussions on those studied and in the publication. I communicated the aims and nature of the investigation as fully as possible to all subjects/respondents so that they might make an informed decision about whether or not to participate in the study. It was made explicit that their participation was of a voluntary nature and they could withdraw from the study at any time. It was also made explicit that if they chose not to participate that this would not have negative consequences for them. The subjects/respondents in the study had the right to remain anonymous and any information, which they should provide, would

remain confidential. The questions asked would not be insulting or intrusive. Monitoring devices such as a tape recorder were only used with the permission of the respondent/subject. Informed consent was obtained from the subjects involved in the study.

The following chapter provides greater detail on the new curriculum policy in South Africa after 1994. Particular reference is made to Outcomes-based education (OBE) and the concerns expressed about its introduction, the implementation of the new policy, and the notion of collaboration.

# Chapter Two

## 2.1 Background: The New Curriculum Policy in South Africa post 1994

The Revised National Curriculum Statement 2002 (RNCS) was developed to strengthen and streamline Curriculum 2005 (C 2005), which was reviewed in 2000 and became policy as the RNCS in 2002. The RNCS specifically re-affirms the change from teacher-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching promoted by C2005. Both C 2005 and the RNCS form a two-part process in the revision of the national curriculum that preceded 1994.

C 2005 was introduced into South African schools in 1998 for the advancement of progressive, nation-building policies of the new democratic government. However, OBE was a problematic and contentious issue. It did not appear to be working at a classroom level (Jansen & Christie, 1999; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999) and its focus seemed to be vocationally orientated because of its labour and economic links to the NQF (Samson & Vally, 1996; Chisholm & Fuller, 1996; Govender et al., 2003).

C 2005 expected too much of the teaching force and further marginalized previously disadvantaged teachers who found the language and terminology complex and difficult to understand. Jansen (1998) is concerned that teachers will not be able to understand the 50 different concepts and terminology inherent in OBE. He uses the concept of 'outcomes' as an example and he argues that this will require an understanding of competencies, unit standards and learning programmes. He is also concerned that value statements such as 'participate actively in promoting a just and equitable society' are too broad and decontextualised to be meaningful in a South African context. C2005 presupposes teachers who are well prepared with good content and conceptual knowledge and a high level of skills, which was not the reality on the ground (Cross *et al*., 2002). Christie (1997: 117) refers to this as a "pastiche of policy borrowing and local initiatives adapted to South African circumstances".

Another concern is that OBE is seen as a political rather than a pedagogical reform. In Jansen's (1998) view, it is aligned with the economy rather than pedagogy and is aimed at encouraging economic growth by producing economically productive and skilled citizens.

Crossley & Watson (2003) expressed concern about the context of South Africa's under-resourced schools and under-qualified teachers. Harley *et al* (2002: 284) also argue that the context of the teacher needs to also be taken into account because what *'should be'* (policy requirements) is obscured by what *'is'* (the reality of the classroom).

Teachers need to be able to demonstrate practical, foundational and reflexive competences; to work in integrated ways; to assess appropriately; to implement OBE effectively and to teach in a learner-centred manner. Critical to achieving this kind of capacity was an assumption that these criteria are *transparent* (Shalem & Slonimsky, 1999) to teachers and their understanding of the *criteria* requirements is in line with that intended by the DoE.

The change from the traditional role of the teacher as provider of knowledge to the learner and learning outcomes is also a central concern to Muller (1998) in a paper in which he questions the nature of the pedagogy in OBE. With reference to Bernstein (1996), Muller (1998:181) had argued that OBE represented a "*shift from a visible to an invisible pedagogy and entails a new though problematic invisibility of the pedagogue*". He identifies this as reflecting a shift in teacher education from a transmission-content model to a competence model where implications for curriculum design and teacher education have to be fully understood within institutions (see also Modiba, 1999). Muller maintains that the concept of competence is not new. In the 1960s it was generally agreed that competence referred to the possession of a capacity. However, the tightly-framed performance model [Collection Code] and loosely-framed competence model [Integrated Code] are in conflict with one another in curricular reform. The competence model requires teachers who are highly skilled and unobtrusive while in the performance model the teacher is visibly in control of the learning process.

The Norms and Standards policy document (2000) outlines the knowledge, skills and values required by the education department to demonstrate teacher competency. It also stipulates that theory and practice are to be integrated; and teachers are to demonstrate subject knowledge, practical competence and reflexive competence. The new norms and standards added pressure on teachers to improve their professional

skills (Cross et al., 2002), to be lifelong learners and to acquire new knowledge through experimentation, inquiry, discussion and reflection (Confrey, 1990).

Johnson, Monk & Hodges (2000) contend that The Norms and Standards presupposes that all teachers are capable of being curriculum developers and researchers but in practice this is not so. In response to these concerns about the taken-for-granted stance in relation to teacher capacity to implement policy Harley *et al*. (2000) see teaching and learning as socially negotiated and dynamic and argue that 'extended professionalism' is needed if the policy is to be successfully implemented. In their view the role of the teacher is socially defined and cannot be dictated by policy. What needs to be considered and what should define the role of the teacher is that teachers have different perspectives and are differently positioned socially and culturally. Teachers come from different ideological bases and cultures in which they are embedded and are differently positioned in relation to their economic, social, cultural and professional backgrounds. It is in this sense that the norms and standards for teachers have also been criticised as unrealistic by authors such as Modiba (1999), and Shalem & Slominsky (1999: 14).

Modiba (1999) is concerned about the capacity existing within the different sectors to interpret policy in an appropriate manner. She is worried about the unrealistic '*missionary*' ideals underpinning the norms and standards. Shalem & Slominsky (1999: 14) are concerned with how teachers are expected to make sense of the criteria. According to them the three kinds of competence expected from teachers can only make sense "from within the moral and political values and pedagogic preferences embedded in the educational perspective held by the competent educator". The concerns that Shalem & Slominsky (1999) are raising have been captured in the Adler & Reed (2002) study on teacher change through in-service education. They critique two key assumptions underlying the performance and assessment criteria in the Norms & Standards document. One is how the inside of a practice is revealed and the other is the transference of generic capacities. They are concerned about the transparency of the criteria and argue that as '*facts*' they do not necessarily lead to an understanding of the internal concepts involved in '*good teaching*'. The argument that they are making is that the 120 criteria of the Norms and Standards cannot, on their

own, be expected to immediately transform the inadequacies and inequalities of education in the present context.

According to the Norms and Standards (2000) the seven roles for educators [mediator of learning; interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials; leader, administrator and manager; scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; community, citizenship and pastoral role; assessor; learning area /subject/discipline/phase specialist] as stipulated in the Government Gazette (2000: 13) are to be combined with the associated practical, foundational and reflexive competences. The Government Gazette (2000: 15-16) defines practical competence as the ability to consider, choose and perform possible actions. Foundational competence is defined as demonstrating an understanding of the knowledge and thinking underpinning the action while reflexive competence is the ability to integrate performance, decision-making and understanding and also to be able to adapt to change.

However, as pointed out above, researchers in the country, included amongst them Robinson (2003: 31) is also concerned that this reconceptualisation of the curriculum will not be realised unless "… concerted attention [is] paid to the developmental task of changing practices in teacher education". She further argues that the competences and pedagogical practices expected of teachers have to be applied in a local context that too is changing and which is "characterised by sophisticated policy reform within a context of difficult educational and social circumstances" (Robinson, 2003: 22).

In short, these critiques show that norms and standards for teachers are unrealistic and teachers will find it difficult to translate concepts into learning programmes. A few selected studies drawn mainly from countries in Southern Africa provide useful examples of the challenges teachers face when trying to implement new policies.

**2.2 Studies: Challenges in New Policy Implementation**

Taylor & Vinjevold's (1999: 178, 179) study, which describes three instances of teachers being unable to develop their own learning materials as exemplars, illustrates the extent to which the norms and standards are unrealistic. The first example is of teachers on the FDE programme at the University of Witwatersrand who had attended courses, acknowledged the important role of materials in learning, and showed a

keenness to make their own materials but had no confidence to develop their own. They attributed their inability to their own lack of creativity and not having a safe place to store these materials.

Trying to establish how the FDE programme at WITS had influenced teachers who participated in it, Adler & Reed (2002) categorised the teachers in relation to their teaching practices, reflective practices and gaps or mismatches between what they said (theory) and what they did (practice) and concluded that teacher's reflective practices had a strong influence on their ability to take-up new teaching practices. The lesson for INSET providers here is to consider teacher's professional capacities and context since they are integral to the reform process. In this particular study, what became clear was that even though training was introduced the reality of the contexts in which teachers worked and their capability to be effective in these contexts was not fully considered. The implications are that INSET providers need to take into account teacher's professional capabilities and their contextual reality in the selection of approaches so that they are responsive or engage with the capabilities of the teachers and the resources that are available in their contexts. It cannot be assumed that all teachers have the necessary skills upon which a reflective approach can be built.

Another study that is demonstrating the same problem that Adler & Reed (2002) are writing about is O'Sullivan's (2001) study of a three-year (1995-1997) In-Service Education & Training (INSET) programme to implement reflective approaches in the training of qualified and underqualified primary school teachers in Namibia. The project aimed to aid the implementation of reflective approaches through an action research approach, where the trainer in a collaborative role supported teachers in conducting research into their own practice and in this way support implementation of ELT reforms. According to O'Sullivan (2001: 537) the necessary reflective skills can only be developed "if reflection is reconceptualised to include another beginning level of reflection to replace the initial level, the technical - rational level". She raises the transfer of reflectivity as a problem and questions the 'transfer' and appropriateness of a westernised concept of the reflective approach. She provides the following solutions to support teachers in the implementation of reforms related to the teaching of English language (ELT – English Language Teaching) as part of the English Language Teaching Project. The first was to use an action research method to develop a

'*structured reflection*' approach that was within the teacher's professional capability and was more suitable to the context within which these particular teachers were situated. The second was to use Practice-Based Inquiry (PBI) to develop the skills of teachers and enable them to translate the educational goals into practice since the Ministry of Education expected teachers to critically examine aspects of their teaching, develop problem-solving strategies, monitor the strategies and reflect upon their effectiveness.

The assumption that teachers were uncomfortable with a training approach which focused on their own experiences and ideas is supported by Shaeffer, (1994) who notes that "many are uncomfortable with group dynamics, self-analysis and consciousness raising" and Pryor (1998) who describe teachers as seeing themselves as 'operatives' rather than 'agents'. Teachers had not been trained to use reflection to improve their teaching practices and did not know the methods and approaches for higher-order reflective skills such as comparing, analysing, synthesising and brainstorming. In their research in Malawi, Stuart & Kunje (1998: 391) also found that:

> One of the limitations of reflection was precisely that few participants had a wide enough store of educational knowledge – either of the subject or professional issues – to bring to bear on the problems encountered, so links to meaningful theory were hard to make.

A structured reflection approach, about which these authors are writing, is based on a social constructivist view of adult learning (Vygotsky, 1978) and scaffolded learning (Bruner, 1983) where the idea is that learning is more likely to take place where teachers have subject and pedagogical knowledge to draw on in their efforts to understand and structure curricula. As a result, learning and cognition are integrally linked. This is in line with Miller & Gildea (1987), who through their work on vocabulary teaching, warn against using an approach that is based on an assumption that knowing and doing take place separately and which ignores situated learning practices which structure cognition. Boxtel, van der Linden & Kanselaar (2000) see such situated learning as involving the transformation of theoretical concepts into practice, and therefore believe that the way in which the concept is used reveals how it is understood.

The third example is that of a study undertaken by the School of Education, Training and Development at the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) that showed that although teachers had a good understanding and awareness of the role of learning materials, their motivation for not wanting to design their own materials was due to feeling that they did not have the skills required, that it wasn't their responsibility, that it wasn't part of the syllabus and this was drawing them away from their main responsibility which was to ensure that the learners passed their exams.

The conclusion of the report is that teachers are least competent in the role of 'designer of learning programmes'. Taylor & Vinjevold (1999) view this in a serious light and question the assumption that policy mediators base their interventions on. In the case of this study they are concerned that it was assumed that teachers would develop their own learning materials purely without being encouraged to do so.

A study by Nsibande & Modiba (2005) supports the claim. It was conducted to capture teacher's understanding of their assessment strategies in the Continuous Assessment (CA) programme, which they had to implement in primary schools in Swaziland. The critical questions were what do teachers understand to be the crucial principles and concepts associated with the objective and how do they translate these principles and concepts into practice in the classroom? The assumptions underpinning the CA policy were that teachers had gained adequate experience through their participation in INSET programmes on CA, and through implementing it from 1993. They had also been provided with support materials, and had attended workshops to learn how to use the materials. Another assumption was that teachers were able to reflect upon and show critical understanding of the CA objective, the context of implementation, and what knowledge was needed to fulfil the objective requirements. It was further assumed that the reflection of teaching practices would assist in the professional development of teachers.

The sample was selected from teachers who participated in all CA workshops in the Manzini region in Swaziland over a seven-year period. Two teachers were interviewed and their classroom discourses were analysed to see how they translated the principles and objectives (theory) of CA into effective teaching and assessment

exercises (practice). Ten rural schools were selected and a multi-instrument approach was followed. The research tools used were observations and interviews. Four lessons were observed and videotaped to provide detailed descriptions and to facilitate follow-up discussions, which were tape-recorded. Teachers then explained their methods to the researchers while watching the lesson together in an interview/process conversation. What the researchers found was that there is a need to rethink the ways in which teachers are informed about the principles and objectives of new methods or innovations. The accounts given by the teachers did not reflect an understanding of the underlying concepts and principles, which were supposed to inform their teaching practices.

Drawing on mainly Habermas' (1984) thoughts on communicative rationality, the authors argue that teachers needed to firstly understand what they were doing and why they are doing it, and through a common understanding they would then have been able to achieve the required objectives. This is important because if collaboration and collegiality among teachers, specialists, writers and publishers is to be promoted, it is incumbent upon the policy mediators to ensure that teachers are fully informed and can value and share in the goals of the innovation. The study found that there is a need to rethink the ways in which teachers are informed and educated about the principles and objectives of a new methodology or innovation. These teachers' accounts did not reflect an understanding of the underlying concepts and principles, which were supposed to inform their practices.

It could be argued, drawing on the studies referred to earlier that teachers in South Africa still appear to be functioning as in previous years, and not appreciating the paradigm shift that has occurred in curriculum policy. Their efforts to implement new policy reflect a lack of understanding of its essence.

Reed [still to be published] too, in her later study on English language textbooks, claims that designers as mediators of this new policy have themselves not made the shift:

> Some designers still imagine teachers, learners and the English curriculum in ways that do not sufficiently recognise social, cultural, economic and linguistic diversity within and beyond South Africa.

She argues that textbook designers in South Africa have to visualise three readerships: learners, teachers and education department officials when they prepare their texts. She is worried that although their work is informed by C 2005 and explicit reference is made to it in the introductions to the texts, these designers have not made the shift to the new teaching methodologies linked to multiliteracies. She claims that this message, which is in the introduction to one of the five textbooks in her study, is meant to reassure teachers that they will find a lot that is familiar in the new textbooks. The message is that:

> This revised edition of *Advance with English Grade 9* has been rewritten to meet the requirements of outcomes-based education. It contains all those original tried and tested features of the course that teachers have appreciated over the years, together with a number of brand new features …

Reed claims that although this outcomes-based version of a textbook is purported to be in line with the latest teaching practices, it appears more to be based on earlier pedagogies than to current ones. The designers are not placing sufficient emphasis on raising the teacher's consciousness particularly with regard to multiliteracies. This is what Reed finds worrying:

> In my view, two sentences from the opening paragraph of the introduction addressed to teachers in Textbook D help to explain the orientation of this book to older pedagogies rather than to a twenty-first century pedagogy of multiliteracies. The reassurance offered to teachers is that they will find much that is familiar in the new outcomes-based version of this textbook in which the list of 'brand new features' starts with 'many new exercises and reading texts'.

A study which highlights the challenges faced when you have to cater for students/teachers from diverse backgrounds and qualifications and how important it is to scaffold new concepts and knowledge for learning to be sustainable is one on the take-up of learner-centred teaching by teachers in an in-service FDE programme (Brodie, Lelliott & Davis, 2001). The purpose was for teachers to experience learner-centred teaching practices first-hand and in this way develop their own models to enable them to put the policy into practice. Teachers were exposed to the theory on

learner-centred teaching and expected to practice it in the classroom. The researchers hoped to gain a better understanding of the difficulties encountered by teachers in their take-up of new ideas and to understand the effectiveness of teacher change within the context of an in-service programme. What they found was that the constraints related to the contexts and positioning within which teachers work; and teacher knowledge, affect take-up (Brodie et al, 2001). Another finding was that teacher characteristics [*prior qualifications, reflective competence, grade level, subject knowledge and confidence*] and access to support structures and resources affect teacher take-up. A third finding was that support within schools and from principals, play an important role in teacher take-up. Fourthly, although teachers made structural changes regarding group-work and learner-centred activities, their conceptual changes were procedural rather than related to the actual promotion of learning.

Brodie et al. (2001) refer to this as "*taking up the forms rather than the substance*" of learner-centred teaching practices. The forms that they refer to are the strategies of learner-centred teaching and the substance is the learning theory upon which this approach is based. What this research found is that teachers tend to develop a hybrid teaching style as they adjust from an old practice to a new one; that the context of the under-resourced teaching environment has a constraining effect on the ability of teachers to implement changes; and that the pace of change has been too fast and teachers need more support and time to help them through the transitional stages of adapting to reforms.

Their research findings support Jansen (1999) who argues that context, positioning and knowledge influence and result in teacher's taking-up new innovations *differently*. They believe that this research has implications for in-service teacher education. Firstly, the teachers who found this approach problematic were themselves struggling to cope with other aspects of their teaching. This would seem to indicate a need for a better integration of pre-service and in-service programmes. Secondly curriculum packages of materials need to provide sustained support and guidance. Thirdly, more research is needed on how teachers understand pupils' learning and fourthly more research is needed on learning in South Africa for purposes of scaffolding and mediating new knowledge.

It is however interesting that these authors seem not to be aware of the importance of mediating concepts or theory in a manner that is sensitive to the circumstances within which teachers work for its implications to be grasped and subsequently translated into effective practice (Stenhouse, 1975).

