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The practices of a group of ‘out-standing’ early reading teachers working in Johannesburg government schools

Deborah Joan Botha

A thesis submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Johannesburg 2017

Abstract

This work explores the teaching practices of a small number of experienced early reading teachers who are considered 'out-standing' in that they 'stand out' in their individual schools as teachers who consistently produce children who are able to read at grade level.

Twelve teachers, from different socio-cultural and socio-linguistic backgrounds, who teach in Johannesburg government schools, situated in different socio-economic areas, are the participants in the case study. Through in-depth teacher interviews and conversations, the teachers' own descriptions of their reading programmes and pedagogies were recorded and analysed. Bourdieu's theory of practice, [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice' (Maton, 2014, p.51) is used to consider the relational alignment between field, habitus and capital which underpins each teacher's practice, to provide insights into the origins and evolution of these practices.

The main finding is that all twelve teachers implement 'balanced' reading programmes with the explicit teaching of decoding skills being foregrounded. However it is the systematic and compassionate way in which the programmes are delivered, rather than the programme itself, which makes the teachers stand out. This is underpinned by the teachers' habitus shown in their linguistic, organisational, time-management, and planning skills, together with a child-centered disposition.

Significant differences between the teacher's practices are revealed, particularly regarding the core instructional strategies for teaching reading, but also in relation to differentiation, homework practices and supervised reading practice, and despite the common terminology of the national curriculum being used. The differences in practice are aligned to the different socio-cultural and socio-historic backgrounds of the teachers, and their exposure to the historical field. The practices are also associated with the differently resourced and positioned schools in which they teach, which constitute different microfields. Because these are all effective reading teachers, this study shows how good teaching practices can be enacted in a variety of ways, in different contexts.

Individually, each teacher has acquired different forms of symbolic capital which makes them out-standing. This has enabled them to adapt to the transforming field in South Africa. Where teachers qualified and worked in the historically more privileged sectors, unchanged

reproductions of historic practices are common, while the teachers from the historically dominated sector have all significantly changed their practice. Greater levels of adaptation were thus required from the teachers who acquired the least capital in the historical field. New capital had been acquired after 1994, through teaching in different types of schools, literacy interventions, and through personal agency.

The recommendations, based on this study, are that further support is provided to early reading teachers in the form of reading resources, upskilling opportunities, particularly regarding the use of the Language of Teaching and Learning, the implementation differentiated practice and the implementation of homework practices. It is also suggested that aspects of the curriculum be reviewed.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Deborah Joan Botha

1 July 2017

Dedication

To Andre, and to my children, Paul and Adam, who inspired me with their own achievements.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Kerryn Dixon, who has been more than a supervisor and has taught me an extraordinary amount in the long process of completing this thesis. Her patience and astute discrimination shaped my thinking and taught me not be afraid of theorising.

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I also remember my parents, Pamela and Patrick Ryan, who I think would have been pleased, and Diana Tshababala who was a source of strength to our family for so long.

Finally, thank you to my precious family, Andre, Paul and Judy, Adam and Thirosha, who have been so patient and understanding throughout this long process. I could not have completed this without your support. Andre, thank you for the edits, the meals, the kindness and unwavering loyalty you showed as I completed this.

Abbreviations

CAPS:	Curriculum and Assessment Statement
DBE:	Department of Basic Education
DET:	Department of Education and Training-Department
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
READ:	Read, Educate and Develop
HOA:	House of Assembly
HOD:	House of Delegates
HOD:	(In a school context) Head of Department
HOR:	House of Representatives
TED:	Transvaal Education Department
WSoE:	University of the Witwatersrand, School of Education
LoLT:	Language of Learning and Teaching
SES:	Socioeconomic Status

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND: THE SOUTH AFRICAN LITERACY SITUATION

Children's literacy acquisition and development, particularly that of children disadvantaged by South Africa's unequal society, have been the focus of my working life for over thirty years. Following Paulo Freire, I believe that it is a human right to be taught to read and write so that one can participate fully in society. I also believe that the ability to read and write effectively is becoming more important as the 'knowledge economy' grows (Freire, 1970; World Bank, 2006). Because of this, I am deeply interested in levels of literacy achievement in South Africa. This interest began in the 1970s when I qualified as a South African teacher under the apartheid system. I worked principally in the disadvantaged education sector in this country, and so witnessed the gross inequalities in South African education before 1994. The equalisation of education was one of the goals of the new democracy and aligned with my deepest beliefs.