This is only possible if inset or preset providers could implement Giroux's (1992) notion of border pedagogy. He uses border pedagogy to illustrate the interconnectedness of knowledge and the metaphor of '*border crossings'* to describe a meeting place for the voices of differing perspectives. This allows the crossing *"over into borders of meaning, maps of knowledge, social relations and values that are increasingly being negotiated and rewritten as the codes and regulations which organize them become destabilized and reshaped*" (Giroux, 1992: 147). The message here is that both teachers and teacher-educators need to transcend barriers and find a meeting place that Nsibande & Modiba (2005) write about, where old perspectives of knowledge can be re-evaluated and new values and perspectives can be reconceptualised and accepted. To gain access to this knowledge, educators need to meet mediators of the curriculum in the middle ground (between the borders). Here, in this meeting place, educators will have access and can create a new product out of their existing practices and the new practices required of them. What this is reflecting is what Bernstein (1996) and Gough (1999) emphasise, namely that what is being taught needs to be opened up. We need a kind of intervention that is sensitive to the positioning of teachers. This is what Jansen is appealing for specifically in the context of South Africa.

Due to the concerns raised with regard to South African teacher's ability to implement C2005 as the new curriculum for schools post 1994, a committee was appointed by the Minister of Education in 2000 to review its structure and design. This was agreed to by Cabinet who stated in July 2000 that:

> The development of a National Curriculum Statement, which must deal in clear and simple language with what the curriculum requirements are at various levels and phases, must begin immediately.

**The Ministerial Review Committee (31 May 2000)**

Kadar Asmal called for the C 2005 review and he and the DoE selected members from the educational community who were intended to be a combination of "prominent South African educationists, school-based curriculum practioners and department-based curriculum policy advisors" (DoE, 2000a: 3). Linda Chisholm (HSRC) chaired the review committee. The African National Congress, Teachers' unions and academics were the three major role players in the construction of C2005. Their voice, positioning and power bases were to lead to the development of a curriculum, which was based on human rights and outcomes (Chisholm, 2005).

Dominant stakeholders were the African National Congress representatives who included the Minister of Education (Kadar Asmal), the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), the Departments of Education (DoE) and Cabinet. Other teacher's unions were also part of the revision process. These were The National Association of Professional Teachers Assocation [NAPTOSA], and the Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie [SAOU]. Although all three unions were involved in C 2005 from 1997, they were initially excluded from the Review Committee and then after protesting, were later included. Academic representation was by university-based intellectuals who participated as critics of C2005 before it was reviewed.

There were 150 members altogether based on race, region, gender, subject specialisation and curriculum development experience. The working groups represented learning areas, human rights, inclusivity, qualifications and implementation. All had a role to play in contextualising and adapting the C 2005 so that the new curriculum would be both idiosyncratic to South Africa and correlate with international standards (Chisholm, 2005).

The Review Committee blamed the design and implementation process of C 2005 for its failure. It concluded that it had an unclear structure and design - insufficient attention being given to the structures and functions of the curriculum at national and provincial level and the core role of curriculum in education; lacked conceptual clarity; used obscure language and terminology. C2005 did not provide enough structure and guidance to teachers. Requirements at each level and phase needed to be more clearly specified and the outcomes expected of learners to be more clearly

described. With regard to teacher capacity, it felt that there was inadequate support, orientation, training and development for them; learning support materials were of variable consistency and quality – there was a shortage of staff and resources dedicated to teacher development; (Chisholm, 2005; Cross et al., 2002). The curriculum was considered suitable only for well-resourced contexts and too sophisticated for under-resourced contexts. This confirmed Jansen's (1997, 1999a) argument that OBE is more compatible with well-resourced schools and highly-qualified teachers and his concern that the present state of education in South Africa would negatively affect the implementation of such a sophisticated curriculum reform.

The Review Committee recommended that attention be given to: a national teacher education strategy which would include teacher preparation, training and development of curriculum trainers at regional and district levels as it was evident that well-resourced schools and well-trained teachers were required. The production of relevant learner support materials (LSM) particularly textbooks; budgeting for the curriculum, methods of reinforcement and time frames needed to be better organised as the pace at which reform was being implemented was being rushed. There was also the need for regular monitoring and management of the reform process at classroom level (Cross et al., 2002; Chisholm 2005).

C2005 was to be made more understandable in the following manner: the language needed to be simplified; the design framework be streamlined and the design features reduced from eight to three: critical and developmental outcomes, learning outcomes and assessment standards; curriculum and assessment should be aligned; and that teacher orientation and training, learning support materials and provincial support be improved. It was also recommended that curriculum requirements at each level and phase be more clearly specified; the outcomes expected of learners be more clearly described; and the number of learning areas be reduced to promote conceptual coherence. It was also recommended that weaknesses related to implementation such as resources, time frames, monitoring and review be given attention.

The revised version of C2005, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) provided more specific examples of texts to be used, teaching methods, knowledge skills and integration of outcomes. In each phase (Foundation, Intermediate and Senior) an explanation is given as to what learners should be doing at each level and what the focus should be. For example in the Senior Phase (Gr7-9) for the English language the focus is on consolidation and extension of language and literacy. It is stated that by the end of this phase learners should: be able to read and write for a range of purposes at a formal/informal, public and personal level; be keen and flexible readers who can source and evaluate information on their own; listen actively and critically and speak with confidence and with sensitivity to their audiences; be able to analyse, understand and use the language effectively. More guidance is given with regard to the texts to be used. In Grade 7 learners should read and evaluate local and international texts such as short stories; autobiographies and biographies; short novels; poetry; one and two-act plays; folklore, myths and legends; shorter texts from magazines, newspapers, advertisements and posters (visual literacy); and radio talks.

The assessment framework is designed around the principles of OBE. To assist teachers in the assessment of learners the RNCS provides a framework which includes the Learning Outcomes with their accompanying Assessment Standards for each grade within the General Education and Training Band (Grades R-9). The Assessment Standards are central to the assessment process and in line with OBE learners are expected to demonstrate their competence of the prescribed outcomes in each grade. Although this framework is an improvement, the practical pedagogic skills required for an OBE approach cannot be assumed and it is a concern that the RNCS does not address this shortcoming in enough detail. The key elements of OBE are outlined in two paragraphs on page 126 of the policy document. If we consider the paradigm shift required by teachers to implement these new teaching strategies, the explanation provided is clearly insufficient.

In short, the RNCS highlights the role of education in developing critical thinking and democratic values in all citizens and claims to be rooted in social reconstruction and upliftment. It claims to promote the principles and values set out in the Constitution of South Africa 1996 (Act No 108) and in the Manifesto of Values (DoE, 2001), which promote social justice, and human rights. It advocates social justice as the main

principle that should underpin teaching and learning. A healthy environment, human rights, inclusivity and the development of a high level of skills and knowledge, clarity and accessibility, progression and integration are also considered as crucial for teaching and learning. It re-emphasizes an outcomes-based and a learner-centred teaching approach and envisages educators as playing a crucial role in implementing reform; 'all teachers and other educators are key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa'. (RNCS, 2002:3). This has implications for the role of teachers. They are now seen as important agents of change in the education system. Before 1994 they played mainly a technicist role as practitioners.

Criticism of the RNCS draft statements by SADTU (12 October, 2001) was that it was not aligned with the NQF, there was a lack of representation by teachers and learners and it was still reminiscent of the previous style syllabus. Criticism of the RNCS draft statements by NAPTOSA focused on the lack of alignment between the intentions of the RNCS and learning area statements. These criticisms underscore the argument that curriculum reform is highly complex. Issues related to professional knowledge and skills and support structures at school, department, provincial and national levels and educational research studies are crucial to it. For example, in the view of Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995), professional development strategies that take these into account would serve to provide teachers with the support that they so desperately need during the uncertainty of curriculum change by making them fully aware of what they need to know and do to implement the reform requirements (see also Darling-Hammond, 1997; Zemelman et al.1998).

In the case of this study and drawing on these authors, support materials are examined to find out whether or not they make teachers fully aware of what they need to know and do to teach in a manner that fulfils the requirements of the RNCS. Gough (1999: 48) argues that understanding comes through deconstructing the text by opening up the layers to expose what he refers to as Doll's (1993) four Rs; namely, the richness, recursion, relations and rigor that has gone into the generation of the content/knowledge. Doing this makes the invisible internal language of the content visible for teachers through translation, reflecting, analysing and synthesising what is essential to it. By opening up the layer of richness this would expose the depth and layers of meaning within a text. The layer of recursion would expose what scaffolding

and reflecting is necessary to clarify content. By opening up the layer of relations which Doll (1993: 170) says are "*always changing*" it would reveal the connections within teaching and cultural practices. This will underline Doll's (1993: 180) argument that "*the textbook is seen as something to revise and not as something to follow*". The layer of rigor entails interpretation and a determination to look for "*hidden assumptions, different alternatives, relations and connections*" (Doll, 1993: 180). Gough makes the point that these four criteria are useful in guiding the development of a transformative curriculum and how knowledge should first be broken down before it can be rebuilt.

The model that is alluded to in this literature underscores that collaborative participative partnerships involve collective reflection and closer attention to teacher's understanding of what they need to know and do to implement the reform requirements rather than exposure to a de-contextualised rehearsal of procedures advocated by the RNCS as a policy document. Key here is collaboration between educators and researchers/specialists working closely together to develop competences, implement, grow and sustain an innovation. On the basis of this, teacher support should allow teachers to feel that they are driving the process and equipped to continue with the innovation when outside support has been withdrawn.

The model described by Lave & Wenger (1991, 1999) is an example of a successful collaborative, participative partnership alluded to here. Lave & Wenger (1991) argue that social interaction is a vital component of situated learning. This theory of how knowledge is acquired has its roots in the work of Vygotsky (1978) on social learning. The basic principles of situated learning are that knowledge should be presented in an authentic context, and that social interaction and collaboration are necessary for learning to take place. Integral to this approach is the concept of a 'community of practice' whereby certain beliefs, skills and behaviours are to be acquired as newcomers [apprentices], on the periphery, progress to becoming old-timers [experts] in the centre. Lave & Wenger (1991) call this process of masters and novices working together "legitimate peripheral participation".

This model of building a 'community of practice' can be associated with the collaborative model referred to earlier by Darling-Hammond & MacLaughlin (1995).

Firstly, both emphasise direct participation and involvement in activities to bring about a change in the social relationships within the community. Understanding and knowledge skills are developed in the process and through informal learning such as observation and imitation, specific expertise in practices is acquired. Secondly, the theorists acknowledge that participation is a way of learning that goes beyond just observation. Through a broad, peripheral participation novices gain an understanding of the practices of a community and also learn from the collaboration of old-timers (masters). Thirdly, increased understanding comes from novices socializing and working with experienced members, sharing in the division of labour, and making changes to adapt to ongoing community practices, and changes in the community. The notion of curriculum development, as implied in Lave and Wenger's notion of community of practice shows us how the process is dependent upon context.

Key here is collaboration between educators and researchers/specialists/authors in bringing about change in teacher's mindsets so that they become more receptive to altering existing practices and more accepting of an innovation. Therefore, a model, which will support ongoing and sustained teacher development reform, is one which includes training through collaboration and participation and which is informed by principles implicit in the notion of learning communities.

Such a model is that of empowerment. Here stakeholders in a community work together to draw up a mission statement, take stock of what needs to be done for improvement and set goals for the future to foster sustainability and growth. Significant to the collaboration is the notion of a community working together and participating in a project/process/programme that they are driving themselves, have set their own criteria and have collaborated on achieving the goals that they have set.

In the context of the study conducted here it will thus be useful to consider whether documents provided to teachers promote such collaboration by including teachers through providing them with what Bernstein (1996) calls using L2 as access and to clarify L1. It is important to establish the extent to which curriculum support materials provided to teachers are using L2 to help them in policy interpretation and understanding the L1 associated with concepts and principles of the content to be

taught. The next chapter provides a detailed account and value of the theory of L1 and L2 provided by Bernstein (1996) as basis for research into knowledge organisation.

# Chapter Three

## 3.1 Bernstein on L1 and L2 as Languages of Description

> A language of description constructs what is to count as an empirical referent, how such referents relate to each other to produce a specific text and translate these referential relations into theoretical objects or potential theoretical objects. In other words, the external language of description (L2) is the means by which the internal language (L1) is activated as a reading device and vice versa … [and] consists of rules from the unambiguous recognition of what is to count as relevant empirical relation, and rules … for reading the manifest contingent enactments of these empirical relations (Bernstein, 1996: 133).

Bernstein's view is that the external language of description (L2) as device should open up the internal language (L1) to reveal its essence. The *language device* is a system of formal rules that govern speaking and writing. It is said (Chomsky, cited in Bernstein, 1996) to be based on two facilities: acquisitional and interactional (communicative) which need to work together. Although the acquisition of the language device may be ideologically free, Bernstein agrees with Halliday (1978, 1993) that the rules are not. The language device although not neutral has an inherent regulatory function through its rules particularly the contextual rules, which provide a *register* to understand communication (curriculum) in its context (Bernstein, 1996:41). This means that although the rules of the device themselves might be relatively stable; those that govern the communication are contextually based. Neither the *carrier* (the relay), *which contains the stable rules*, nor the *carried* (what is relayed), which contains the contextual rules, is neutral nor ideologically free. Pedagogic communication is viewed as a carrier.

Bernstein's work is thus invaluable in clarifying principles that underpin the transformation of different types of knowledge (intellectual, practical, official, expressive, local) into pedagogic communication. He speaks of the process in terms of the ability to create the pedagogic code that is crucial to knowledge and the *social grammar* to communicate it. His focus is the pedagogic device and the *meaning potential* that it activates in order to facilitate communication. He distinguishes between an internal language of description [L1], which is conceptual, and an external language of description, which is able to describe 'something other than itself' [L2]. What this means is that one language [L2] is being used to access another [L1]. Bernstein's L1 and L2 emphasise the following aspects.

Capacity-building. Through the translating device (L2) Bernstein says the reader is able to acquire conceptual clarity, which is capacity building.

Transparency. Bernstein uses the translating device (L2) to make theories and concepts transparent and accessible to the reader. Bernstein (2000: 3, 7, 12) maintains that models of description are needed to understand how knowledge systems become part of consciousness and uses the terms of classification (*what)*, which is used to preserve power and framing (*how*) which plays a regulatory role within a particular context and is therefore to do with "*who* controls *what*". In his languages of description, Bernstein (2000: 132) differentiates between internal language (conceptual syntax or L1) and external language (descriptive syntax or L2) of description. He defines a language of description as "a translation device whereby one language is transformed into another". He maintains that an internal language constructs *invisibles* while an external language makes the invisible *visible* (Bernstein 2000: 133). Key here is firstly the creation of a context, which will produce an unambiguous response, and secondly that the reader is able to recognize what the required response should be (Bernstein 2000: 134).

Understanding. With regards to ethnography, Bernstein (2000: 135) states that understanding a culture and making its inner workings transparent is through the model of the internal language of description (L1). He maintains that this requires two conditions to be met. In order for the internal language of description (L1) to become *visible* and describe more than itself, it must be *translated* through the external language of description (L2). The second condition is that L2 should include more than only the descriptions provided by members and in this way perform an interpretative function between the theory (internal language) and the practice (enactments) within the model.

Bernstein (2000: 139) acknowledges that because reliability is questioned regarding L2 as a translation/transformation process it is important that the language of L2 be as clear and unambiguous as possible so that the reader can acquire the information. Also the competence of the translator may need to be checked to see that decoding has been accurately done. Bernstein's L2 as a translating, interpreting and mediating

device makes L1 accessible and open to scrutiny or evaluation. It specifies information, allows access to information and permits interaction with the information. The role of description in research is that the language of description (L2) is not only used to translate a theory and its derived model (L1) to make the theory accessible and understood but also to reveal its strengths and limits. What Bernstein (2000: 150, 152) argues is that language as a social construct needs translating devices so that it is accessible to all parties.

According to Bernstein, the pedagogic communication or discourse that is made possible by the pedagogic device is regulated by three internal rules that are hierarchically structured. These are the *distributive rules* (what, who), the *recontextualizing rules* (how, where and when) that are derived from the distributive rule and the *evaluative rules* (criteria), which are derived from the reconceptualising rule. It is important to understand the role of the pedagogic device in making pedagogic communication possible and in this case how it influences curriculum literacy and understanding. To clarify this role he concentrates on the *carried* or *relayed* rather than on what constitutes the *relay or carrier*.

Bernstein (1996: 42) describes the function of *distributive rules* as "distribut[ing] forms of consciousness through distributing forms of knowledge". The distributive rules (what, who) identify and control *who* may transmit *what* knowledge to *whom* and under *what* conditions and in this way are to do with power and control. According to Bernstein (1996, 2000: 28, 29) the distributive rules distinguish between two classes of knowledge, the *thinkable* (mundane) and the *unthinkable* (esoteric), which are available in all societies. But he argues that because knowledge is socially constructed and contextually based, what is thinkable/possible or unthinkable/impossible will vary historically and culturally. He therefore suggests that different societies control and manage knowledge differently. He gives as an example non-literate, small-scale societies where the unthinkable would be controlled and managed by religious systems while in a modern, literate society higher educational institutions tend to manage and control the unthinkable. Bernstein (1996: 44) also draws attention to the role of context in meaning making. It may happen that meaning becomes so embedded in its context that it cannot relate to anything outside of that context. This would lead to a lack of *space* that would prevent a gap between

the thinkable and unthinkable knowledge. Bernstein (1996: 45) refers to this as the *potential discursive gap* and this is where the distributive rule plays an important role since whoever controls this gap, or site of possibilities, will have the power to control this space for their own interests and purposes. The distributive rules are the *relay* for these changeable power relations who distribute the thinkable and unthinkable and says they become "*the field of the production of discourse*". In other words, they become fields where knowledge is produced and access is restricted Bernstein (1996: 31).

Bernstein (1996: 42) describes the function of the *recontextualizing rules* as regulating "the formation of specific pedagogic discourse". The recontextualizing rules (how, where and when) regulate the selection, sequencing and pacing of the theory of instruction and field of knowledge. They create recontextualised fields, functions and agents. The fields play a vital role in the creation of educational autonomy. He (1996, 2000: 33) further distinguishes between the Official Recontextualizing Field (ORF) created by the state, its agents and ministries and the Pedagogic Reconceptualising Field (PRF) which consists of specialists in the pedagogical field in educational bodies (Department of Education), professional bodies, research foundations, schools and colleges and asserts that there cannot be autonomy within the pedagogic discourse process if the ORF is dominant. He warns against state interference, which tries to weaken the influence of the PRF.

The *evaluative rules* constitute any pedagogic practice whose main purpose is to transmit criteria. These rules state and govern the setting of the criteria that will be used in the pedagogic device to regulate time, text and space and have a cognitive, social and cultural impact. The evaluative rules regulate the criteria for the division of time, grades and age. The evaluation rules for text regulate the specific content: what knowledge is to be taught, how it is to be acquired and how knowledge acquisition will be evaluated. The evaluation rules that regulate space transform it into a specific context such as classroom or home schooling where the content is to be transmitted. This is seen as a continuous process and is regulated by the pedagogic code (ideology) that underpins the pedagogic communication.

Through these rules, Bernstein provides us with a theoretical framework that shows that a curriculum is never static, never ideologically free, nor neutral, nor without controversy, nor without opposition. Rather it is a socially dynamic construction that is ongoing and responsive to economic, societal, educational, pedagogical and political forces. In his *web of relationships* he identifies the role of players as the Official Recontextualizing Field (ORF), the Pedagogic Reconceptualising Field (PRF), the economy and society. These two fields, representing the interest of the state (ORF) and pedagogy (PRF), together with market and societal forces vie for representation and power in a negotiation process.

Bernstein maintains that strong framing and classification reveals a hierarchical and ritualised educational relationship where the writers consider their readers as having "*little status and few rights*" and will also imply a more conservative, traditional, disciplined, and inflexible approach with regard to materials design. An integrated code framing will be based on the ways that people learn and will allow for scaffolded learning, more openness, creativity and flexibility in terms of design.

Collection Code subjects have strong classification and framing. The organization of knowledge tends to be more hierarchical and traditional and there is less control over the selection, organization, pacing and timing of lessons where sequencing, streaming and tight framing creates continuity and discipline in the subject. Strong framing gives the teacher more power in the pedagogical relationship but less control over the pedagogical content.

Bernstein's recognition and realisation rules show the relationship between transmission and acquisition. The recognition rule operates at the level of the acquirer and is influenced by strong or weak classification. The principle of classification affects context and power relations and in this way influences meaning making. The realisation rule is the way these meanings are put into practice in the construction of legitimate text. In this way, Bernstein (1996, 2000: 17, 18) says, the recognition rule decides what knowledge (theory) is important while the realisation rule governs the way in which this knowledge is acted upon or put into practice. He believes these principles and rules are vital to facilitate an '*unambiguous*' response. As Bernstein (1996, 2000: 30) explains, *modelling* is crucial to the process of realisation and

therefore it is important to "design a context which creates an unambiguous recognition of the response to it".

Ensor (2000) draws on Bernstein's recognition and realisation rules to explain why the apprenticeship model is better suited to teacher education. The model is an example of both recognition and realisation rules interacting. Although access to the recognition rules may provide what Ensor (2000: 178, 182) calls a "professional *argot* (register/glossary), and recognition rules of *best practice*", this does not necessarily translate into providing the capacity to *realise* or put these into practice in the actual classroom. Ensor (2001: 318) agrees, and suggests that best practice needs to be *modelled* by teacher educators and *practised* by student teachers. This is where teacher education as an *apprenticeship* rather than teacher education as a *relay* can play an important role. The model of an apprenticeship allows for both theory and practice, which Ensor (2000: 180) describes as "the rules to be spoken and shown". In other words in the apprenticeship model, the novice is exposed to both the invisible pedagogy and best practice which provides for both recognition and realisation to take place. If we use Bernstein's classification and framing models we would say that in an apprenticeship the framing is weaker and there are fewer boundaries between the workplace and the place of learning. In contrast to this model, in the relay model the pedagogy is transmitted or relayed. Practice becomes separated from content, which Ensor maintains results in recognition but not realisation. This model tends towards tighter framing with strong boundaries between learning and working sites and practice is represented by examples instead of actual experience in the classroom. Ensor sees this as reproduction by example and thus an impediment to change. It is thus not sufficient to provide in-service and pre-service teachers with the *recognition rules* alone. If these teachers are not also provided with the opportunities to put new methodologies such as learner-centred or reflective teaching into practice then their ability to understand and grasp the *realisation rules* will be undermined (Ensor, 2000: 175-176).

This then leads us on to the significance of the theory to how support material designers design texts. Examining this aspect is likely to indicate the extent to which they are working with the collection or integrated code (Bernstein, 1996: 166). Goodson and Marsh (1996) argue that strong framing encourages conservation and

stability and that resistance to fundamental changes in the classification and framing of a subject may be due to a perceived threat to its structure and the distribution of power of those in control. The implication of this type of framing is that stability and conservation are a priority, which militates against reform practices and "*fundamental change is essentially unattainable within such a structured frame*" (Nisbet, cited in Goodson & Marsh, 1996: 152). The Integrated Code subjects are less tightly framed and have a more open relationship with one another, which allows for more innovation and creativity in teaching practices. McCormick & Paechter (1999) argue that integrated code subjects such as English and social studies have a greater sense of autonomy and are therefore more open to reforms. The pedagogy in the integrated code emphasises the different ways of knowing, the underlying theories of learning, and the scaffolding of knowledge from the bottom up (Bernstein, 1996: 168).

The type of framing used by the designers will reveal their attitude towards the content with which they are working and the professional authority they think teachers possess as promoters of learning. I would like to see if the designers have applied the principles and rules of Bernstein's pedagogic code in their design to unravel the text for teachers, evoke an unambiguous response (recognition) to curriculum requirements and in this way avoid confusion and facilitate the realisation of best practice.

If we look at the changes in classification and framing which took place in the recontextualisation of the RNCS we will see that changes in social and political context have an effect on the language of discourse and pedagogy. Pre-1994, there was a strong framing and classification of knowledge while in the context of a democracy the knowledge is weakly framed and classified. While this allows for greater autonomy, if the principles and concepts (L1) underpinning what is to be taught are not made explicit (L2) and practised/modelled, it is doubtful that they will be realised in the classroom through teaching and learning. Ensor (forthcoming: 8) argues that social transformation on its own cannot bring about the required changes in teaching practices but needs to be accompanied by changes in teacher education that will "*enable student teachers to both recognise and realise the generative principles that underpin best practice*".

Fetterman (2001: 3) defines such interactions as empowering. He sees it as '*the use of evaluation concepts, techniques and findings to foster improvement and self-determination*". When introduced it was considered to be an idea '*whose time had come*' (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005: 5) because it addressed critical issues in the evaluation field regarding control, purposes and the role of the evaluator. Empowerment grows the field by building on what was in it, namely collaborative, participatory, utilization-focused, ethnographic, illuminative and democratic evaluations and what Fetterman & Wandersman (2005: 16) refers to as '*the past informing the present'*. Principles inherent in empowerment such as participation, engagement, local control and *capacity building* (participatory); the interactive relationship between the evaluator and the participants (collaborative); the respect for participants' perspectives, community knowledge and insiders' perspectives (ethnographic); the focus on use; and involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation process (democratic), reflect the various evaluation traditions which were influential in its developmental stages (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005: 6).

The empowerment process is guided and shaped by the following ten principles: improvement, community ownership, inclusion, democratic participation, social justice, community knowledge, evidence-based strategies, capacity building, organizational learning and accountability. Fetterman (2001: 34) contends that this approach focuses on the development, improvement and knowledge acquisition by using three steps *developing a mission statement; taking stock; and planning for the future* to help them to learn how to evaluate their own programmes and in this way empowering themselves in the process. The role of the evaluator is that of a 'critical friend' who facilitates and participates in the process but ensures that the evaluation remains in the hands of the stakeholders. Empowerment uses the ten principles and a three-step strategy devised by Fetterman to inform the process. Vanderplaat (1997:147) describes the contribution of empowerment as "*its acknowledgement and deep respect for people's capacity to create knowledge about, and solutions to, their own experiences"* (cited in Fetterman, 2001: 6).

The process of empowerment is a collective endeavour and Fetterman wants to hear the insiders' voices. He argues that it is important to feed this into the process to give

an indication of how to improve the course or programme. Observations and interviews are used to gather data and instruments such as brainstorming, prioritizing and rating are used as people conduct their own evaluations. In this way evaluees are drawn into the process. There is a collective wisdom that informs the process and most important is whether or not it does what is intended - that is to improve the programme. Two other important concepts inherent in this approach are advocacy – advocating on behalf of that particular programme and the liberating effect of being empowered. Participants sense that they are driving the process and are drawn into process from the beginning through completing the steps used in the evaluation process: *taking stock, setting goals, developing strategies and documenting and negotiating progress* (Fetterman, 1998, 2001). They are able to rate the progress made in the successively achieved goals. The logic is quite compelling that those goals should be achieved because members are driving the process to improve the programme. The strength of it lies in the criteria used in the programme rating, which have been drawn up by the members and show that their views have been brought into the process.

The model has implications for what, amongst others theorists referred to in this chapter, Bernstein and Ensor are emphasising. What it implies is that it is difficult to empower without understanding how participants in the development project are positioned. In summary the model requires support material designers to get involved in a participative process in which they learn from the teachers and the teachers learn from them so that they can reflect on the process and identify what is missing or where there are shortcomings. By working in collaboration with teachers, designers will gain an awareness of what they need to know, the skills and knowledge which they have or don't have, so that their knowledge and skills gap can be addressed in writing support materials. The skills and knowledge teachers have and can then be used as attributes and scaffolding to new knowledge and skills. Conceptually this implies a particular way of working that Fetterman (1998) would call an empowerment evaluation - that in the process would give teachers the authority to function effectively on their own. Can we regard the transformation of the old national educational policy into the RNCS and the NCS to be considered as an example of the bargaining, negotiation and consultation process? Did it involve the many stakeholders in South Africa's educational web of relationships?

How the designers respond to these questions will influence how support materials mediate or not the concepts and content taught in such a way that the curriculum policy requirements are clearly understood by teachers. It is therefore incumbent upon the designers to take into consideration the language of the performer and use it as scaffolding to access L1 to avoid confusion between everyday concepts and subject specific ones. Bernstein emphasises that L2 must be derived from L1. In this way teachers will be empowered (Fetterman, 1998) as they will have a better understanding of the concepts and skills that they need to teach and are to be learnt and subsequently what is required of them by the new curriculum policy, that is, the RNCS.

The description that Bernstein provides of the *pedagogic code* and *pedagogic device* may help us to establish whether the designers took the different rules into consideration in their selection and transmission of knowledge, that is, what went into the text and how this is communicated to make it realisable or not in the classroom. Drawing on Bernstein, it is reasonable to expect designers to be aware that they control the potential discursive gap that is to be reduced or closed between what teachers know and can do and what they have to acquire so as to implement policy successfully. Their commitment to make this possible does, in Bernstein's view depend on the kind of power relations they wish to maintain and sustain between themselves and teachers. It is these factors that influence how they balance aspects related to bridging the discursive gasp between the thinkable and the unthinkable in their writing. As controllers of the potential discursive gap, how are they recontextualizing the RNCS for teachers? If, as Bernstein says, that those who are recontextualizing the potential discursive gap do so between what is taught and how people are positioned, what does this imply in terms of the responsibility of designers?

Designers are acting as specialists in the pedagogic field. We could argue that even though they seem not to be suffering any domination by the ORF other than taking into account the requirements of the policy, they are expected to subject it to scrutiny to make obvious its concepts and essential features in the transmission they demonstrated by the manner in which they organised and expressed the content of the

text- as specialists in the PRF. One would have expected them to see this as a requirement where the majority of teachers are embedded in a paradigm that is conceptually different from what the RNCS promotes. This is the role that designers have to play as mediators of policy for teachers. It is the challenge for them. How they draw on and translate their knowledge of teacher's subject and pedagogical knowledge gained through engaging with them into documents that continue an empowering conversation that exposes the generative principles (Ensor) is of an interest to this study. The next chapter is an account of how the researcher tried to find out the degree to which the principles written about here were considered or not in the design of support materials for the English language.

# Chapter Four

# RESEARCH DESIGN

## 4.1 Introduction

In South Africa there are competences teachers are expected to possess and utilise in implementing the RNCS or NCS. Therefore, support materials need to be structured in such a way that they develop these required competences. If the coursebook can be used to transform teaching practices then Tomlinson (2003: 49, 50) argues it is important that the criteria for assessing textbooks should include the ability to encourage teacher development and "relate to the extent to which they engage the teacher's constantly evolving critical standpoint and facilitate the expanding and refining of the teacher's schemata in the process". They should be helpful without being prescriptive to allow for teacher agency to adapt them according to the context. To allow teachers to feel that they are driving the process, they need exposure to a process that equips them with the necessary tools to conduct self-evaluation and continue with the innovation when outside support has been withdrawn. Islam & Mares (cited in Tomlinson, 2003: 100) writing specifically in relation to language teaching, agree and assert that**:**

> Classroom materials need to be adapted in a principled manner to reflect needs within particular teaching contexts, current understanding of second language acquisition and good teaching practices.

I therefore chose a qualitative approach as this allowed me to use ethnographic research tools such as interviews and document analysis, to gather data in multiple ways, pursue issues in depth through probing, and see the 'human face' behind the designing of learning support materials. This in terms of Bernstein (1996) was to enable me to understand why the designers have expressed themselves the way they did and how suitable this was to access L1. A qualitative approach makes use of a naturalistic setting with the researcher as the instrument of data collection. This allowed me the freedom to engage with designers in a manner that clarified how their reading of the context in which they were writing facilitated or hindered their writing of L2 as a way of accessing L1. The approach had to enable me to determine:

- How the designers followed the requirements of the RNCS to assist the teachers to understand and translate into practice its underlying principles.

- What the textbook provided as guidance for teachers? How did it use L2 to support L1 and thus clarify for the teacher how to teach the prescribed content?

It was important to look into these aspects as they directly affected the way that the teacher either promoted or hindered new educational changes. By focusing on the effectiveness of the L2 provided, it was possible to assess whether the designers' writing was informed or not, by knowledge of the teachers subject and pedagogical expertise. This study hoped that by obtaining designers' views and examining the textbook and teacher's guides they wrote, useful data or evidence could be drawn and used to establish how they intended to promote or not teacher's curriculum literacy.

The conceptual stance required an approach that is not measurement driven but aims to achieve a better understanding of what actually happens, and to obtain the perspective of those 'inside' the programme or innovation (Basson, 2006: 59). Key to the approach is understanding.

**4.2. Research Approach**

According to Creswell (1998) choosing to do qualitative research allows the research to take place in a naturalistic setting with the researcher as the instrument of data collection. He (1998: 16) defines qualitative research as a process of inquiry whereby the researcher examines a social or human problem in a natural setting and constructs a detailed picture that in turn allows the reader to have a better understanding of the issue concerned. Key characteristics of qualitative research are a natural setting; the researcher as instrument of data collection spends time in the field and negotiates access; the collection of visual or written data is used to provide a detailed description; the outcomes are part of the process and not a product, data is analysed inductively with attention paid to details, evidence is collected of the insider's view or emic perspective, expressive rather than scientific language is used, and reason is used as a form of persuasion.

Qualitative research involves a multimethod approach of empirical evidence collection such as case studies, personal experience, life story, interviews,

observations, written and visual texts that describe both the routine and problematic in individuals' lives:

> …involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.
>
> Denzin & Lincoln (1992: 2)

It is in this sense that Creswell (1998) sees Denzin & Lincoln's definition as adding a grounding in philosophical assumptions (ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological); an interpretative and naturalistic approach; and the use of multiple sources of information.

The following case study illustrates the value of the approach in establishing the effectiveness of support materials. The study, "A strategy for teacher involvement in curriculum development" by Ramparsad (2000) looks at the effectiveness of support materials provided in teacher preparation for C2005. Although the DoE maintains that teachers were involved in curriculum development and implementation of C2005, this study on Grade One teachers in Gauteng schools questions their impact and involvement in the design and dissemination process. How teachers felt about teacher skills, training, participation, and concerns about C2005 was explored through focus group interviews. The study asked 2 questions: what role teachers are playing in the Foundation phase regarding the curriculum reform process and what mechanisms were in place to ensure the development of the necessary skills to enable teacher participation in the curriculum reform process?

The results of the study showed a minimal involvement by teachers in the design process. This may have been due to the level of development and training of teachers, which did not foster participation in curriculum discourse, feedback and evaluation, but Ramparsad (2000: 289, 290) claims that it was rather the mechanisms such as workshops provided for participation, which were inadequate. The support materials were not considered effective, as there was a lack of understanding by teachers of the language in the programme documentation provided which indicated a lack of understanding by the programme developers of the needs of participants. The top-down, cascade method of dissemination that was used expected teachers to return to

their schools to train their colleagues and other community stakeholders. This was not considered an effective or good method of dissemination since the information they passed on became diluted. The teachers lacked confidence as they did not feel they had mastered the new methods, which caused confusion due to inadequate and selective information, and the teachers ended up implementing a policy that they did not clearly interpret or understand. The major role played by teachers in the curriculum reform process was in the implementation phase but even here there was a lack of empathy by curriculum developers for the implementation problems encountered by teachers in the classroom.

With regards to the empowerment supposedly offered by the new curriculum, found was that the DoE needs to rather have phased in the Ramparsad (2000: 290) notes that teachers appeared to be dependent upon instructions and assistance from the education department rather than using their own initiative, innovation and creativity. Pilot schools only provided feedback on implementation and other teachers involved in the process were not consulted on changes needed. We could argue that principles inherent in empowerment such as participation, capacity building; an interactive relationship; a respect for participants' perspectives; utilisation; and involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation process as described by Fetterman & Wandersman (2005: 6) were not evident in the process. What Ramparsad (2000) reforms through regular semesterised (termly), large-scale formal in-service programmes to bring about effective curriculum change and to ensure greater teacher involvement in the process.