Twenty years later, there has been a significant transformation in the education system, but not the miracle that was hoped for. There is no 'quick fix' for equalising the quality of education and I have come to accept that vestiges of the past remain, reproducing its inequities, privileges and lack of educational rigour, and will do so for generations to come. This has become evident in the results of a series of post-democratic, national and international literacy evaluations and reports which reveal continuing low levels of literacy proficiency in South African primary schools during the post-democratic period (Fleisch, 2008; Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman and Archer, 2007; Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman, 2012; Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena, Palance, 2017; Taylor, 2013; 2014; Spaull, 2013; 2016). These evaluations include the nationwide National Systemic Evaluations, which found that the majority of Grade 3 children in South Africa were reading below grade level (DBE, 2001), and the Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study (PIRLS), which found that 95% of Grade 5 children read with exceptionally low levels of comprehension compared with other participating countries, and that 78% of Grade 4 children cannot read for meaning (Howie et

al, 2007; 2012; 2016)[1]. This has led to the perception that South Africa has a literacy crisis (DBE, 2008), although 'crisis' might not be the correct word to use regarding literacy levels. A crisis implies a situation which has 'suddenly worsened' (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2006), whereas the current literacy situation in South Africa, underpinned as it is by the history of education in South Africa, can be seen more as a slow, public awakening to the realisation that the colonial and apartheid educational systems have left a complex and often poor legacy to future generations of teachers and learners, which will be difficult to overcome (Hartshorne, 1999; Du Plessis, 2003; Soudien, 2007).

This view is supported by Fleisch (2008) who explains the complexity surrounding the post-democratic literacy situation. Following the logic of two parallel economies existing side by side in South Africa, Fleisch describes two parallel education systems, each achieving startlingly different results in literacy evaluations (Fleisch, 2008). In the bimodal model he describes, almost all of the distinguishing characteristics of the two systems are historically embedded, a result of the pre-democratic education system. In South Africa before 1994, poor teacher-training, an under-developed infrastructure and poor resourcing were evident in schools for most of the children who were not classified as 'white' (Hartshorne, 1995; 1999; Soudien, 2004; 2007). This contrasted with conditions in the smaller number of schools for 'white[2]' children, where the spend per child was up to 98% higher, resulting in a significantly better quality of education (Fleisch, 2008).

Whether the current literacy situation can be termed 'a crisis' or 'an awakening', the problem has become widely acknowledged in educational and political structures over the past fifteen years, for example, by the former president of South Africa, who, in 2010, set a national target for literacy levels in an attempt to raise standards. The target was that 60% of primary school children would perform at grade level by 2014. Grade level, as defined by the then current curriculum, was not out of line with international standards (Howie et al, 2007; 2012; 2016; DBE, 2011). A series of literacy interventions and trials were begun after the president's statement, building on earlier literacy interventions which had been implemented soon after 1995. These were all situated in South African primary schools and included the Learning for Living intervention (READ, 1999-2005); the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

[1] The 2016 PIRLS results show little difference in terms of literacy levels in this country.

[2] During the apartheid regime, South Africans were classified racially as 'white' (of European descent); 'black' (of African descent); 'coloured' (of mixed-race descent) and 'Indian' (of Asian descent).

(LitNum Strategy), (Western Cape Education Department, 2006-2016); the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS), (Gauteng Department of Education, 2013-2015); the Early Grades Reading Studies I and II (EGRS I/II), (DBE, 2014-2017); and the Reading Catch-Up Programme (RCUP), (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2015). Each of these interventions was (and is, for those that are ongoing) an attempt to respond to the literacy situation; each has principally targeted the group of schools which fall into Fleisch's second rung of achievement. The results of the literacy interventions thus far have been mixed and sometimes disappointing, so that the literacy situation remains unresolved despite indications of progress (Fleisch, 2013; Van den Berg, 2008; Spaull, 2013). Nevertheless, after analysing two large literacy research projects currently being conducted in South Africa, Spaull (2016, p. 5) believes that 'reading in the FP (Foundation Phase[3]) is the biggest solvable problem in our education system'.

The literacy interventions that have been referred to are described more fully in Chapter 2; however, the situation remains that children in particular schools, principally urban or suburban schools that were once part of the dominant 'white' education system in South Africa, have a greater chance of developing grade-level reading skills in the early years of their schooling than the children who attend schools that are historically associated with the non-dominant education systems, and who comprise the majority of learners in this country (Spaull, 2013).

1.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

Common sense would suggest that within each of the categories in Fleisch's bimodal model (2008), there is a hierarchy of schools, and within this hierarchy there are teachers who teach literacy in more or less effective ways. Once one looks beyond national statistics, there are individual teachers who are regarded as particularly effective teachers of reading in both achievement groups. Cunningham and Allington (2007, p. 2), working in the United States, say:

[3] In South Africa, the Foundation Phase of education refers to Grade R, 1, 2 and 3. However, Grade R is not part of the formal education system.

> In the years since 1994 there has been a great deal of research focused on schools and classrooms that beat the odds. All over the country in rural, suburban and urban areas there are classrooms where year after year all the children succeed in learning to read and write.

I believe the situation is no different in South Africa, and therein lies the hope of many of us in this field: that good practice does exist, even within the less-than-optimistic picture painted by national literacy evaluations, both within the group of schools falling into the lower rung of the bimodal model of distribution (Fleisch, 2008) and those on the upper rung. Understanding more about these teachers' practices may provide us with some of the additional knowledge needed to address the overall literacy situation more effectively as a 'solvable problem' (Spaull, 2016).