This case study reveals that crucial to professional support initiatives is clarity of language, as described by Bernstein, so that stakeholders can have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how to do it.

### 4.2.1. Sampling

I have used *purposeful* (purposive, judgement/judgemental) sampling and *convenience* (available) sampling. Both are forms of non-probability sampling where participants or subjects are selected on their accessibility and who are representative of the topic being researched. Patton (2002: 242) claims purposeful sampling is

integral to qualitative research, is rich in information and allows for the in-depth study of an issue. The logic is that a small sample studied in depth can provide rich information and insights. In this approach, a small sample is used to increase understanding without needing to generalize this to a larger population. Convenience sampling is when it is convenient for the researcher to use the participants in the study. This could be due to location or proximity to the researcher. Convenience in the study was mainly informed by participants' proximity to my home and locality, residing in Johannesburg. After examining the questionnaires from the first three designers I had met, I selected them as my sample based on their locality, proximity to my home, experience and work produced.

To identify relevant authors for my purposeful sample, I first examined some contemporary Grade 7 textbooks which, based on my own teaching experience of almost thirty years, I thought were well-designed and well-constructed. I then made a note of the authors of these textbooks and the name of the publishing companies concerned. I contacted the publishers by email and telephone to get permission to interview the selected authors and sent them a letter (Appendix B) requesting their consent to proceed with the research and containing details about my study so that they could decide whether I could or not contact the authors concerned.

Once I had their permission, I contacted some of the local authors (based in Johannesburg) telephonically to arrange a time when I could meet with them to discuss my study and to see whether they fitted the profile of the type of designer I wished to have as a participant. Then I arranged to meet them in places that were suitable for them. I met with Designers A and B in their workplaces in the morning and I visited Designer C at her home in the afternoon. When I met with the authors for the first time I first introduced myself and explained the background to my study. After this I asked each designer to complete a questionnaire (Appendix B) regarding age, gender, qualifications, work experience and work produced to see if they fitted the profile of the type of designer I needed.

These authors were contacted because at the time it was only their texts which I had in my possession and was awaiting more texts from the publishers. As I was writing up my study I did receive from the publisher X a more recent edition written by authors

drawn from the various communities in the country. Unfortunately, by the time I received another textbook and its accompanying guide, not only were there no contact details for the authors but it was also too late for me to contact the respective authors to pursue interviews with them and include them in the study.

It would have been more enlightening to the study if some of the members of this sample were drawn from the other communities that make up the South African population. However, as this is a project that has very strict time constraints, even though I wished to pursue this it would have delayed the completion of my study. In a sense, the difficulty experienced by the publishers in easily identifying authors belonging to other communities in South Africa, who could be part of the study from its beginning, does by itself reflect the power relations that Bernstein writes about when he explains the nature of the domination that occurs in education and how it is made available to others.

This makes the sample in the study very interesting because by interrogating the ways in which designers produce their texts it will be possible to determine the degree to which their intentions of empowering less skilled teachers were realized or not. In this study specifically it was crucial that the designers be able to reflect on those aspects that they would normally take for granted when interacting with teachers belonging to their communities. Support materials in South Africa are mainly needed by teachers who were deliberately exposed to inadequate education and are thus not as skilled as those who had a more privileged education.

Following the completion of the questionnaires and after providing each designer with an information document on background to the study (Appendix C) I thanked them and left. I took the questionnaires home with me to study them and make decisions on suitability. Since I had already asked permission to conduct the interviews using a digital voice recorder in my first visit, the designers' participation was confirmed telephonically. At this time they had already completed an interview consent form (Appendix D) form giving me permission to interview them. We arranged a suitable time to meet.

Although I had other possible interviewees on my list, I did not attempt to find other designers as I felt that three would be enough for my sample. As a result the sample in the study is both purposeful and convenient. I saw no need to invite other designers outside of my immediate geographical proximity as this would have required me to travel far and as a fulltime student this would have added to my financial commitments.

**i. Profile of Designer A**

Designer A is under 50 years old. She is a white, female South African and is English speaking. She has a degree (majored in Latin) and taught for almost 10 years before moving into materials writing. She has a good background to the RNCS as she was a member of the Review Committee that recommended that C 2005 be revised. She has written manuals for inset workshops, textbooks and materials for adult education and ran a teacher development programme. She is currently involved in education through her textbook writing.

Designer A trained to write materials at SACHED (South African Council of Higher Education) where the atmosphere was very liberated and non-racial. She worked with a team of about 20 writers. They produced materials for distance education; ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) type correspondence courses for adults in conjunction with the Turret Correspondence College on a project for SACHED. The methodology was very rigorous and when they wrote a chapter the group would edit it and provide feedback. They were trained to do this. In the feedback there would be a report on what was working well, and the expectation was that there would be a lot of reworking after editing. After the first round of editing there would be another group edit. There would be 2 or 3 edits before the final draft. The kind of approach used allowed for different perspectives and was inter-disciplinary (collaboration of teachers in a grade/phase etc) which was very time-consuming. They were scheduled to achieve otherwise they would be considered as under-performing. They would write three or four chapters a year. The chapters were quite long and involved literary and grammatical skills development, and components such as artwork and photos – components. She said that time was needed for producing quality work. She was writing full time and was monitored in materials development which she felt definitely skilled her as she was being trained at the same time while writing. She was

also involved in workshops on materials development. She found that the art of writing in simple English with very little space was very difficult.

**ii. Profile of Designer B**

Designer B is between 50 and 60 years old and is a white female South African. She is English speaking and has a strong academic background in education. She has a PhD and is a teacher educator at a university in Johannesburg. She has written materials such as workbooks, textbooks, and produced video and audio tapes. She has been a teacher for almost thirty years. She began writing materials when she was a school teacher, as she had written materials for her pupils. In the 1980s she was part of an English Language Programme for schools in Soweto where they worked with primary school teachers on the language policy shift (from mother tongue to Std 3). She was also involved with teacher education where she worked with DET teachers to develop materials. She also did work on the Threshold Project (Std 3) where they would produce work weekly. In 1985 she started her own project (Speak) for Std 3-5 (Gr 5, 6, 7) for the teaching of English. She developed work cards and reading materials based on own stories. She used South African voices in the stories/narratives as she was committed to developing South African culture. She also worked with Designer A on hidden histories and did theatre work and wrote South African plays. She was asked to work on an English language textbook series in 1992 and started off writing all materials.

This designer has experience in both materials writing for textbooks, teacher's guides and manuals for workshops, particularly at primary school level. She had run a series of workshops with another writer on how to use a textbook in the classroom and had written a unit for an Inset programme for ACE. She considered teacher development very important. She considers materials' writing as a complex task which requires very particular skills

**iii. Profile of Designer C**

Designer C is between 60 and 65 years old and is a white South African female. She is English speaking and has both a degree (MA) as well as a teaching diploma. She has been in teaching for over 30 years and has prepared support materials since 2001 such as manuals for inset workshops, teacher's guides for textbooks, workbooks, textbooks and has published a book on the use of stories in the classroom. She runs

her own literacy programme to help teachers implement the new RNCS teaching practices in a number of schools in Alexandra in Johannesburg.

Designer C said she started writing materials because of an awareness that what was being used needed to be mediated by teachers but that they didn't exploit the opportunities properly. She felt that a large sector of children's needs were not being reached by the texts either because they were not appropriate for that sector, the level was wrong and was pitched too high or not unpacking the text so that it could be understood. In her opinion the textbook should do two things. It should provide support for teachers and in this regard the methodology should be explicit and the text challenging but familiar. But she felt that the methodologies were not effective. Secondly, a textbook should be for learners to learn.

### 4.2.2. Support Materials

I examined the following textbook and its accompanying teacher's guide: Textbook A and Teacher's Guide A. Textbook A I obtained locally from a fellow teacher and former colleague whom I telephoned and asked for any spare copies of the textbooks which she was using. She sent them to me via a friend from whom I collected them at her home. Textbook B, which I would have liked to include, arrived late from the publishers in Cape Town. I contacted the publishers by email and the manager very kindly had the textbook and accompanying teacher's guide posted to me from Cape Town. I collected them from the local Post Office. Although I had received Textbook A from my former colleague she did not have the accompanying guide. Fortunately I managed to get one from Designer A when I interviewed her. Although I intended to use Textbook B and Teacher's Guide B, time constraints made it impossible for them to be included in the study.

I have chosen a teacher's guide as I saw it as appropriate text to look at if wishing to identify what designers have taken into account when putting it together. Because it is a text, I needed to analyse it and draw insights that Tomlinson (2003) and Ball & Cohen (1996) singled out as important if support materials are to be of effective use to teachers.

Although the materials that I have selected for this study (teacher's guide A and textbook A) are commercially published and in the public domain, for ethical reasons I decided not to identify the designers or the publishers. I have therefore named them with letters of the alphabet. This is also because I have only used a small sample of publications and thus it cannot be considered to represent the full range of textbooks and teacher's guides that are currently available. The intention of the study is not to draw comparisons but to evaluate the support that they provide to teachers. Details about the titles and designers will be provided in the appendices.

(i) Teacher's Guide

I will begin with a description of a teacher's guide accompanying textbook A written by authors A, B, C, & D. This is smaller than the textbook and is 17cm by 24 cm in size. The guide was published in 2004 in Cape Town. The front cover has a picture of three teenagers from different cultural groups and both back and front covers are in shades of green. It states the following on the cover with regard to the special features of the guide: 'suitable for RNCS' (the top right hand corner which is where it is said teachers look first); 'also available The Today series Portfolio and Assessment Planner, with handy worksheets'; 'the Today Series is available in all eight learning areas!'. The back cover has a blurb about the Today Series which is described as innovative, covering all the RNCS requirements, popular, meeting the needs of teachers and available in every learning area for Grade 7. The covers of these other titles are also shown. The book claims to encourage 'active learning through discovery and doing'. The features in this guide that are said to make teaching English First Additional Language enjoyable are: unit overviews, unit reviews, a year work plan, lesson preparation guidelines and assessment records that are simple and logical.

The first page highlights (in a star) that this book has been tested in Grade 7 classrooms. This is of particular interest because I did not get the impression from the designers' responses that their books had been trialled. It would be useful to know where these guides were trialled; which provinces, schools, and pupils were involved in the trials. What was the feedback from these trials?

The next three pages are the contents pages. These include an introduction, the RNCS, Assessment, and examples of assessment records from page vi to xxii. The contents

pages outline the eight units. These are titled in numerical order: bring with me life; Meaning and messages; Signs and symbols; Rainbows and rivers; Boots, bats, balls and bounce; Breaking the silence; Spreading the news; and A Short story. A Grammar Index is included at the end. The font size is very small.

The introduction includes information about the RNCS such as the principles of social justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity; OBE; a high level of skills and knowledge for all; clarity and accessibility; and progression and integration. Each was accompanied by a brief explanation. For example Outcomes-Based Education was defined in the following manner:

> The philosophy of outcomes-based education (OBE) remains the foundation of our curriculum. OBE focuses on the *results* that are expected at the end of each learning process. These are called outcomes. They refer to knowledge, skills, values and attitudes within particular contexts. OBE also gives attention to the *processes* that will take learners to these end points.

The teacher is advised that the features of the RNCS and how the Learners' Book have been designed are there to provide support to the teacher in the effective implementation of the curriculum. The teacher is then provided with an explanation of what has changed. This includes changes to learning areas which have changed such as LLC to Languages, MLMMS to Mathematics. Another change mentioned is that of design features which have been reduced to critical and developmental outcomes, learning area statements, learning outcomes (LOs) and assessment standards (ASs). Information is provided on how this teacher's guide supports the critical and developmental outcomes through activities such as problem-solving and decision-making. Group work is to be used for learners to learn how to "work effectively with others as members of a team, organisation and community" and also to learn how to be better organised and responsible.

(ii) Textbook A

The first thing that you notice when you compare this textbook (Learners' Book) with its accompanying teacher's guide is that the textbook is larger, 20 cm by 29 cm, and the picture on the cover is in colour while the one on the teacher's guide is in green. On the front cover the attention of the reader (teacher) is drawn to the special features of this textbook such as "Suitable for the RNCS"; "Also available: The Today series Portfolio and Assessment Planner, with handy worksheets" and "The Today series is

available in all eight learning areas!". On the back cover, it states that this series meets all the requirements of the RNCS, supports teacher's needs and is available for every learning area in Grade 7 (Business [EMS], Arts & Culture, Life Orientation, Maths, Science, Social Sciences and Technology. Mention is also made of the suitability of the textbook for First Additional Language learners. Features of this book which are said to make learning successful, easy and fun are the activities, content, portfolio and assessment features, the language spot, dictionary at the back, and extra reading texts. It also says that this textbook should be used in conjunction with the teacher's guide.

The Learner's Book has 122 pages. There are eight units and each unit is fifteen pages long, except for the short story which is seven pages long. When you open the book, the first page claims that the book has been tested in Grade 7 classrooms. There are four authors. The Learner's book is printed in Cape Town South Africa and first published in 2005. The Contents page has two columns with sub-headings: Main learning and/or assessment focus; and Activity, texts and contexts. The eight units are titled: I bring with me life; Meanings and messages; Signs and symbols; rainbows and rivers; Boots, bats, balls and bounce; Breaking the silence; Spreading the news; and A short story. Included at the end of the list of units is a word list, useful tips for learners, Section A: Improve your writing and Section B: English words that are often confused. The next page contains a letter addressed to the learner from the authors welcoming him/her to 'an exciting year of learning English" and outlining and explaining the features of the book. It also states that this is a book for learners whose home language is not English but who are being taught in English. I will describe Unit One in detail to illustrate how each unit has been set out.

Unit One includes the following outcomes: LO2 Speaking; LO3 Reading and Viewing; LO4 Writing; and LO6 Language Structure and Use. These are the learning outcomes (LOs) and assessment standards (ASs) provided at the beginning of the unit:
LO2 Speaking: interacts in additional language; demonstrates critical awareness of own language use; uses language to include people and not to exclude people.
LO3 Reading and Viewing: reading a text; understands in a simple way some elements of poetry e.g. rhyme; reads for information; reads for pleasure; shows some understanding of how reference books [dictionary] work.

LO4 Writing: writes for personal reflection; writes creatively; designs media texts.
LO6 Language structure and use: revises grammar learned in the previous grades; extends use of questions to include question tags; extended use of adjectives; use of meta language: verbs, nouns, adverbs, adjectives, extends vocabulary.
The learners are also told what activities will be done, what skills and knowledge will be required and how they will be assessed.

When I counted the number of times the different LOs were used across all eight units this is what I found: LO1 nine times; LO2 fourteen times; LO3 thirty-seven times; LO4 twenty-eight times; LO5 eleven times and LO6 twenty-one times. This is interesting because there is a heavy emphasis on comprehension (LO3) and writing (LO4) while verbal skills (LO2 Speaking), which should be used more often in teaching a second language, are far less.

### 4.2.3. Methods

The data sources for my study were interviews and document analysis of curricula material provided by the DoE such as the RNCS and Teacher's Guide for the Development of Learning Programmes, text books and support materials available to facilitate the delivery of the RNCS.

i. Interviews

Interviews may be used as the chief method of data collection, or used together with other qualitative strategies such as observation and document analysis Bogdan & Biklen (1982). Three possible types of interviewing can be used. One is the informal, conversational type of interview. Another is the semi-structured interview and a third is the open-ended interview (Patton, 1990). Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to prepare the questions and topics in advance but during the interview the researcher can adapt the wording and sequencing to the context. The interviewer can also use probes to elicit more information or clarity on an issue or explain a question if not fully understood by the interviewee. According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 351), an informal interview is when there are no set questions and no topics are prepared in advance. In this type of interview the questions surface within the context

of the conversation. Standardized open-ended interviews are less flexible and participants are asked the same questions in the same order.

I chose to do **semi-structured interviews** as this allowed me not only to structure and focus the interviews more or less on the same issues by means of the questions and topics that were prepared in advance. Also during the interviews there was flexibility to adapt the wording and sequencing of these questions according to the direction and emphasis the interview adopted. I had the opportunity to respond sensitively to the circumstances of the context created by the responses provided by the interviewee. Through gentle probing in the relaxed and comfortable homes or workplaces of the designers I also felt at ease when I tried to elicit more information or clarity on an issue. I was able to obtain detailed descriptions of the design process as experienced by each individual designer and clarity on the principles that informed the production of the texts. Guided by mainly insights from Fetterman (1998) and Bernstein (1996), the in-depth understanding, detailed description and insider's [emic] perspective that was obtained from the designers clarified why they had expressed themselves as they did and the reasons they considered their L2 as suitable for accessing what was crucial (L1) to the content they were mediating for teachers. I regarded support materials as a reflection of curriculum delivery by designers. For me they reflected how they (designers) read policy and used their interpretations as a basis for 'deconstructing' what was essential to the content teachers had to deal with at classroom level and for which they hoped to receive guidance on teaching strategies from the support materials. I expected this mediation to be informed by what the designers identified as the behavioural assumptions made about the professional capacity teachers required to implement the RNCS effectively. In short I was interested in the designers views about how the support materials they wrote, as translating devices (L2) of the essence the content (L1), were fulfilling the ideals of the RNCS as a policy tool.

I used an interview schedule (Appendix E) as the focus of the interview but also probed further when I wanted more clarity on an issue. An interview schedule was useful for a number of reasons. Firstly it ensured that each person answered the same questions and provided the information required. Although the responses themselves could not be predetermined, with semi-structured interviews as interviewer I had the latitude to probe further and explore issues in more depth. Secondly, the schedule was

valuable because it worked very well within the limited time frame I had with the designers. Thirdly, since the study involved multiple participants it allowed me to be systematic and comprehensive. Fourthly, it helped me to keep the interview process more focused. As pointed out by Lofland & Lofland (1984) the advantage for using an interview schedule was that it permitted flexibility as it could be modified to include areas that were of particular importance or to exclude questions that seemed to be irrelevant or unproductive to the research.