Rather than dealing with the broad deficits in South African literacy teaching, I am interested in the teachers who, regardless of the context in which they teach, develop literate children capable of reading at grade level. In this research I have focused on teachers who would be classified as historically disadvantaged, described in a national report, in deficit terms, as teachers who 'either "can't" or "won't" teach literacy effectively' (Taylor, 2013), as well as teachers who have emerged from the more privileged sectors, to consider the practices of individual teachers operating in the context of desegregated schools, with some success (Fleisch, 2008; Comber, 1996).

I struggled to find a term for these teachers who 'beat the odds' and have settled on the term 'out-standing', using a literal interpretation of the term rather than the usual usage. This is signified by the hyphen. The term is not as a descriptor of excellence, as in teachers objectively selected through large data-sets of learners' results, but describes twelve teachers who 'stand out' from their peers in specific school contexts. They were nominated by their school principal, peers or others in the field, such as district officials or non-government organisations (NGOs). The twelve teachers stand out because they consistently, year after year, produce literate subjects, and appear to do so better than their colleagues.

The study stems from an ethnographic study I conducted in 2007 of a Grade 1 reading teacher, working in Soweto[4], who had been identified as an effective teacher of reading by her principal and by district-level educational structures. The school in which this teacher worked was the type of school with which successful literacy learning is not often associated**,**

[4] Soweto is township in Johannesburg where many 'black' people were forced to live during the apartheid era.

not only in South Africa, but more widely (Gregory, 2008), as it is situated in an area of Johannesburg characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty. The study questioned the universality of the 'deficit myth' (Gregory, 2008, p. 3) that poverty and illiteracy are inextricably linked and describes one teacher's ability to consistently develop young children's reading and writing skills in a historically disadvantaged school. This study suggested that models of effective reading might be drawn from all sectors of the education system. I wanted to extend this research to examine the practices of other out-standing teachers who represented a range of different socio-economic, socio-linguistic and socio-historic backgrounds.

This research is centred around twelve of these early reading teachers and the research aims are as follows: First, to understand the teaching practices or pedagogies the teachers use for the teaching and learning of reading. Second, to understand the reading programmes they have constructed, which underpin their effective teaching of reading. Third, to understand how their teaching practices and reading programmes originated and then evolved over the years, and which aspects of their current practice represent adaptation to the new conditions in the field after 1994, when South Africa became a democracy. Fourth, to determine how their practices vary in response to different contexts, in order to understand local varieties of good practice in a range of different, but not highly privileged contexts. In other countries and studies, researchers have reflected on this need to look at practices across a range of contexts, believing that they provide a more democratic representation of teachers' practices, and this was one of my objectives here (Comber, 1996; Mills and Comber, 2013). That significantly disparate contexts still exist in the current democratised field is part of the enduring dual legacy of colonisation and apartheid (Fleisch, 2008; Gains, 2010). The historical isolation of different communities, where teachers could practise for a lifetime and yet remain unaware of the teaching practices in a neighbouring school or suburb, because of racial or social divides, has created these variations.

Based on these aims, my research questions are:

- What are the teaching practices of twelve out-standing early reading teachers, teaching Grade 1 to 3 in government schools, in different socio-cultural contexts in Johannesburg?
- How are these practices a response to the historic and current conditions in which the teachers have worked, and currently work?

1.3 RATIONALE

Any research essentially involves a systematic investigation into a subject so that something more is learnt about a topic (Merriam, 2009 p. 3). With applied research there is a further purpose, which is to improve the quality of practice in a particular discipline (Merriam, 2009). This study could be called applied research, in that its aim was not only to identify and understand the practices of selected early reading teachers in the post-apartheid era, and the evolution of these practices, but to add to the body of knowledge on which educational reform is built, so that it is not based on the 'fiction' of an ideal teacher or a single set of practices, but rather on the practices of real teachers, operating successfully but differently in diverse contexts (Comber, 1996).

In this way, the study responds to the current literacy situation by providing a deeper understanding of the kind of teacher knowledge and skills that may be needed for some resolution of the literacy situation. One reason for the mixed results of the many literacy interventions in post-apartheid South Africa may be that the interventions have tended to reduce a complex and layered situation to one in which a single treatment is provided to schools and teachers, regardless of their different contexts. This has been done for logistical and financial reasons, but opens up questions regarding the selection of the treatment and its implementation in schools at differing levels of functionality, or teachers with different levels of skills and knowledge.