The interview schedule which I used to guide the interview process contained semi-structured questions, which I had sent out to a publisher who had to ascertain that they addressed and would elicit information that is relevant to the ideals of the RNCS. The semi-structured questions were to help me prompt and probe deeper and obtain clarity on specific issues related to the teachers and learners' capacity that was to be built by these materials. The questions focussed mainly on support materials for teachers and how they promoted their curriculum literacy. They were therefore directly related to the production and use of these materials by the teachers. If the participant did not touch on these issues then I fell back on my interview schedule to re-direct the interview. I wished to find out:

1. Whether the designers considered teachers as '*partners in practice'* and encouraged them to adopt a critical stance towards learning support materials (LSM).
2. If so, how did they foster and support collaborative practices?
3. Regarding ownership of the support materials, did they view or not the teachers as co-designers of learning support materials (LSM) and did they expect teachers to voice opinions about the relevance of LSM?
4. Did they consider teacher's learning – was using the LSM supposed to provide opportunities for teachers to improve their own learning?

A digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews. Even though Lincoln and Guba (1985) are against tape recording unless the reasons are exceptional as they regard it is an intrusion and also because of the danger of technical failure, as Patton (1990: 348) suggests recording the interviews was "*indispensable*" in capturing data more accurately than simply relying on field notes which are being hurriedly written. This allowed me to focus on the interview, and transcriptions afterwards could be

used to cross-check between the notes and the recording and increased the accuracy of the data.

**ii. Document Analysis: Textbooks and Teacher's Guides**

There are three types of document analysis which can be used in the analysis of a text. They are discourse analysis, content analysis and thematic/content analysis. Broadly speaking both thematic content analysis and content analysis are modes of analysis that focus on content as subject matter while discourse analysis focuses on content as mode or form. Content analysis can be defined as a method of research which:

> … examines words or phrases within a range of texts including book chapters by examining interviews and speeches as well as informal conversation and headlines. By examining the presence or repetition of certain words and phrases in these texts, a researcher is able to make inferences about the philosophical assumptions of a writer, a written piece, the audience for which a piece is written, and even the culture and time in which the text is embedded. Palmquist (1993 in Mouton 2001)

Discourse analysis while sharing a similar interest with content analysis in examining words, phrases and context of a text, is more concerned with the use of language in society/context. This means looking beyond the boundaries of a sentence or utterance or how language is used; the interactive nature of dialogue or everyday communication; and the relationship between language and society (Slembrouck, 2000 in Mouton, 2001).

In this particular study, the documents that were examined were support materials prepared for teachers in the form of teacher's **guides** and **textbooks.** I began by studying the appearance of each book, noting the size, details on front and back covers, graphics and colours. After this I opened to the first page to see when and where they were published. I then turned to the Contents page to see the way the content had been laid out. I followed this with an examination of the introductory pages leading up to Unit One. I then selected a unit to examine more closely. I began with an examination of teacher's guide A. I looked at what information was provided for the teacher in the unit overview at the beginning of the unit in the teacher's guide. I then looked at the nine activities which comprised unit one. I then did the same with textbook A.

Firstly I needed to look at how the support materials were promoting the teacher's curriculum literacy, that is, if the language in which they were written was in the form of L1 or L2. Secondly, I needed to ask what assumptions they were based on in terms of the needs of both the teacher's professional development and enhancing the learners' understanding of the content that was taught. In relation to the RNCS, to what extent did they address the understanding of teaching and learning implicit in the statement? How did the materials help teachers to recognise and realise what they needed to know and do to fulfil the requirements of the RNCS? The literature on support materials (Tomlinson, 2003; Ball & Cohen, 1996) seems to isolate these as important to look at when trying to understand and establish the value of support materials as instruments to promote the quality of teaching and learning.

Although I was not examining textbooks themselves in detail I needed to be able to ascertain what links there were between the textbooks and the teacher's guides and how the designers had structured the teacher's guides to guide the teacher in teaching and enhance learners' understanding through the use of the textbook.

The method of analysis I decided to use was thematic/content analysis as I was looking particularly for *themes* within the subject matter. While language style or form are significant and give access to content in a subtle way, this was not my primary aim. I was more interested in the *what* (thematic content) rather then the *way* (discourse). My interest in discourse analysis lies mainly in the power relations suggested by the way the reader is positioned by the authors' choice of words in the text.

Therefore thematic content analysis was the main method which I used to analyse the teacher's guide and textbook. In this analysis close attention was paid to topics such as collaborative practices, examples of mediating/translating concepts/knowledge (L1 and L2) as described by Bernstein, empowerment of teachers through their use of the guide or textbook, and teacher development or learning through the use of the teacher's guide or textbook. Underlying the analysis is the notion that learning is a social construction which results from an interaction with the text and its social context (Fairclough, 1989, 1992; Thesen 1992 cited in McKinney, 2005:12). Following this line of thinking, the implication is that the designers of textbooks and

teacher's guides do not select the material which they use in these texts in an arbitrary way. They make their choices in a deliberate manner which is in turn rooted in their social context. What was of interest to my study was how this selection took cognisance of the social context and needs of the teachers who would be using this material.

Content analysis of the interview transcripts was carried out to see what themes and patterns existed in the responses. According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006:373), the aim of qualitative research is to be able to make general statements about relationships and to do that you need to look for patterns in the data. There are different techniques of pattern seeking such as gauging data trustworthiness, using triangulation, evaluating discrepant and negative evidence, ordering categories for patterns, sorting categories for patterns, constructing visual representations, and doing logical cross-analyses. I have used triangulation (cross-validation) of data obtained from interviews, texts and field notes to see if the same pattern emerged and to compare what people are saying across the data sets.

### 4.3. Research Process

#### 4.3.1 Interview Process

The length of the interviews varied. They ranged between 1½ and 2 hours. During my initial meetings with the three designers I had established an easy rapport with each of them and had no problems regarding obtaining their permission to be interviewed at length later on. Participants were made to feel comfortable and relaxed in the interview process I interviewed Designer A at her home. She was not feeling well and I offered to reschedule the interview. But she declined and said she was happy to proceed as long as I didn't mind her being in her pyjamas and if she could get back into her bed if the need arose. The interview took place in her bedroom where she sat in her bed and I sat on a chair nearby. We chatted about our children and she told me about her daughter's school and that they were interviewing for a new head. She seemed to be relaxed and comfortable with the interview situation. Designer B was interviewed in her office. She had rushed from a meeting so we chatted about a conference that was happening in June 2007 to give her time to get settled. I interviewed designer C at her home. She had recently moved into a new home so we

discussed the move and her plans for future alterations while she made a cup of coffee for us both.

Key to the interview process is the human factor and interaction between the participant and the interviewer through a conversation, which Kvale (1996, cited in Babbie & Mouton, 1998) refers to as the social situatedness of research data. Bearing this in mind, it was important to me that the participants felt relaxed during the interview. I therefore did not begin the interview until I felt that they were comfortable and ready to begin. I did this because Tuckman (1972, cited in in Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 279) states that the interviewer should 'attempt to make the respondent feel at ease'. According to Kvale (1996) it is important to create this sort of atmosphere so that the participant 'can feel more secure to talk freely'. I therefore made every effort to make the participants feel relaxed because of the significance of this theory to me.

To give an indication of what occurred during interviews, I provide, as an example a detailed account of the interaction between Designer B and myself.

I interviewed Designer B in the morning in her office at her workplace. We sat at a large table that she usually used for meetings with her students and fellow staff members. The interview started half and hour later than planned as she had run late at a previous meeting. Once she had sorted out her papers etc, I first showed her the digital voice recorder that I planned to use to record the interview and then I explained that I would be using an interview schedule and would be taking field notes. I began the interview by asking Designer B her opinion of the new policy and whether she thought that the learning support materials (LSM), which had been given to teachers was helping them to effectively implement the RNCS.

> What is your opinion of the RNCS and what they are trying to achieve and what they're trying to address?

She replied that she thought that C 2005 was an excellent curriculum particularly the literacy component, and considered it advanced, cutting edge and progressive.

> Well I thought that when the new curriculum came out, which was C2005 it was an excellent curriculum. I think there were far too many outcomes. But for languages…*languages,* language literacy and communication, it was a

> very, very advanced, cutting edge curriculum. And when I showed it to my colleagues overseas in Australia and the UK, they thought it was an amazing curriculum, extremely progressive and offered lots of possibility.

She continued the conversation by considering drawbacks in C2005

> Um... too many outcomes, too complex and a quantum leap for too many teachers. I think that it was much too complex and it was just, you know, too much of a quantum leap for lots of teachers to understand how they can interpret it in their classrooms.

She stated further, "the RNCS was not as radical, was simplified and the critical outcomes were very important. But there was not enough focus on literature which was sidelined by language; it was given too much prominence".

The interview concluded with Designer B remarking that a teacher development programme was to begin at her institution in 2007 with a series of Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) programmes which would include language and literacy. The use of the textbook would be central to that. I thanked her for her participation and candour and left the office.

4.3.2. Document Analysis

Informed by Bernstein, Tomlinson, Ball & Cohen, I was interested in finding out how the materials helped teachers to recognise and realise what they needed to know and to what extent they addressed the understanding of teaching and learning. I wanted to see how the framing of the text correlated with the conclusions I drew. I took teacher's guide A and in examining it, this is what I did. I first selected the unit and activity which I wanted to examine. This was a language activity which stated: Use some language to talk about language [terms such as nouns] which is in the teaching tips section; it is explained in the following way:

> Write a range of words on the board, including some verbs, some adjectives and some nouns. Words can include the following: house, beautiful, car, walk, draw, write, desk, pencil, crayons, slow, fast and so on. Ask learners which are the names of things. Ask learners what the word is for 'names of things'. If necessary, tell them they are called nouns.
>
> Ask learners to work with a partner and to read the 'Language Spot' information about nouns. (page 9 in textbook) Then ask learners to tell you the

different types of nouns there are. Write them on the board. Ask for an example of each and write these on the board.

Although the instructions were clear, the essence of the lesson was not explicit. This activity involved paired work by learners and teacher assessment (provided in the rubric) is to be on the learners' written work – recognition and classification of nouns. The language spot provided information on the different types of nouns (common, proper, collective and abstract nouns) which the learners were to use with the activity which was: ask the learners to do the language activity using their lists of likes and dislikes from Activity 5. They were asked to look for nouns in their list and then to classify the nouns.

The next section explains how the data analysis from all three was structured and organized.

### 4.4. Data Management and Analysis

The field notes were typed up and the tape recordings transcribed so that I could have a hard copy of the conversations. I filed each participant's data set separately. This consisted of the consent form, the questionnaire which provided the profile, the transcribed interview and the notes made during the interview. I then examined the interview data and coded it according to the questions which I had asked. I was looking, in particular, for how designers expressed their views on providing support through teacher learning, and the manner in which this had to be done. I highlighted phrases or words that I thought were linked to their theories on teacher learning and how support materials were to be used by the teachers.

An illustration of how the coding process occurred is provided in the following example:

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher | **What do you think – are the learning support materials being given to teachers helping them to effectively implement the RNCS?** |
| Designer C | I think it's hard for them to find their way around all of those, those LOs and ASs and to know in what way they would actually be teaching to meet a particular aim um so it's **the gap** between the AS and what do you do to make that happen? I think that's, there's a gap there um like if you take something like LO3 and one of the strategies, one of the ASs is strategy, teaching reading strategies. Now what do they, **how does the teacher understand that?** How do you make that happen in a practical way? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Designer A | There is **comprehensive coverage** and that is stipulated by the publisher. |
| Designer B | I assume that all of these, the publishers have put together all the guidelines for support for teachers and **it's all embedded in the document** and it's part of the brief we get … so it's very **clear** for teachers. |

I did a vertical analysis of each interview through paraphrasing the transcriptions to highlight the words used by each designer to refer to issues she considered important to teacher learning. Words such as collaboration, participatory learning, and reflection were isolated as demonstrating views they held with regard to the approach that would be crucial to the design of support materials. I was looking particularly for data related to the process designers used before sitting down to write. I then typed out a summary of each vertical analysis. Afterwards I did an horizontal analysis to identify the *cues* which would reflect their individual attitudes, perceptions, experiences, understanding and opinions. For instance in response to a question on the significance of teacher involvement in the writing of materials, the authors were unequivocal in their responses.

Designer A said:

> Just because you're a good teacher doesn't mean that you can write materials. They're different *skills*.

Designer B said:

> … but when you write a unit of materials it's *a very complex craft* of integrating the right kind of text, the questions around the curriculum, the language levels of the children, what it is that you want to achieve, what your kind of conceptual understanding is of what you want to achieve, the theme…

Designer C said:

> I just think that there are very few teachers who are that *capable*.

Looking at these statements significant to them is this particular cue *writing materials is complex and requires certain skills*.

I typed up a summary of each horizontal analysis. Once I had these separate accounts and had analysed A, B and C separately, I then put them together to see where there were similarities and differences and which viewpoints belonged together. I used the cues and words associated with them to derive themes that were used to structure and organise the substantive chapters of the study. They have been derived from both vertical and horizontal analysis of the interviews with the three designers. They point to a lack of awareness of the significance of the designers' role as teacher developers;

an absence of dialogue with the teachers in the design process; invisibility as a principle in teacher development; and a view of teachers as practitioners to play a technicist role in the classroom.

### 4.5.Themes

To demonstrate how themes were arrived at I will use the example below of how data was managed in terms of coding and thereafter used for deriving themes.

Firstly, *the designers lacked an awareness of their significance as teacher developers*. Although all three designers were aware of a lack of capacity amongst teachers in schools in South Africa and thought that many teachers lacked the necessary skills to implement the requirements of the RNCS, they did not see their role as that of teacher developers. From the three responses, I could see that they rather perceived their role as either filling a gap (Designer C) or improving the teacher's knowledge and skills through their use of the textbook in the classroom. In this way, the knowledge and skills selected would be used for the purpose of providing for the education of the learner.

Designer A expressed capacity building as being specifically dealing with knowledge skills.

> We needed to specify explicitly what knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to be covered in each grade level and what content needed to be covered in each grade.

Designer B expressed it as clarifying the outcomes as a framework:

> It has all been clearly laid out, you see, how we have used these outcomes as a main frame for the way in which we think about what we want to do…

However, Designer C who is more concerned about the gap in teacher's knowledge stated:

> I think it's hard for them to find their way around all of those LOs and ASs and to know in what way they should be teaching to meet a particular aim. So it's the gap between the AS and what do you do to make it happen?

If we look at these as codes what becomes evident is that the designers were able to express at a theoretical level what is necessary to teachers. However, at the level of practice they demonstrated a lack of awareness of the role that they could play in teacher development. It was through reading how designers expressed their role that I

was able to arrive at the theme that designers lacked an awareness of their significance as teacher developers.

In the next chapters, Chapter 5 presents and analyses the designers' views about the writing process and significance of teacher's guides to the textbooks they wrote. Chapter 6, presents first, the researcher's analysis of these texts and second, how the interpretation is consistent or not with what the designers thought of the texts.

# Chapter Five

## Intensive Analysis of Interview Data

### 5. 1. Introduction: Designers' Views from Interviews

The chapter illustrates the extent to which, in the designers' views, teacher learning and empowerment are important considerations in the writing of support materials for the English language. I focus on their views about the purpose of the teacher's guides and textbooks they wrote. From the designers' perceptions and opinions, it became clear that they in general did not see themselves as performing a teacher development role. They simply viewed themselves as having a responsibility to producing materials that teachers could draw on to implement policy. They indicated a reluctance or unwillingness to involve teachers in the preparation of the support materials and the general viewpoint is that teachers lack the general knowledge and skills to be of use to them. Even though Fetterman (1998), for example suggests that empowerment needed to start from the bottom up with all stakeholders being involved in the various aspects of the process and negotiating goals together, from the interviews with the designers it became apparent that what drove the materials development process were the requirements of the RNCS and the needs of the learner.

This is inconsistent with what other writers referred to in this study, namely Bernstein, Lave & Wenger, Darling-Hammond, Ball & Cohen and Tomlinson have said about the importance of fostering teacher learning as a way of meeting the needs of the learners. According to them teachers should be viewed as partners in promoting learning, which does not appear to be the case here. Drawing on their theories, the argument in this chapter is that although the RNCS requirements are complied with as fully as possible, this does not translate into a discourse that clarifies the strategies used and concepts taught. The scaffolding and development of conceptual knowledge and skills needed to be carefully included in the design of the materials so that both teachers and learners clearly understood (realised) what is required of them and responded in the correct manner. The conclusion in the chapter is that even though the textbooks and guides may provide a form of support in that they show the teachers what is expected of them, in accordance with Ensor's (2000) view, it is not good enough to just model practices, teachers have to understand the practice themselves.

**5.2. Designers do not see themselves as performing a teacher development role.**

Darling-Hammond (1989) argues that an effective way to improve the overall quality of education is through strengthening teacher knowledge. The designers in this study seemed unaware of this as they were more focused on the language development of the learner and did not attach as much importance to the needs of the teacher in the teaching and learning process. Apart from Designer C, who used her existing knowledge on teacher learning, there was no real effort to understand the position and context of the teacher. She was concerned about the gap affecting teachers and suggested that perhaps teachers should be helped to develop the new techniques by providing them with strategies which they could use in the classroom. She put it this way:

> I actually think what you almost need to be doing because you're expecting a sophisticated understanding of how to apply your methodology to meet those aims. I think what you need are practical, and I don't understand why this is a problem, why can it not be possible to say teach this, teach that, without being too directive, you're still leaving a fair amount to the individual's creativity and translate [for the teacher].

The teacher is regarded as a practioner, overseeing the learners and any learning done by the teacher is incidentally achieved while using the textbook. We can see this in what the designers said. Designer A described the role of the teacher in this way:

> You're obviously assuming that the teacher is going to be the manager of the situation and assessing and overseeing and mentoring the learner, but this is the learners' book

Designer B was more explicit about who was in control and felt that she didn't have to engage with the teacher but that this would rather be done by the textbook/teacher guide. She viewed the support materials as helping the teachers to implement the curriculum and not to develop them. She phrased it like this:

> Embedded in that working through, the notion of that process of the working through, you are going to learn how to do something.

Although Designer B was aware that there might be a lack of capacity at classroom level, she did not specifically provide for teacher learning in her materials (textbook) since it was her perception that the textbook and the teacher's guide represented a partnership between herself as the controller in the Bernstein sense, and the teacher as

the implementer or practioner. She assumed that by following the textbook and teacher's guide, the teacher would be able to overcome these shortcomings.