Hugo and Wedekind (2013) write about the applicability to the South African situation of Beeby's (1954) historical model of teacher-training. This model outlines four levels of teacher competence, ranging from rudimentary to high-level teaching autonomy. Each level is aligned to the functionality of the type of school in which they work. Hugo and Wedekind (2013) reflect on the need to move beyond a broad classification of teachers for purposes of re-training, and towards more specialised interventions to meet particular needs. This view is also held by researchers working with systemic educational change (Mourshed, Chijioke and Barber, 2010), who consider projects that treat all teachers similarly as a waste of resources and endeavour. Through this study, the complexity involved in responding to differently contextualised needs may be better understood.

The study also has implications for making successful teaching practices explicit. Because of the historical isolation of different teachers, perceptions of practice have been created that

may or may not be 'fiction' (Comber, 1996). Until a range of different but successful practices are described and unravelled, the practice seen in the dominant educational context remains the model of best practice, and will be used as the basis for the treatment provided in literacy interventions. Attempting to replicate dominant practices might not be the most effective way of achieving higher levels of literacy, as they could be seen as unattainable by teachers who have spent their own years of basic schooling in schools embedded in the 'previously disadvantaged'[5] historical field (Hugo, 2013). By making explicit the everyday practices of a small number of out-standing teachers in both more, and less, privileged contexts, a range of practices will be described, which offer alternative, and viable, ways of teaching reading so that the myth of a perfect way to teaching reading can be questioned. This last point aligns with the work of Comber (1996, p. 2):

> Without attention to the way in which teachers are positioned in the broader system, educational reform and professionalism are built upon a fiction, that of an ideal teacher forever receptive and ready to enact the products of progress in theory.

Describing these different but effective local practices also has historical value and means they will not be altogether lost when the teachers themselves leave the profession. John Dewey saw this as a challenge nearly a hundred years ago, explaining that one of the saddest things about education was that 'teachers take their best ideas with them when they retire' (Dewey, 1929). This study attempts to record practices that could disappear in the next decade, as the teacher population ages (Howie, Van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman, 2012).

It is hoped that this study will also contribute to a wider understanding of effective early literacy teachers. In the United States, there have been studies based on observations of large numbers of teachers, with the aim of identifying and codifying the practices of effective literacy teachers (Cunningham and Allington, 2007; Pearson and Hoffman, 2011). In the United Kingdom, in a smaller study by Wray and Medwell (2006), the teaching practices of effective teachers were observed and common practices identified. Although the first-world context of the research means their findings are not entirely relevant to the South African context, they both provide explicit examples of effective practice, albeit in particular

[5] 'Previously disadvantaged' is a common term in post-democratic South Africa, and refers to communities marginalised or dominated under apartheid. It is sometimes used as a euphemism for 'black' South Africans, but is used here literally.

contexts. However, in their design, these studies differ significantly from this study. The studies referred to are principally behavioural (Cunningham and Allington, 2007; Pearson and Hoffman, 2011) and quantitative, whereas this study attempts to describe, but move beyond, the immediately visible elements of teaching practice, to consider the rationale behind, and origin of these practices, in the teachers' words. In addition, rather than describe common practice, this study focuses on individual teaching practices.

In South Africa, researchers such as Prinsloo and Stein (2004); Gains (2010); Stein (2008); Dixon (2007); Hoffman, Pearson, Beretvas and Mathee (2001-2002; 2003-2004; 2004); Pretorius and Mampuru (2007); Pretorius and Machet (2004); Pretorius (2014) and Gennrich and Janks (2015) have conducted post-democratic studies on literacy teaching practices in schools in poor socio-economic areas, a field under-researched historically in colonial and apartheid times. Their studies provide insights into the literacy practices in South African schools, and amongst teachers situated in the 'previously disadvantaged' sector of education. They provide an understanding of the historically embedded problems of literacy teaching and learning in the South African context. These problems include a lack of reading resources, the use of less than effective pedagogies, and the complexity of the language and literacy issues in this country. However, the teachers in these studies were not chosen as particularly representative of effective reading teaching, nor is there much comparative analysis of practice across the different socio-cultural contexts. In this way this study hopes to add to the body of literacy research in this country.

The word 'out-standing' is a new term to describe effective literacy teachers. Importantly, it is not synonymous with 'best practice'. Like Nieto (2003), I believe that 'best practice' is an inherently problematic term and that there is no 'best practice' that could be applied to every situation, particularly in South Africa, with its wide-ranging contexts. My perception of out-standing teachers aligns with Nieto's broad definition of 'best practice', in that it is teaching practice 'that may be effective with many students' (Nieto, cited in Nkomo and Vandeyar, 2005 p. 5). It is closer to the concept of a 'practicing teacher', as described by Pearson and Hoffman (2011). Within the pragmatist tradition (Dewey 1929; Freire, 1970) and drawing on the work of Elbaz (1981), they describe 'intelligent' teacher practice, which is underpinned by pragmatic teacher thinking, which produces a 'practising' teacher, who is 'thoughtful, effective, pragmatic, and reflective' (Pearson and Hoffman, 2011, p. 12). The idea of describing the teaching of identified 'practising' teachers,' rather than a single idealised

practice in an undefined context, seems more useful. Essentially, the out-standing teachers described here are teachers who are meeting the needs of a particular group of students, have been recognised in their schools for doing this particularly effectively, and are 'practising' teachers of early reading (Comber, 1996; Pearson and Hoffman, 2011; Mills and Comber, 2013). This may be a model for South African literacy teachers at the current time.

When looking at the practices of the 'out-standing' teachers, it is the teachers' own constructions of their reading programmes that interest me, rather than recording a 'slice' of the reading programme, or doing an analysis of the reading and writing levels of the learners they teach. Both of these methods have been used in national South African research projects to describe or measure the effectiveness of particular early reading programmes (Taylor, 2013; Fleisch and Schoer, 2014). By understanding individual practices, as described by the teachers themselves, I hoped to gain some understanding of the 'hows and whys' of their overall reading programmes, the rationales behind them, and the challenges the teachers have overcome or continued to experience. I saw talking directly to teachers and using their own words as a way of dignifying their position and understanding their practice without judgement.

Boundaries in this study are discussed in Chapter 3, but are linked to the rationale for this study. First, the study is confined to teachers teaching reading in Grades 1 to 3, rather than at all levels of the primary school. Some of the practices of reading teachers at this level have been described in the South African context through the research of Gains (2010) and Dixon (2007). Both have conducted long-term studies in Foundation Phase classrooms in the Johannesburg area in order to understand aspects of early literacy learning and teaching. In one case, this centres on how a teacher's own construction of literacy is aligned to their teaching practice (Gains, 2010), while the other explores the relationship between literacy, power and the body in particular early grade classrooms (Dixon, 2007). Building on those studies, this study describes the practices of identified, out-standing, early-grade reading teachers practising in Johannesburg.

Second, another boundary which is discussed in Chapter 3 is the focus on reading, despite a common understanding that literacy development is not confined to reading, but includes writing and other modalities. The focus on reading is for reasons of manageability and because literacy skills have been separated in the South African national curriculum, CAPS (DBE, 2011). Third, there is a geographical boundary, as the study is confined to teachers

teaching in greater Johannesburg. However, Johannesburg schools are situated in a range of different socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts, which allows for the diversity of context I envisaged.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Because of the complexity of the field of education in this country, I use the work of the sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1977), to underpin the study. Current teaching practices in South Africa are often the product of the social constructs which defined this country during colonial and apartheid times. This has resulted in a field which remains complex from a sociological point of view. Albright and Luke (2008, p. 4) explain that educational researchers often turn to the organisational framework of Bourdieu's theory of practice when they are addressing systemic inequalities in schools. The teachers in this study worked in schools which were variously positioned in the broader education system and the Bourdesian framework makes this positioning transparent, so that inequalities are 'recognised' (Swartz, 1997). With South Africa's history of institutionalised colonial and military dominance of one group over another, Bourdieu's explanations of how systems of dominance may remain less than transparent, provided insights into the reproduction of particular practices (Swartz, 1997).

Bourdieu explains all human practice as an interaction between a field and an individual's habitus or set of dispositions. The teachers' habitus in this study were forged within social conditions that were legislated and enforced by pre-democratic governments. The influence of these social structures, together with the teachers' individual dispositions, affect their teaching practices. Bourdieu's theory of practice offers a way of understanding this complex interplay between societal and individual imperatives enacted in these teachers' classrooms. The practice can be deconstructed to make transparent the extent to which ideologies embedded in the historical educational field are still reproduced.

Bourdieu's work is also helpful in identifying the types of capital these teachers have acquired, which position them as out-standing in the diverse contexts in which they teach, in considering how it was acquired and whether it is transferrable, so that particular teaching practices stand out in a different socio-cultural environment.

In essence, Bourdieu's theory of practice allowed me to shift my gaze from an unnuanced reading of the bimodal model of distribution (Fleisch, 2008), which positions historically disadvantaged teachers as the teachers who 'can't and won't' teach reading effectively (Taylor, 2013), to a more nuanced understanding of the practices of individual out-standing reading teachers from both 'rungs' of the model. The theoretical framework used in this study is described in depth in Chapter 2.

1.5 SUBJECTIVITY OF THE RESEARCHER

Research is neither neutral nor objective, and in a spirit of reflection, an aspect of research that is emphasised by Bourdieu (1972), I need to make transparent my own opinions and experiences regarding reading teaching practices. I will frame this discussion with Bourdieu's theory of practice, as an example of it can be applied to explain the development of practice.

The habitus, the way people are and behave in the world, has its origins in the early years of life (Bourdieu, 1972). My habitus was formed in the privileged sector of the hierarchical apartheid society, although my parents, as middle-class, English-speaking white South Africans, were not particularly privileged within that sector, and were not supporters of the apartheid government. Ideologically, I absorbed values in this setting that countered the majority position of 'white' people in this country, resulting in some activism at university and a career choice to work in the dominated sector, which was unusual in the community and during the times in which I was immersed.