> You're helping them to, through the medium of this book to teach the outcomes and to teach, as you say, you are focused on the curriculum, so you are very aware of the outcomes. So you're helping them, you're partnering them in this teaching.

Designer A perceived teachers as being responsible for their own professional development and learning. She said that they should:

> … keep abreast of developments in the field and to get certain points and if you don't get points you can't practice anymore. I think it needs all of that.

She had not used any research on teacher learning and knowledge or adult learning to assist her in the design of the materials. When I asked what was guiding the preparation of the teacher's guide, was it the resources, the people designing them were they looking at how the teacher was going to teach or were they looking only at the learner, she implied that the motivation was only writing the textbook for the learner.

> I'm definitely looking at the learner when I'm writing.

Despite her belief that teachers hadn't been provided with the tools to replace teacher centred practices and that the textbook couldn't do a lot about changing a teacher's style as this depended on the teacher's own frame of mind, she did not consider teacher learning necessary when writing the materials

> And I think that's all very well and good but the problem is that it (RNCS) didn't take into account the skills base that we were working from in South Africa. The lack of capacity, the lack of resources. So I don't think a textbook can really do a lot about changing teacher learning style if there isn't the willingness on the part of the teacher if the teacher isn't open to the change.

When discussing teachers hybridising by mixing the old practices with the new, Designer B compared teacher learning of the new practices as akin to learning dressmaking where you just followed the manual systematically and in this way you learnt the skills:

> So if you work through these books quite systematically and you deal with the issues, which arise, it is going to raise all sorts of questions, you know, and give you certain guidelines on how to teach certain items and take them forward.

I got the impression that the designers were writing for a broad band of teachers with the assumption that they had a certain level of knowledge and understanding. Designer B said that teachers would be unable to teach from the textbook without the teacher's guide and a certain level of teacher development. She acknowledged that a lot was being assumed:

> Um, so, to some extent it is about developing teacher knowledge, but it's also assuming that there's the basis you have to start from somewhere. But it's also trying to help teachers to take their work into new areas and new ideas.

The designers do not appear to be catering for different teaching styles and teacher personalities, whether the teachers are first language English speakers or not, or taking their perspectives and preferences into consideration which Tomlinson (2003) states are important considerations if teacher's books are to provide guidance and be useful or not. This is also in contrast to the literature on teacher learning which recommends the involvement of all stakeholders in negotiating learning Fetterman (1998) and Tomlinson (2003: 138) who says:

> [that there] needs to be a clear sense of the target teacher group in terms of their language ability, education, teacher-training experience, willingness to try new things and time available for preparation.

When I asked Designer C if she had used any research on teacher learning and knowledge or adult learning to assist her in the design of the materials she replied that in the learners' books there was a strong emphasis on the new pedagogies such as learner-centred learning. In Textbook A in Unit Three, activity three 'Practise reading gestures' (page 33) was very learner centred and the register she had used tried to relate to the child's interests. She tried to model the activities on learner-centred practices and at the same time tried to allow for individuality and personality. With regard to comprehension type questions the choice of text and activities were based on the texts that she felt were learner centred. She believed that through the use of the textbook, teachers should pick up these new methods.

> We are surely, surely if teachers are using them in a fairly methodical way, even if not in an inspired way, they would be picking up …

Regarding teacher learning Designer C said she had used the knowledge she already has on Vygotsky such as applying a multi-literacies approach. She had also applied

certain instruction models to what she was doing with teachers but that she had not personally done research on teacher's learning.

> What I have personally put in practice are things like what I know from Vygotsky that you can model and visualise and if for instance, applying the multiliteracies approach it might be easier for them to assess so in a sense I'm applying some of the instruction models of what we did with teachers.

Designer C had a much more pragmatic approach to teacher learning and was more in touch regarding modelling and collaboration. She had experienced the difficulties that teachers were experiencing in the classroom and had made an effort to find practical solutions to their problems and in this way empower them.

> And, so what I showed her what to do was to take phrases and words from it and to discuss them before the actual reading … and so in a sense I was helping her to communicate the material. I was mediating for her by giving her certain skills for children.

Designer C saw the need for the textbook to fulfill two requirements. One was to facilitate learning for the learner and the other was to provide support for the teacher by clarifying what needed to be done to mediate learning.

> It's material for children, for the learner but it's also got to be support for teachers. It's got to be very, very supportive for teachers so that they understand why they are doing what they are doing. They understand um, the terms are very clear, that the methodology that you are using is made explicit, that it's not implied, that it is familiar to teachers and yet it is challenging.

Her perception of teacher learning in this instance is that the instructions need to be very clear. Implicit in this notion is that the message to the teachers must be explicit if it is to be understood. Unlike the other two designers she feels that this cannot be assumed to take place through an unquestioning following of the manual or guide.

> You want to use methodology that maybe they can understand and if they can in some way, make their own but at the same time it's going to be effective because a lot of methodologies are not effective…

She used her background knowledge on Vygotsky's theories such as scaffolding, which she tried to incorporate into her materials. Because of this understanding of the need for new knowledge to be scaffolded she was critical of the way the RNCS was introduced to teachers. In her opinion these new methodologies should have been introduced more slowly to give teachers a chance to make the transition from their old practices to the new and in this way bridge the gap between them.

> Maybe to have had a policy which introduced new methodologies and introduced … but it needed to be done in such a way that people could bridge the gap, the gap wouldn't be too huge and then maybe you could have had Mach II, you know, taking it further as people evolved. But to expect people to make this huge paradigm shift...

She has a sympathetic attitude towards the dilemma facing teachers and their confusion and frustration with a policy which was introduced without due consideration towards implementation by them and their shortage of the necessary skills.

> No, but I do sense in the schools that we've been in, I do sense a lot of frustration a lot of confusion actually about, for instance group work and the policy document does say this, that the group work doesn't just mean arranging desks in group of four, you know, or whatever. The teachers don't understand this about group work, that it's actually a quite a sophisticated management technique which I don't think they have and which I don't think um I don't think it's there in the training to provide that management technique.

The general impression I got was that although the designers were experienced in textbook writing for learners, the need to support teacher learning in new practices and concepts was not fully taken into account. Research on teacher learning was also not considered important, as the target here was the pupil not the teacher. The assumption was that the teacher was the mediator of teaching and learning and used the textbook as a tool for this purpose. Also that not enough thought was given to the use of the textbook by the teacher as it was aimed at the learner. This is clearly voiced by Designer A who says she is writing only for the learner as required by the publisher.

> … in the register that you use, for the learners' book you have to address the learner because you're assuming that they are going to be doing the activity and they're going to do this and do that. You're obviously assuming that the teacher is going to be the manager of the situation and uh being assessing and overseeing and mentoring the learner, but this is the learners' book.

Any teacher learning is therefore incidental and not explicit. Teachers are expected to find out how to teach a unit from the teacher’s guide and by reading the accompanying unit in the textbook in preparation for the lesson. This seems to reflect a lack of responsibility for teacher learning which contradicts what Tomlinson (2003) says that the needs, capabilities and context of the teacher who has to put the textbook into practice should be taken into account by designers. But is this not an over reliance on the textbook to transform teaching and learning? Ball & Cohen (1996)

warn that although the textbook has the potential to influence the work of teachers, curriculum materials have played an uneven role in education due to reasons such as teachers needing to learn how to use the new materials and how their beliefs and values influenced their understanding of the material. If teachers do not understand the underlying concepts in the materials, Ball & Cohen argue they will use the materials as 'ingredients' rather than 'determinants' of the curriculum and so create a 'gap' between what the designer intended and what occurs in practice. It would appear that the gap between theory and practice, which is dependent upon how designers recontextualize the content for teachers, has not been given sufficient consideration by this designer.

The implication is that by drawing on the textbook or teacher's guide teachers will become more knowledgeable about the RNCS and this will make them better teachers. Designer A further stated that by working through the textbook teachers would gain a better understanding of the policy.

> [They get] to work through the learners' book before the kids do and can empower themselves…so that the messaging was as in line with the policy as much as possible.

When I asked Designer B about the need for a closer working relationship between the textbook developers and publishers, schools and teachers, which Ball & Cohen (1996) refer to as 'partners in practice' and if she was helping them through the medium of the textbook to teach the outcomes and partnering them in this teaching her reply was that the teacher's guide addressed these issues to the teacher.

> Well, I certainly think, certainly there's a teacher's guide which is absolutely addressed to the teacher and is about those kinds of partnerships and giving teachers guidance and working with teacher's own resources on how they can develop and extend stuff in relation to the learner's book

She said the teacher's guide included a lot of reflexive thinking and critical thinking and that these were embedded in the teacher's guide.

> In the teacher's book, um, there are, certainly there is a lot of reflexive questioning and critical questioning.

Designer B regarded textbooks as pedagogically sound as they dealt with different concepts, skills and issues of identity and it was in this way that they were helping teachers develop competences. She had a perception that teachers would learn about the new methodologies and concepts by following the teacher's guide and textbook like a dressmaking manual.

> It's like if you've got a manual and you're learning how to, how to make a dress, or how, you know, basis skills in, you know, decoupage, you know, whatever it happens to be. You have a manual in front of you and you work through it quite systematically. Embedded in that working through, the notion of that process of the working through, you are going to learn how to do something. So if you work through these books quite systematically and you deal with the issues which arise, it is going to raise all sorts of questions for you around, you know, and give you certain guidelines on how you teach certain items and take them forward.

However, if the designers are under this impression, this demonstrates what Bernstein is saying happens when people don't want to empower others. If I look at the responses of the designers, despite what Bernstein (1996) said about mediating information through the use of L2 as a translating device, and in this way making the meaning of L1 (content) clear and realisable, can the designers claim that they have done this? Designer C has a better idea of what Bernstein is saying and is more concerned with the gap between theory and practice:

> …it's the gap between the AS and what do you do to make that happen?

Designer C said that the teachers found it hard to make sense of all the RNCS requirements and that there was a gap between the policy and practice.

> Maybe to have had a policy, which introduced new methodologies and introduced … it needed to be done in such a way that people could bridge the gap, the gap wouldn't be too huge and then maybe you could have had Mach II, you know, taking it further as people evolved. But to expect people to make this huge paradigm shift...

This gap was of concern to her and she felt that this needed to be addressed in some way.

> I think that's, there's a gap there um like if you take something like LO3 and one of the strategies, one of the ASs is strategy, teaching reading strategies. Now what do they, how does the teacher understand that? How do you make that happen in a practical way?

Lave & Wenger (1991) argue that the balance between theory and practice in participatory learning is a valuable way to learn new practices. Surely it would be better for teachers to be provided with practical opportunities before they try to teach these concepts to their learners? If the designers don't engage with how the teacher is positioned, are they adequately responsive to the policy? Their attitude towards the need to promote the teacher's understanding of the criteria in the RNCS is that it is all provided and explained in the support materials. They feel that they have provided a comprehensive coverage of the policy requirements (in both the textbook and teacher's guide) and what is provided is explanatory. It would appear that little thought is given to whether teachers understand this information and whether it is in a form, which is recognised and understood (L2). This shows little regard for, and appreciation of the teacher's positioning and context. If as Bernstein (1996) says, L1 needs to be translated by L2, we need to ask whether the materials provided clearly model, as Ensor suggests, what teachers need to know and do. The guide was addressed to the teacher and was aimed at giving the teacher guidance and advice on how to work in conjunction with the learners' book. But teacher learning was regarded as implicit in the new teaching practices and embedded in the activities suggested in the textbook.

The next section tries to illustrate how the suggested activities perpetuated the invisibility of what teachers have to learn. Designers assumed that following what policy advocated in terms of procedures would reveal to the teachers how to deal with the concepts and essential features of what is to be taught.

### 5.3. Invisibility as a principle in teacher development.

If we look at what the designers expressed, it is clear that they believed that by closely following the procedures advocated by policy, teachers have been enabled to develop a better understanding of how the RNCS works. The implication is that teachers have the knowledge and skills to understand how the content of the texts is a product of how designers interpret the RNCS requirements. This seems to indicate where professional authority lay on the part of the designers and an opinion of teachers as having less authority as participants in the curriculum design process. It also reflects a technicist view of the teacher as a practioner delivering the knowledge which the

designers provide. If the designers earnestly believe that teachers don't have the capacity, the provision they have made for this becomes interesting to look at. They needed to use an approach which unravelled the text for the teachers to avoid confusion and facilitate best practice as described by Bernstein (1996). His distributive rules, which identify *who* may transmit *what* knowledge to *whom* and under *what* conditions would underscore this strong framing as really being to do with power and control.

This close following of design process as mainly procedure bound (Pinar *et al*, 1995) is reflected in Designer A's comment on the need to review materials to see whether that they took into account or not the requirements of the RNCS. As she put it:

> We did a detailed audit of the previous book and there was a big table of changes, even told them which activities had to change, which numbers in what activities, text and photographs changed so that the messaging was as in line with the policy as much as possible. In general, absolutely comprehensive coverage.

Designer B said that she worked closely with the policy document. She said that all RNCS outcomes are mapped on to the book design to provide a skeletal frame around which she constructed the unit. Also in the teacher's guide the curriculum coverage was clearly laid out.

> … all the curriculum outcomes are mapped onto this book arise out of the curriculum guidelines provide a central skeletal frame around which this whole book is constructed … the publishers have put together all the guidelines for support for teachers and it's all embedded in the document and it's part of the brief that we get...that you know, that the activities have to be clearly demarcated… it's very clear for the teacher. And then there's also materials on how to, you know, there's materials on how you actually do it.

Designer C said she referred to the RNCS genres and made sure that all of these were included. In the micro planning stage she kept on referring back to the RNCS values, critical & developmental outcomes and possibilities for integration. By doing this she felt they were showing the teachers what to do.

> Well we work right from the critical outcomes and the developmental outcomes so that those in fact inform what we're doing right the way through, so that's the start.

The designers seemed to have a perception that by closely following the RNCS in the textbook, the requirements of the curriculum would be made clear to the teachers. They do not see themselves as having to reflect on their own positioning as a way of understanding how the texts they produced could be regarded as autobiographies (Pinar *et al*, 1995). Hence, they do not feel obliged to explicitly state the teaching methods or concepts inherent in the text as these are taken for granted as visible to people whom they assumed in biography with them. But people who are writing on this such as Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) would argue that teachers need to be able to adapt new knowledge and practices to their present teaching contexts. They would further argue that the shortcomings are that teachers are not participating in collaborative experiences and reflecting on both the process and the content of the learning experience. They claim that teachers need to be re-evaluating their own practices so that the new methodologies can be introduced into their teaching. This implies that designers should take more responsibility for explicitly revealing or teaching the hidden curriculum requirements to teachers by being in dialogue with them in the teacher's guides.

However, as the next section demonstrates, the piloting and evaluation that would have facilitated this was seen as not important. Instead, designers seemed to be more concerned with satisfying the publisher's register. According to Pinar *et al* (1995), drawing mainly on Doll's (1993) notion of *currere*, had the designers done this they would have appreciated better the extent to which they themselves are still embedded in the past which was projected in the texts they produced for the future.

**5.4. Absence of dialogue with teachers in the design process.**

There was no indication of collaboration with teachers in the design of the textbooks. Teachers are certainly not seen as partners in practice here. Collaboration only took place among the designers where they worked together as a team. Designer A's view was that many of the teachers were under qualified and she expressed it in this way:

> The schools based development is not going to change much when, those people shouldn't even be in the classroom. They could hardly write. So they're not qualified, they're not interested. They shouldn't actually be in the classroom never mind being improved through school-based teacher development. So I don't feel very hopeful about this teacher development apart from preset.

Despite her appreciation of her own learning being enhanced through collaboration, and the valuable experience and expertise, which she gained when working at SACHED, Designer A does not correlate this situated type of learning with that needed by teachers. She perceives their learning to emanate from contact with the textbook and teacher's guide.

> The thing is that the teacher, if they're doing any preparation, gets to work through the learner's book before the kids do. So if they're doing any preparation is the question, they can empower themselves.

Designer B appears to equate the teacher who needs support with poor teaching. The designer views the teacher as needing a lot of support so tries to put in as much as possible into the textbook to make up for this perceived deficit.

> I would probably say, that's it's the view of a teacher, a teacher who needs a lot support and help in teaching English. And that it's trying to put everything in here, which will support the learners in classrooms where there is poor teaching.

Any input from teachers as how they would feel about teaching a particular unit, what extra skills they might need for that purpose and any other assistance they might need, is not sought. This is worrying because what learning will take place if teachers are not partners in the design process? The designers do not seem to see a correlation with the role of designing support materials and working with the teacher in the classroom. Although teachers are given ideas and tips of how to teach in a learner-centred, OBE manner making use of paired work, group work and peer, self and teacher assessment they are not encouraged nor provided with opportunities to practice and reflect on their appropriateness or suitability in the diverse contexts in which support materials are used. Thus teachers are not seen as partners in practice.

It's not surprising that Designer A thinks this way since she regards her job of materials writing as very specialised and demanding of certain skills.

> Materials development is a specialised skill. You needed quite a lot of training.

While this is considered beyond the reach of under-qualified teachers, even dedicated and motivated teachers are not seen as able to perform this task.

> … materials development is not the same as teaching. You know you can have a very skilled teacher whose dynamite in the classroom and who's very

> adequate on the assessment side and who is not able to write materials. Just because you're a good teacher doesn't mean that you can write materials. They're different skills.

Designer B said the writing of a unit of materials was complex and required conceptual understanding while also addressing the needs of the curriculum.

> … but when you write a unit of materials it's a very complex craft of integrating the right kind of text, the questions around the curriculum, the language levels of the children, what it is that you want to achieve, what your kind of conceptual understanding is of what you want to achieve.

With regard to teachers producing their own materials Designer C did not think all teachers were capable of doing this. If collaboration took place she felt that this would be in the teacher's guide. She suggested that it would perhaps make sense and be better if the teacher's guide and textbook were written at the same time to ensure a correlation between the two.

> … the team that is working on it are saying that you should actually write the teacher guide as you write the textbook because you know whether the questions you are asking, work and the activities work.