A particular disposition around literacy can also be traced to familial structures. My parents were readers and as a child I was read to daily until I could read fluently myself. Our home was a print-rich environment with an abundant supply of newspapers, magazines, books and encyclopaedia, where books were highly valued and given and received as gifts. This generated a lifelong love of reading.

The family moved a number of times because of work imperatives and as a result I attended four state schools. Later, my parents sold their house to fund my brother's and my university education. Despite this, there was always an awareness, from an early age, of the inequalities and poverty that surrounded us as 'white' South Africans. Dispositional traits concerning the importance of education, and the alignment of education with work opportunities, were

entrenched and have been passed on to my own children, as well as a belief in social justice or fairness.

In Bourdieu's theory of practice, he explains that it is the interaction of the habitus, principally formed in childhood, and the field, which produces everyday practice or 'ways of being' in the world. The field of education, in which I have worked for over thirty years, has shaped my practices in fundamental ways. After qualifying as a teacher, I began working simultaneously in the privileged education system for 'white' children and, voluntarily, in the afternoons, with young 'coloured' children in an area of great poverty in Johannesburg. Within three years, I had begun working full time in another poor area, first as a teacher and then as a teacher-trainer. Soweto was an area specifically designated for 'black' South Africans, and working in this context meant that I observed the inequalities in the apartheid education system that were unknown to particular 'white' South Africans at that time.

A disconnect with my own schooling was evident, and this became more pronounced when I later worked for a short time in a school in the United Kingdom, teaching young Punjabi-speaking children in a Reception class. The first-world/third-world contrast was stark, although the linguistic model of subtractive bilingualism was similar to that found in South African classrooms at that time. However, the disparate teaching experiences which had strengthened my practice by exposing me to different socio-cultural and socio-linguistic communities were not valued nor recognised by the official apartheid education system. Because of this, upon returning to South Africa, I began working outside the official education structures of that time, in the non-governmental sector. During the apartheid regime, there were a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the education sector, funded by local businesses and by countries that opposed the apartheid government. The NGO sector formed a distinct subfield in the broader education field and it was in this sector that I worked for twenty-five years, employed by a national literacy NGO, READ[6], working with disadvantaged teachers, schools and communities to develop the literacy skills of South African children.

The literacy intervention designed and implemented by READ at that time centred around the supply of reading resources to 'disadvantaged' schools in the form of a classroom 'book

[6] Read, Educate And Develop

flood' (Elley, 1989), together with teacher support. The READ intervention was built around approaches which were not common in educational structures of that time. READ was advised by a number of overseas-based educationalists from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States who were reluctant to work directly with the apartheid government. Their input significantly influenced the design of the training courses, children's books and teaching materials that the organisation developed. The capital I gained from this exposure enabled me, after the advent of democracy, to contribute in different ways to a number of governmental literacy interventions, and to contribute to language and literacy textbooks for children in the post-democratic era.

The capital I gained through working for READ, and in the wider literacy field in this country, informs much of my current practice as a university lecturer who teaches students to teach early literacy in South Africa. The students come from a range of different socio-economic and socio-linguistic contexts and I am able to draw on my experience in the field to attempt to meet their needs as trainee teachers.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Bourdieu (1977 [1972]) was unequivocal about the inherent subjectivity of any research. My beliefs about equal education, literacy acquisition and teacher development are part of my daily practice and have been incorporated into this study, both consciously and unconsciously. My subjectivity can only be mitigated by an attempt at complete transparency and the clear articulation of my own interests.

I began this research with strong opinions and ideologies and this made it particularly challenging for me to distance myself from my research participants. Despite my attempt at objectivity, my own perspective will, to some extent, have influenced my interpretations and observations. On a practical level, many of the teachers who are part of this study were exposed to some of the literacy interventions or materials with which I have been directly involved in my work at READ and later at the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) where I was involved with the GPLMS[7] literacy intervention. This involvement is clarified in Chapter Two.

[7] Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy

Transparency also means acknowledging that my role as a researcher, which this study necessitated, as opposed to the more familiar roles of teacher, materials developer and teacher-trainer, has been an extraordinarily difficult one for me, and is a field that I am still learning to negotiate. The theorising of teacher behaviours has been particularly challenging and I feel that, although I have worked in the practical field, this is an area in which I remain a novice, so that this study represents a journey of learning in more than one respect.

This chapter drew together the threads which led this study and explained my experience in the field and interest in 'practicing' teachers who 'beat the odds' by teaching all the children in them to read, year after year. These teachers are found in all the socio-cultural, socio-lingual and socio-economic contexts that make up the field of early reading in Johannesburg and it is these teachers' practice which is the focus of this research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

To answer my two main research questions, I hope to describe and compare the teaching practices and programmes of a small number of early reading teachers, to understand where these practices originated and how they evolved. This requires a review of literature relating to a number of different areas.

The first is literature around Bourdieu's theory of practice, which forms the theoretical framework for this study (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu's interest in the unconscious reproduction of dominance in social structures aligns with the post-colonial, post-apartheid, situation in this country. In addition, looking at applications of his theory in other educational contexts provides insights into his constructs of field, habitus, capital and practice.

Literature dealing with two aspects of literacy is reviewed. The first comprises a review of the different constructions of literacy which underpin the way in which literacy is taught. The second is grounded in the teaching and learning of early reading in formal classroom settings. These two areas of research are sometimes conflated in the literature, but I consider them separately.

Because this study is situated in South Africa, literature describing the current South African education context is reviewed. This will help to situate the teachers' practices. Literature describing the historical foundations of South African mass education is also reviewed. This is often retrospective literature, as colonial literature describing conditions in the non-dominant sector is not prolific.

Reading skills are underpinned by language skills, since language involves the first-order symbolism on which print, as second-order symbolism, is built. Literature in this field is reviewed so that the complex issues around language and literacy development in a multilingual, multicultural context are understood (Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998). The review focuses on language acquisition, bilingualism and emergent bi-literacy, together with responses to the South African Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DOE, 1997) and the current position of English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT).

2.1 BOURDIEU'S THEORY OF PRACTICE

Bourdieu's theory of practice is constructed around the concepts of habitus, field and capital (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu sees *habitus* as the set of dispositions embodied in an agent, which causes the agent to act and react in particular ways and thus generate practice in the world. Examining this set of dispositions reveals ways of being and doing that are individual, although they are also aligned to the social spaces in which the agents operate (Bourdieu, 1977; Albright and Luke, 2008). In other words, an agent's habitus shapes and is shaped by the fields in which they operate as part of their everyday lives.

Bourdieu describes *field* as an autonomous and structured space similar to a market-place, where different resources are exchanged and where agents perform their day-to-day practice. Agents will operate in different social, economic and familial fields, but this study is confined to the field of early literacy-learning in schools, although it will refer to both the historical educational field and the current, post-democratic education field.

Bourdieu explains that the resources or *capital* acquired by the agent determine his or her position in a field. His concept of capital refers to cultural, economic, social, linguistic and other symbolic forms of knowledge or power that have been acquired by the agent over time. In any field, agents will react differently, not only because of their habitus, but also because of the different forms of capital they possess and how highly that capital is valued. Thus an agent's capital will determine how he or she is positioned in the field,

Maton draws on a Bourdesian equation to explain the unconscious relationship between the three concepts. The equation is: '**[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice**' (Bourdieu (1986) in Maton, 2014, p. 51). Maton explains:

> This equation can be unpacked as stating: practice results from relations between dispositions (habitus) and one's position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field) (Maton, 2014, p. 51).

The *practice* in this study specifically refers to the teaching practices of twelve out-standing teachers of reading. To describe the implications of this equation, I will explain each of concepts referred to in the equation, starting with the concept of field, before describing habitus, capital and practice.

2.1.1 The concept of field

Bourdieu's concept of field moves beyond the conventional use of the word, which refers to a particular discipline or area of study. The concept of field is broader, and includes the socio-historic, socio-cultural and socio-economic context, as well as the geographical space in which agents operate for an identified purpose (Bourdieu, 1990; Pahl, 2008; Gennrich, 2015). This has implications for the nuanced way in which the field is mapped. Albright and Luke (2008, p. 69) say that, 'To study any field, enduring connections between the social and identities, discourses, practices and products, found in positions and dispositions, across the field, need to be mapped.' The study of the field will thus include a study of the broader context in which the field is located, and also of the habitus and practices of the agents in the field, because they are part of the field and help to structure it. To map the field, Thompson (2008, p. 16) believes that the conditions in the field, '[C]an be determined only through a careful empirical or historical inquiry into the distinctive properties of the field concerned … One must reconstruct the field in relation to the fields of the economy (in the narrow sense), politics, etc.' The field is mapped in Chapter 4.

Bourdieu acknowledges that fields are not static and will change, but generally associates these changes with evolutionary or generational change. Where structures in the field change significantly and suddenly, Bourdieu sees the possibility that fields can be *transformed* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In other words, *transformation* is a relatively quick change, and one in which the field is re-invented or revolutionised. I argue that this is the case with the field of education in South Africa, which has been partly transformed through the legislation enacted soon after 1994 (Du Plessis, 2003; Fleisch, 2008). This legislation was as a direct result of the democratisation of South Africa at the end of the apartheid regime, when attempts were made to create a 'new' country, working with the vision of a more equal society (Sparks, 1994).