This would seem to indicate a very tightly-framed area of expertise with limited access for others (Bernstein, 1996). Teachers are not really being empowered to develop skills such as materials writing, competence or learner-centred teaching as the rules are not explicitly explained through either the textbook or teacher's guide and their input as stakeholders is not taken into consideration (Fetterman, 1998). Power and control thus remains in the hands of the publishers and writers. What thought has been given to the positioning of the teacher with regard to the design of the teacher's guide and textbook and in particular the newly expected norms and standards for teachers? The role of the teacher as mediator of the textbook is given very little thought and importance. Although Designer A admits that she had a far better understanding of the curriculum's shortcomings when she looked at it from a different perspective, that of a textbook writer, she doesn't seem to apply this to herself as a textbook designer.

> … the minute that I started working with a curriculum that I had been involved in designing, the minute I changed hats and had on a textbook writer's hat and started taking that and started turning it into a textbook, I saw weaknesses, straight away. How come we didn't do this here?

Surely this should also have been done with the textbook? She should have taken off her textbook writer's hat and looked at it from the point of view of the teacher? When I probed further she indicated that some teachers shouldn't even be in the classroom as they had so few skills.

> But unfortunately the majority of teachers in SA are not qualified to, number one, or competent, or confident and they're operating in a second language and they don't have a very good command, if we're talking about English language teaching of the language that they are teaching kids to acquire so it's actually a disaster. So they need much more structure...

Designer B had the perception that teachers are not equipped to critically evaluate and use textbooks and therefore they needed to be trained in this. She regarded the textbook as a key resource in the classroom but teachers needed to be educated about its use.

> We now have to turn our attention to the textbook because there are very good textbooks in South Africa now. We now have to turn the attention to how we can work in teacher education on how to help teachers to exploit textbooks... it's teacher development and I think that in service training should have, start having components which look specifically at the question of what is a good textbook and how you exploit a good textbook. So I think that it has to be built into teacher education.

Designer C perceived teachers as not having enough knowledge about how to use a textbook effectively and this could negate the support it provided in a context where there was a lack of resources. She thought that if teachers understood why a textbook should be worked through sequentially, and if this was explained to them, they would use it more effectively.

> So that again says to me that there is such a lack of sophistication amongst teachers um that the handling of the textbook again is probably not enough. Maybe one needs to say there are reasons for following the book as given um still not dictate too much but at the same time make sure the teachers saw that. If they saw the reason for teaching that maybe they would be more careful to follow it.

Would it be reasonable to conclude that designers either have little regard for the teachers themselves or prefer to keep this knowledge sacred and restricted only to people such as themselves? By refusing to make teachers full members of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and keeping them on the periphery do these

designers feel that if they empower teachers in the process they will make their own knowledge production profane?

### 5.5.Conclusion

The research question that was being addressed in this chapter had to do with the extent to which teacher learning and empowerment were important considerations in the design of support materials i.e. textbooks and teacher's guides that I examined in the study: teacher's guide A and textbook A. On reflecting on the data collected, it became clear that the designers in general, did not see themselves as performing a teacher development role. They simply viewed themselves as having a responsibility to producing material that provided teachers with procedures to implement policy. They indicated a reluctance or unwillingness to involve teachers in the preparation of the support materials and the general viewpoint is that teachers lacked the general knowledge and skills to be of use to them.

What this data highlights is a concept of curriculum development that these designers hold. Teachers function as developers at the chalk face and specialists do the thinking for them. This is a concept that Kelly (2004) raises concerns about. It reflects a linear notion of curriculum as content and education as transmission or curriculum as product and education as instrumental rather than a model of education which he believes should includes the experiences and rights of the individual and promote social equality and empowerment (Kelly 2004: 79). When the former is the case, he claims that this leads to a loss of freedom for both learner and pupil (Kelly, 2004: 59). Underscoring Kelly's view, Pinar *et al* (1995) would argue that designers should rather try to understand the positioning of the individual teacher within a holistic framework instead of placing the emphasis on the curriculum as a means of transmitting isolated, static knowledge. Drawing on an earlier study by Pinar and Grumet (1976, cited in Pinar et al, 1995), they argue that the focus of the curriculum should be on how the teacher experiences the curriculum materials rather than on the curriculum structure.

What the next chapter clearly illustrates, by focusing on the content of the text themselves, is that despite the rhetoric of the designers they functioned with a notion of curriculum development that Kelly (2004) is most concerned about.

# Chapter Six

## Access to Learners' Textbook through the Teacher's Guide

### 6.1. Introduction

In this chapter I examine the extent to which the teacher's guide clarified the content and pedagogy used in the learners textbook. While language style or form are significant and give access to content in a subtle way, this was not the primary aim when looking at these texts. Rather I was more interested in the style and form - as the *what or representation- of the* content of lessons and the *way it was* communicated – discourse- to promote teaching and learning. Also important to the analysis were the power relations suggested by the way the reader is positioned and empowered by the authors' choice of words and their organisation in the teacher's guide as support material for clarifying the textbook written for the learners.

### 6.2. Teacher's Guide: Access to the Textbook

When I looked at the teacher's guide A and textbook A, it was clear that the designers were using what Bernstein calls L1. In a task; Unit One, Activity One; learners had to write about themselves. The unit was called "Viewing and writing: Write about yourself":

> Under the photograph, write a few lines describing things that you like about your **personality**. Write complete sentences. Check the information on writing complete sentences on page 6.

In relation to this section in the textbook, this is what the guide said:

> Ask learners to use the descriptive phrases on the board to make complete sentences. Write these on the board, adjusting them with the class's help if they aren't complete, and ask what makes each of the sentences complete. Read the "language spot' on complete sentences on page 6 of the learners' book. Then ask learners to do activity 1. They need to stick their photos in their books or on a piece of paper (so they can be added to their portfolios) and to write some sentences about themselves, before swapping with a partner.

Even though the meaning of the word **personality** was provided in the word list at the back of the textbook (learners' book) on page 117 this was not brought to the attention of the teacher. Personality is defined as "*the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's character*". Abstract words such as 'qualities' and 'personality' needed to be expressed in a language, particularly for teachers for

whom English was a second or third language, through some form of L2 to enable them to clarify what was in the learner's textbook. According to Bernstein (1996) L2 should illustrate to teachers how the content can be recontextualised to clarify its underpinning concepts. This would have enabled the teachers to see beyond the original description to the essence of these concepts and subsequently helped them to ensure that learners grasped the principles of writing that were promoted by the activity they had to perform. However, the designers took it for granted that these principles were known by the teachers and needed no explanation. The teacher is considered knowledgeable about the content in the activity and as having the necessary pedagogical knowledge to unravel the principles that were to be taught using the content suggested. In the guide provided, the designers are not in any way trying to be in conversation with the teacher. They come across as authorities in control of the learning and teaching process.

In Activity Two, 'Writing: Describe yourself' learners are asked to describe themselves in this way.

1. Write about ten lines describing all the things you would include in a photo of yourself. Here are some ideas to get you started:
    - Where you want the photo to be taken
    - What you are doing in the photo
    - What you are wearing: your clothes, your shoes, your hairstyle and so on
    - What the **expression** on your face will be

2. You can make a rough drawing of the photograph. Or, if you have a camera, why not get a friend to take this photo of you?

3. Share your ideas with a friend.

This is how the teacher is told to teach this section in the teacher's guide A:

> Read through the instructions for the activity. Discuss the term 'framed' with the class referring back to some of the photos that learners particularly liked in the magazines they looked through … Ask some learners to tell you some of the things that they think represent themselves, for example, activities, places, clothes, etc. Ask learners to do the activity and then to show their partners what they have come up with.

The teacher is told to assess the learners' ability using as a checklist the following criteria:

- Includes items suited to the medium (magazine)

- Shows something of self in the final product
- Uses suitable visual elements which are attractive

The scale provided to measure these criteria is: Yes, Partly, No.

The section related to this activity in the teacher's guide was mainly made up of commands e.g. 'Read through the instructions with the children', 'Discuss the term *framed* with the class' The way that the text is positioning the teacher, I believe, is as a subordinate, carrying out the instructions (commands) of the designer. What is also of interest to me as an English teacher is that the learning outcome for this task is LO4, which is writing, but the learner is being assessed on a visual literacy activity i.e. a picture. Why are the 'ten lines describing all the things you would include in a photo of yourself' not being assessed. This is after all an English language task, not an art class. What about punctuation, sentence structure etc?

According to Tomlinson (2003) designers need to inform the teacher of the pedagogical principles or framework guiding their writing and Bernstein (1996) says that if principles are to be transformed into pedagogic communication they should be explicit and transparent. The positioning of the teacher here ignores the interactive relationship between teacher, learner and curriculum materials. Instead there appears to be the assumption that the curriculum materials can operate independently of the teacher (Ball & Cohen, 1996). If support materials are to be of value, Ball & Cohen (1996) argue that they should provide sufficient guidance, useful and clear notes, a rationale, lesson summaries and cater for different teaching styles. This has not been implemented here.

A third example is to be found in Unit 5, Activity 6 'A praise poem' which is an individual activity and addresses LO4 and AS 'writes creatively'. This activity is preceded by other activities where learners read information on ball games, the language of ball sports, David Beckham, advertising, brainstorming an exhibition, the origins of soccer, the Aztecs and Mayans as the first soccer players and their god of ball games called Xochipilli. This is what the learner is told to do:

> Imagine that you are a ball player who is about to play an important match. You do not want your team to lose! Write a praise poem to the god Xochipilli.

In the teacher's guide, the information provided for this activity is that this activity addresses LO4 and AS4: the learner writes creatively; shows development in the ability to write stories, poems and play-scripts. The teaching tips are:

> Find out what learners know about praise poems and get the learners to discuss what they know in groups. After about ten minutes, one person from each group can stand up and tell the rest of the class what their group's definition of a praise poem is, and provides examples. Each group should have no more than three minutes to report back. Based on all the group presentations, the whole class can discuss and decide on what they think would make a good praise poem. Write down the agreed criteria on the board. Then let learners read or perform their praise poems to the rest of the class at the end of each lesson for the next week or so.

The task is to be assessed using the following criteria:

> The learner takes part in defining a praise poem and establishing criteria for this definition; applies these criteria to the writing of a praise poem; assesses work and edits where necessary.

The scale provided to measure the criteria is a rating of 1-4.

What struck me immediately was that neither the teacher nor the learner was provided with an example of a praise poem. The assumption is that all learners and their teachers know what a praise poem is. I would have expected the guide to provide cues to important aspects expected when writing this type of poem, for example, rhyme, descriptive/emotional language and stanzas. This should be expected at Grade 7 level. But designers, failed to do this. Learners and teachers were expected to know that these aspects needed to be included in the poems. It was in discussion that designer A realized and commented on this omission as follows:

> Let's just randomly look at one of the teaching tips. Let's see what they say in the teacher's guide to support the teacher. Activity 6. [we both looked at the guide] Now you see where this falls short? It doesn't actually give the criteria.

I agreed and she then went on to say:

> So I would say that that's a shortcoming, because it assumes that between the teacher and the learners they will be able to come up with a satisfactory set of criteria…But they also need to know, they need an example of a praise poem.

What is evident here is that upon reflection of the task and the information provided, this designer was then able to see the shortcomings in the textbook and teacher's guide for this particular activity. Designer B had said this about the teacher's guide:

> There's a teacher's guide, which is absolutely addressed to the teacher … giving teachers guidance and working with teachers own resources on how they can develop and extend stuff in relation to the learners' book.

Looking firstly at the textbook that was to be used, I would argue that there is an assumption that the pupils can make meaning about a text unrelated to their own context and involving content from other countries and peoples such as the Aztecs and Mayans. There is little consideration given to the reader's own context or that of his/her community. It was also taken for granted that each learner would know what a praise poems is and knowledgeable about the criteria for writing such a poem.

Teachers have not been provided with sufficient information in the teacher's guide to teach the units effectively or even as the designers intended. Even though designers A and B seemed to believe that if the textbook was used, the curriculum requirements would be covered, they had ignored the role of the teacher as the person to facilitate access to the content of the textbook. There was no evidence that the authors were familiar with what the teacher knew and was able to do, that is, the positioning of the teacher. They seemed to have ignored what the literature has said about teacher learning.

The information and instructions were set out clearly but the learning appears to be incidental rather than explicit. I would think that a more structured process needed to be provided so that it was clear to the teacher what the learners are looking for. According to Bernstein if the teacher has clarity and understanding then he/she would be better positioned to make this knowledge accessible to the learners.

Even though this was a Grade 7 classroom, teachers have to be helped to understand what was crucial to the differentiation that is made amongst the nouns for them to be able to clarify this in their teaching. Simply repeating what is in the text could not in any way be seen as reflecting understanding. What the guide ought to have done was to clarify to the teacher the nature and scope of the intentions of the content that was taught. However, as Hirst (1975) argued, fulfilling lesson objectives is about raising consciousness that will result in a cognitive process and subsequent change of behaviour. Designers overlooked this. Especially in the light of an earlier statement by Designer C where she is aware that group work is a 'sophisticated management

technique' and that many teachers don't understand the concept and have not had training in the practice. This is what she said:

> The teachers don't understand this about group work and the policy document does say this, that group work doesn't just mean arranging desks in groups of four, or whatever. The teacher doesn't understand this about group work, that it's actually quite a sophisticated management technique which I don't think they have and which I don't think it's there in the training to provide that management technique.

I would have expected her to have allowed for this lack of understanding and to have ensured that the teacher knew what to do if she expected the teacher to enact the activity as she expected.

Although the designers shared a concern about teacher's skills and capacity we need to question why more effort was not put into the teacher's guide to ensure that the learners would be taught effectively. If, as Bernstein says, L2 should open up L1 to reveal the concepts so that the content can be understood, it makes sense that if the teacher guide is more explicit and clear, the teacher will have a better understanding of the content which needs to be taught to the learners. By neglecting to ensure that this happens, by controlling the potential discursive gap in this manner, it would appear that the designers are intent upon remaining in control of this knowledge and restricting access to teachers. The reason could be that they don't believe that the teachers use the teachers' guides and therefore this is just a waste of time.

If they believe that the teachers lack capacity why is this not being addressed in the support materials they design? Surely if teachers are so unskilled they need even greater assistance? More opportunities for collaboration should be outlined? More opportunities for practicing the competences and skills should be described? If you don't address the teachers as they are positioned then you won't be able to create a rupture, an opportunity, to cross the border (Giroux) to a place, which will allow new learning to take place. Gough (1999) refers to the same point by arguing for the value of using Doll's (1993) Four Rs as a basis for promoting people's cognitive development and ownership of the knowledge production process. His view is that unless people understand the richness, recursion and rigor that has gone into the production of knowledge, it will be difficult for them to see how the synthesis has

occurred and subsequently find it difficult to reconstruct this knowledge in a manner that is suitable in the various contexts within which they function.

It is in this sense that Ball & Cohen (1996) argue that if support materials are to be play a valuable role in teacher learning when new materials are introduced, consideration should be given to the provision of instructions on how to use them. Teachers should be encouraged to engage with the materials in a way that would build capacity, encourage professional development and improve their teaching practices. They believe that this can be done if the teachers are provided with concrete examples of the type of work expected and if the pedagogical practices and concepts implicit in the new materials are explicitly illustrated and communicated. Tomlinson (2003) supports this viewpoint and argues that the theoretical framework of the lesson should be explicit and transparent. My concerns regarding what is expected of the teacher, the lack of clarity regarding the underpinning concepts, the limited information that has been provided were further supported by an examination of the teacher's guide.

### 6.3. Teacher's Guide

Learning outcomes and assessment standards are explained under a heading "What is a learning outcome?" and "What is an assessment standard?". Definitions from the RNCS are provided as an explanation of each. A learning outcome (LO) is described as follows:

> Each learning area has its own set of learning outcomes. Learning outcomes were designed down from the critical and developmental outcomes. The learning outcomes give a specific focus to knowledge, skills and values for each learning area that learners should achieve by the end of the General Education and Training (GET) band, making them clear and understandable.

An assessment standard (AS) is described in this way.

> The policy states that assessment standards describe the minimum level, depth and breadth of what learners should demonstrate in their achievement of each learning outcome. They embody the knowledge, skills and values required for learners to achieve learning outcomes for each grade and do not prescribe method. Assessment standards are grade specific and show how conceptual progression will occur in a learning area. Assessment is performed against the assessment standards for a particular grade. Therefore they are a key feature fro the progression of learners from grade to grade.

The explanation continues as follows by "*providing the appropriate content, knowledge and activities that effectively covers the learning outcomes and assessment standards*" (xii). Designers tried to explain how they addressed this when mapping the outline of the textbook and teacher's guide:

Designer C said this:

> And then we kept on checking, as we did a backward planning of the book, you know all the units and all the genres we were using - for the genres we looked at the beginning of the RNCS; to see the genres we should be doing and made sure that we went through all of those, um, we and then as we created, as we did the micro planning, we kept on referring back to the RNCS values; the very specific values, plus we kept on referring 'back' to the critical outcomes and developmental outcomes which are supposed to go across all the learning areas

Designer B said this about conforming to the RNCS:

> … all the curriculum outcomes mapped onto this book arise out of the curriculum guidelines [and] provide a central skeletal frame around which this whole book is constructed. So if you look at the teacher's guide here, you might see, that what we do here, like here are the units, like "getting to know each other", um, and here, we've got all the issues around the principles of the national curriculum, social justice, outcomes based education, progression, integration, development, outcomes... Unfortunately, it's very hard now to write these documents … because of all the politics and economics around publishing.

This is how Designer A expressed it:

> We had to do an audit of the books that we had written for C 2005 to see where the gaps were in terms of the RNCS. And basically make adjustments to the book so that we were covering all of the requirements of the RNCS. So we did a very detailed combing through the policy, and mapping it on to our book to see where the gaps were and discussing how we could address it

If we look at these explanations in relation to one another the consideration that the authors gave to the requirements of RNCS in the design of the teacher's guide became clear. Albeit, Designer B expressed some disquiet about having to take into account the politics and economics of publishers. She found it restraining to them as authors.

The next section in the introduction (p. xv – xxi) explains the new assessment policy. This it says is based on continuous assessment and the principles of OBE. The requirements of the RNCS are that assessment should be transparent, integrated with

teaching and learning, based on criteria and standards which have been predetermined, a variety of methods and contexts and should be valid, reliable, fair, learner-paced and flexible. This is reflected in Designer C's comments about the varied forms of assessment that she included in the textbook and teacher's guide.

> … and in terms of assessment, we alternate with little assessment exercises. We alternate between peer assessment and teacher assessment and self assessment. So that mix is required by continuous assessment with every now and then a little pointer that this can go into the portfolio.

The use of rubrics is advocated and Designer C explained how she tried to meet the requirement:

> A lot of use of rubrics, which is an RNCS requirement. So that there are rubrics for them. They don't have to use those, but it is a model for them to go by and also suggestions to them as to how to get children to use rubrics because there is a very big value in the RNCS document - that assessment is transparent. Children know what the criteria are. So you put the rubric on the board, so the kids can see it, and they know…

Also included in the assessment section are the ways that assessment now differs from the previous curriculum; the purposes of assessment; the definition of continuous assessment; assessment strategies; record keeping such as record books, learner portfolios, progression schedules, learner profiles, assessment codes, reports; and implications for use in the classroom. An example of this regarding self-assessment and peer assessment by the learners states:

> Create learner self-assessment and peer assessment opportunities at appropriate times to encourage learners to reflect on the learning process and assess their own strengths and weaknesses.

In response, Designer C claimed that she provides for different forms of assessment in the textbook.

> We're kind of reminding the teacher to provide for the portfolio. … implicit reminders to the teacher - there should be … in the teacher guide - we would say to the children, your teacher will come and, so she knows that when doing peer assessment she's also walking around observing.

Then photocopiable examples of assessment records are provided such as an observation sheet for informal assessment, a learner self-assessment sheet, a self-assessment / a peer assessment/ and a teacher assessment of group work sheet. These are useful in that the teacher doesn't have to draw them up her/himself. The one

drawback is that they don't refer to competences and only require yes or no answers. It would have been more useful if the grading scale provided on p. xvii, for the peer and teacher assessment sheets for group work, was specific on the competences to be qualified rather than have the following generally expressed scale:

> 4 = Learner's performance *has exceeded* the requirements of the learning outcome for the grade.
> 3 = Learner's performance has *satisfied* the requirements of the learning outcome for the grade.
> 2 = Learner's performance *has partially satisfied* the requirements of the learning outcome for the grade.
> 1 = Learner's performance *has not satisfied* the requirements of the learning outcome for the grade.

Underpinning this scale is an assumption that teachers knew what the specific learning outcome implied in terms of the cognitive development expected and what behaviour would serve as an indicator of such development. The rubrics provided from page xxvii-xxxii are said to be useful to the teachers. These could be considered useful for teachers who are trying to understand what the form of assessment required in practice. They include summative, baseline and formative assessment record sheets. These are particularly useful because the criteria and level of competence are clearly demarcated. A shortcoming that is perceived by Designer C is that all this paper work may affect the teacher's creative time while Designer A was concerned that it would take away from the teacher's preparation time.

> What worries me is that people are spending their time filling in forms (admin) instead of preparing.

Although the intention of the teacher's guide is to familiarise teachers with the new policy requirements, Designer C was worried that teachers were not using it.

> Can I tell you something? We don't think the teachers use them.

Designer A reiterated this concern as follows:

> Now that bit gets to the question I want to ask you whether teachers use teacher's guides?

She was obviously very concerned when she asked "Did you say you used teacher's guides when you got them?" In answer to her question, I replied that in my opinion, especially in the context of education now, the teacher's guide is essential to

understanding the new curriculum. In response remarked " It needs to assume less, be more directive perhaps?"

On the basis of the content covered in the teacher's guide, it is reasonable to argue that it reflected what authors saw as their role as providers of professional support to teachers. Even though the designers acknowledged that they had to guide and support teachers, they could not be empowered by what was provided in the teacher's guide.

In discussions with the designers it became clear that its preparation was not given the consideration it ought to receive. When I asked the designers what was guiding the preparation of the guide the general view was that the motivation was to produce the textbook and they were writing for the learner. This is despite what they said about teacher capacity and that many were unskilled. Designer A described teacher capacity this way:

> Unfortunately the majority of teachers in South Africa are not qualified, number one, or competent, or confident and they're operating in a second language and they don't have a very good command, if we're talking about English language teaching, of the language that they are teaching kids to acquire. So it's actually a disaster. So they need much more structure.

This need to address the lack of teacher capacity has been underscored but ignored by this designer. One would assume that if teachers are so poorly equipped every effort would be made to ensure that they understood exactly what to do so that effective teaching and learning would take place. This teacher's guide is specifically for English as a First Additional language and from this it can be assumed that the learners are second language English speakers. How were they to know what to do if the teachers themselves do not have clarity and understanding of what the outcomes required them to assess in terms of performance?

If teachers were to fulfil the competences required by the norms and standards of teacher education, designers needed to understand how they communicated subject and pedagogical knowledge amongst themselves and use this form of communication in the teacher's guide as scaffolding to the communication they wished to promote and included in the learners' textbook. This would have facilitated access into the design process (Fetterman, 1998, 2001). Rather than do this, the content provided to the teacher is merely an over simplification of that provided to the learner. This is not

good enough if the teacher's knowledge and understanding is to be addressed. The teacher needs to be provided with more in-depth information on content and strategies.

On the basis of the evidence provided here, it is reasonable to conclude that the design of both textbook and teacher's guide is driven by the requirements of the RNCS and the publishers and not by the needs of the teacher. The teacher is seen as the functionary of policy and the publishers. As Bernstein asserts, when the ORF is this dominant, the individual (teacher) is disregarded and deemed to have few rights and little status. This in the South African context is in conflict with the principles of the new curriculum.

We can assume that the designers are following an approach, which conforms to the performance model as described by Bernstein (1996). He claims that a performance model emphasises a specific output (outcome) expected from the learner, a particular text e.g. poem, comprehension, letter etc., that the learner is expected to produce (the learner's work is the product), and the skills needed produce this piece of work. If that is the case, then the designers needed to do the following for the benefit of both learners and teachers: principles and rules needed to be explicitly set out. The criteria should have been explicit and specific. In evaluation, the model concentrates on what is absent in the product. This the designers should have established first so as to make sure that they write in a manner that would reduce the discursive gap they knew existed between the products of the teachers and the new knowledge they were providing. Only then would they in turn to make help learners aware of what is expected and how to recognise and realise the legitimate text.

However, the RNCS advocates the competence model. According to Bernstein (1996), this is a learner-centred model that places greater control in the hands of the learner regarding selection, sequence and pace. Here the recognition and realisation rules are implicit rather than explicit and the focus is on process rather than product. The use of textbooks and such pre-packaged learning materials is less likely to satisfy the requirements of the model, as the teacher here is supposed to construct appropriate teaching and learning materials for the context of the learners. This model

requires greater autonomy and capacity from the teacher who plays an invisible role in the learning process.

According to Muller (1998: 187) a performance model, as instructional model, moves the emphasis from the learner to the outcome and at the same time expects the teacher to control the selection, pace and evaluation of knowledge in a 'visible' way. But Muller (1998: 181, 187) questions the invisibility of the teacher in the new OBE model, which he believes is more costly, time-consuming and requires more in-depth training. He describes OBE as a model:

> … where both competence and performance assumptions are jostling for dominance in the same curriculum reform.

**6.4 Conclusion**

While the way that the designers have set out their teacher's guide and textbook may conform to the principles of OBE and the RNCS, it does not conform to what writers such as Tomlinson (2003) have said about support materials. OBE presumes a capacity and 'invisibility' on the part of the teacher, but authors such as Tomlinson argue that the teacher's guide should clearly indicate the content and the pedagogy that is used in the learner's book. Also, English here is a second language and would thus fall within the boundaries of Collection Code subjects (Bernstein, 1996) such as French, which are strongly framed and classified with a definite product expected at the end of the teaching and learning process.

Support materials could make a greater contribution if the enacted curriculum (Cornbleth, 1990) was to be made the focus of their design. This would mean redrawing the boundaries between teachers and the design of support materials place. The teacher would then be placed in the centre of the design process and in this way their development promoted (Ball & Cohen, 1996) by textbooks that provide practical guidance on a text, suggest innovative approaches and offer a variety of plans so that the teacher can cater for all learners.

# Chapter Seven

## Summary of the Study

### 7.1. Intention of the study

The study looked at a textbook and teacher's guide for teaching English at Grade 7 level to see how they assisted, respectively, learning and teacher's understanding of the principles that informed the preparation of the textbook. The latter was considered as a reflection of curriculum delivery. I wished to find out whether the designers viewed teachers as partners in curriculum delivery. There was also interest to establish the extent to which teachers were encouraged to engage with the text, identify its strengths and shortcomings when used for teaching and learning so that improvements can be effected in later editions.

By examining support materials to find out how they clarified for teachers how to translate concepts implied in the RNCS into teaching strategies, I hoped to gain an understanding of the materials as supplementary curriculum guidance documents meant to assist teachers, as curriculum developers, to change their practices in accordance with the new thinking of the RNCS.

On the basis of data obtained from the interviews with the authors of the texts examined here and the analysis of these texts by the researcher, the framing used by authors revealed their attitude towards the content with which they were working and the professional authority they ascribed to themselves and to the teachers as promoters of learning. Drawing on mainly Goodson and Marsh (1996), the argument made in the study is that it is possible that this type of framing may be an attempt to resist perceived threats to the distribution of power of those in control of the professional knowledge production process. The designers' work was strongly framed with restricted access. The conclusion, informed by Bernstein's (2000) theory on pedagogic models, is that the texts demonstrated a model that ensured that the authority and control of the curriculum development process remained with the designers.

Chapter five illustrates how all three designers were unable to see themselves as performing a teacher development role. They were so intent on conforming to the requirements of the RNCS, as instructed by the publishers, that they designed materials that prescribed to teachers how to implement policy rather than be partners in devising strategies in teaching the content that was covered in the textbook. The designers seemed to believe that by modelling the required practices in the textbook and giving teachers instructions about what to do to ensure that these practices occurred in lessons, would make it possible for them to grasp what was intended. They assumed that how they organized the curriculum was self-explanatory and if teachers followed instructions they would learn how to deal with the concepts and essential features of what is to be taught. The argument in this chapter is that although the designers succeeded in complying with the policy procedural requirements, they did not clarify for the teachers what was involved in translating the principles underpinning the RNCS.

While learners were provided with a variety of opportunities to interact with the texts, the teachers were to simply implement what was proposed by the instructions in the guide. There was no dialogue with them as partners in curriculum delivery. Authors should have more explicitly 'unpacked' the steps that were taken to teach concepts in a manner prescribed by the RNCS. Instead everything was made so explicit that teachers were left with no scope for decision-making about the curriculum. Drawing on, amongst others, Ensor, Bernstein and Lave & Wenger the argument is that for sustainable learning or change to take place access to the concepts should have been more explicit and criteria informing the design explained. Unfortunately, the authors seemed to have preferred to restrict access, as they did not consider teachers as adequately knowledgeable to be involved in conceptualizing the writing of these texts. They seemed not to appreciate fully the resources that needed to be put in place in order to professionally empower teachers. The conclusion is that the textbook and guide did not provide opportunities for teachers to gain an understanding of what was involved in organizing the texts as they were.

In Chapter Six, the primary focus was in the *what* (thematic content) and the *way* (discourse) teaching and learning were supported. The positioning of the reader in the text was of particular interest to the study. A close examination of the teacher's guide

to establish whether the designers were using L1 or L2 to clarify its content indicated that they were using L1. They were simplifying the content but not communicating it to the teachers using a language that allowed the access to L1 as Bernstein (1996) suggests should happen. The conclusion is that since the teacher's guide did not make it easier for the teachers to understand the language of the text they were likely to be left unempowered.

The tone and many commands used in the instructions for the teachers portrayed the authors, as the producers of the texts, as the only people who had the authority to prescribe how they could be used and subsequently in control of the curriculum process. As a social convention (Gee, 1990), the discourse and language selection could have been influenced by the conventions that are still typical of the school culture within which the authors are writing. It could be that in accordance with Gee's (1990) views, the authors might have felt that given the social community and the context of the teachers, they needed to use a model that would convey what they considered to be a valuable manner of transmitting the content and translating the principles promoted by the RNCS. This is what they took for granted as worthwhile pedagogic practice. Also, it could be that they considered teaching learners and teachers as being the same. Janks (2005) refers to this as dissimulation because the power relations remain hidden and the differences between people are ignored.

The interview process provided a free and relaxed opportunity for the designers to clarify how they perceived their role as mediators of the policy for the teachers. The process was useful it also provided a basis from which I could triangulate my reading of the texts they had written. Their views fitted in well with what I had concluded when examining these texts. This evidence is covered in chapter six.

Primarily, Bernstein's (1996) theory on the languages of description was invaluable to account for the authority that the designers bestowed on themselves as curriculum developers. The nature of the potential discursive gap which was identified in the materials that Bernstein writes about could be looked at critically to unravel the extent to which the designers were aware of their control over this gap and how willing or prepared they were to make the criteria they employed in producing materials explicit and thus visible to the teachers. The text provided insights from which I drew in the

attempt to clarify how these designers, as controllers of the potential discursive gap, were recontextualizing the content for teachers in response to the requirements of the RNCS. It also helped me to reflect on issues of power, control and access to the curriculum design process and the status and rights that the writers ascribed to their readers. Bernstein's theories seemed far-fetched for me before this, but drawing on them in this study, I found what he said really illuminating. This was very exciting for me and it was like an epiphany or eureka moment. It provided a most appropriate theoretical explanation for what I had experienced when referring to support materials in preparing lessons as a teacher.

Ensor's text on teacher education in a South African context was a useful adjunct to Bernstein's theories, particularly her emphasis on the need for student teachers to be able to recognise and realise the generative principles underpinning best practice. With Fetterman's (1998, 2001) I was able to explain how issues related to empowerment have to do with understanding acquired through involvement in and ownership of the curriculum process. Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) on learning communities and Lave & Wenger (1991, 1999) on apprenticeships and participative partnerships were useful in addressing how the latter can be made possible. The texts drew my attention to the value of participation as a form of support for teachers having to change their teaching practices.

In analyzing the texts themselves Ball & Cohen (1996) and Tomlinson (2003) provided cues on how the texts ought to have considered the positioning of the teacher particularly the context, needs and capabilities to be accessible to them. In particular, Tomlinson's emphasis on the value of feedback and dialogue between teachers and designers helped to clarify the designers' views about their status in relation to that of the teachers. Drawing on Ball & Cohen's (2003) work, it was possible to argue that that the lack of dialogue between them and the teachers may result in teachers not using the materials as the designers intended. Designers had perhaps unwittingly created a discursive gap between the materials and teacher's languages by specifically overlooking what the teacher's guide had to do for them to provide meaningful support. For the classroom to become a site of learning for teachers the guide should have encouraged them to reflect-in-practice on activities in the textbook during lessons and subsequently provide guidance on how they could be improved. This, as it

is argued in the study, could have enhanced teacher learning and subsequently the learners' cognitive development.

The choice of a qualitative approach for the study enabled me to use ethnographic tools such as interviews and document analysis. Interviews as the main method of data collection enabled me to understand in depth the designers' views about their role as support materials writers. They allowed me access to them as insiders in the writing process. Analysing the texts by focusing on both thematic content and discourse used in them corroborated what the designers said about the way they designed the support materials and the register they had used. This made the study reliable, as there was consistency across the data collected (McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 183) Interpretations derived from both texts also demonstrated congruence (mutual meanings) between the authors and mine. The validity thus established makes the study, I believe, an indispensable educational resource to both publishers and their authors.

If this study was not confined to a restricted time period the insights it provides would have included data from observations of teacher's lessons that are provided in the support materials examined here. However, though this might have been desirable, the inability of the researcher to obtain data related to this aspect does not in any way detract from the value of the study because its intention was not to find out how teachers translated the context of the text into practice but rather to establish how the text addressed and fulfilled what are generally accepted as principles of meaningful curriculum development.

The conclusion drawn in the study is that even though there is clear evidence of designers' attempts to unravel what the RNCS implies through practice, this did not translate into a discourse that helped the teachers access the rationale of the lessons that are given as examples in the support materials. Guidance was not in the form of modelling the concepts that were taught, and that was likely to leave the teachers disempowered and perpetuated the technicist role they played in the classroom.

**7.2 Implications and Recommendations of the study**

An implication for this study is that the texts should be revised if they are to provide intensive and meaningful follow-up support that will make them effective learning tools. They should allow for the scaffolding of learning. Teachers' practices need to be known, before introducing interventions at classroom level because developing competences like reflexivity requires teachers to first concretize concepts for themselves. Second, improve their subject knowledge and then master the pedagogy relevant to teaching the subject. Therefore, support material designers need to scaffold conceptual development if new concepts and teaching practices are to be fully understood and effectively utilised by teachers.

Designers also need to consider and be responsive to the professional capability and context of teachers when structuring the support materials. Empowerment requires that there should be greater teacher involvement in the design process. It is to be seen as a collective endeavour and later on the evaluation process should be guided by, amongst others, the principles of improvement, ownership, evidence-based strategies, organizational learning and accountability. The materials design process must reflect that this has occurred. Based on collective wisdom, materials will be meaningful and more receptive to the teachers. This entails reconceptualising the role of the teacher and the approach to designing support materials. More effort needs to be made by the designers and the publishers to provide for explicit teacher development in the support materials.

The teacher's guide therefore needs to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the teaching strategies and content, which have been selected by the designer.

Publishers need to take more responsibility and seek independent advice on how their textbooks and teacher's guides are to be designed so as to have the necessary impact for both teachers and learners. It is not sufficient to just rely on the authors commissioned to produce materials which are placed in the market without first subjecting them to a thorough and independent review process. Appropriateness in this respect will be more rewarding financially in the long-term.

Also the DoE should advocate for such a review process by compelling publishers to pilot the use of sample texts by teachers in classrooms so as to improve understanding about how the concepts and strategies, which they contain, can be better communicated. There should be a chain of responsibility starting from the publisher to the teacher in the classroom. In short, publishers have responsibility and are accountable for how teaching and learning are improved in the schools of all provinces where their particular support materials are being used.

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