However, I argue that the transformation is incomplete as distinct subfields can still be identified, linked to the divided social structures of the historical field. Thompson says of subfields: 'Each subfield, while following the overall logic of its field, also has its own internal logic, rules and regularities' (Thompson, 2008, p. 73). Each subfield in this study is linked to one of the four separate and differently-funded apartheid education systems. In this way, although the sudden change in the field could be called transformational in a Bourdesian sense, in reality it is a partial or incomplete transformation, because vestiges of the historical

field remain evident in the subfields, often resulting in resistant inequalities. It could be more correctly called a transfor*ming* field, as the habitus of the teachers, who are an integral part of the field, remain, to some extent, durable, and resistant to the changes. Some aspects of the field are stable while others are in a state of flux, and the term transform*ing*, suggests this fluid, negotiated space. Bourdieu also contends that fields are always sites of struggle (Thompson, 2008) as the agents in the field struggle to gain power or prestige. In a transforming field, this struggle is intensified.

Each of the identified subfields shows the impact of the transforming field differently, as different types of schools and individual teachers adapt to, or resist, the new conditions, in order to position themselves in the changed field. This reveals enduring vestiges of the historical education system from which they have emerged and in turn, reveals how the capital each teacher has acquired is often aligned to their immersion in a particular system or subfield as much as to their individual dispositions. The positioning of the teachers within a subfield, and also within the broader field, is crucial to explaining why and how they stand out in the subfield and field (Bourdieu, 1992; Whitaker and Gruenert, 2015), and is discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

In this study, the identification of the subfields is also important because it underpins the selection of particular schools and participants for in-depth discussion in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. The selection was based on the subfields in which different teachers were situated.

2.1.2 The concept of habitus

Habitus is the word that Bourdieu uses to describe an agent's disposition, thoughts, actions, perceptions and beliefs: their way of 'being-doing' in the world (Bourdieu, 1977; Maton, 2014, p. 51). In this study, habitus represents the ingrained, often unconscious patterning of each of the out-standing teachers, patterning that ultimately produces and reproduces the field (Bourdieu, 1990; 1985; 1981 in Uhlmann, 2008). The concept of habitus is important to this study, as it explains the ideologies behind, and justifications for, the practices the teachers enact in their classrooms. This means considering how the teachers are bringing individual dispositions to their teaching practice, as these dispositions will shape the habitus. The importance of identifying dispositions in the habitus is clearly shown in Compton-Lilly's study of the development of one young writer's habitus, showing the pivotal role of the four identified dispositions (Compton-Lilly, 2014).

Considering dispositions also means reflecting on both the structural and the constructivist origins of the dispositions the teachers demonstrate (Bourdieu, 1977). The interplay of the individual and the social, the structuring and the structured, is explored in relation to the habitus and the teachers' classroom practices (Bourdieu, 1977; Dressman and Wilder, 2008).

Jenkins (1992) and Maton (2014) explain that Bourdieu's concept of habitus is sometimes considered deterministic because many structures are imposed on a person. For example, this is true with young children, who often have little agency. Another example is when an agent is positioned as the colonised or dominated in a society, as this not a choice and, for many, represents a form of symbolic violence that has been involuntarily suffered with lasting effect (Burawoy and Van Holdt, 2012). Symbolic violence can be contrasted with physical violence, but is no less negatively impactful on the habitus. All these teachers grew up during the draconian apartheid era and many would have experienced symbolic violence by being discriminated against because of their race. If their habitus had been conditioned to behave in subservient way, this would affect their sense of agency. However, even within hierarchical historical structures, agency may become evident, sometimes creating tensions with the formal structures and mitigating against them.

Although habitus is so deeply ingrained that agents often act unconsciously, Bourdieu explains that there will always be the possibility of change in, or modification of, the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). He believes the habitus can adapt to, and operate successfully in, a changed field or changed conditions, particularly if the unconscious practice has been made explicit or visible to the agent. But the conditioning usually takes time and Bourdieu believes the habitus is slow to change. Bourdieu explains that a habitus *evolves* in the same way that a field evolves (Thompson, 2008; Maton, 2014). When a field has been transformed suddenly, the habitus cannot undergo this slow, generational change and must respond quickly. Three responses to a transformed field are described in interpretations of Bourdieu's work. First, when the habitus is durable, it may resist aspects of the transformation and a mismatch, or time-lag, can occur. This is termed *hysteresis,* where the field and habitus are incompatible at a particular time (Burawoy and Von Holdt, 2012; Hardy, 2008).

A second response occurs when there is a correspondence or a natural fit between the habitus and the transforming field, so that embedded practices are able to be successfully reproduced in a changed context (Thompson, 2014; Maton, 2014). The third response occurs when the habitus displays adaptation, or innovates in order to operate successfully in the new field

(Thompson, 2014; Maton, 2014). Responses will depend on embedded dispositions that are already part of the habitus, and on the agency of the subject, who may consciously react to, or respond to, the change. Thompson (2008, p.14) says:

> A field is always the site of struggle in which individuals seek to maintain or alter the distribution of the forms of capital specific to it. The individuals who participate in these struggles will have differing aims – some will seek to preserve the status quo, others to change it.

Bourdieu discusses the concept of a *well-formed habitus* which is *durable* in that particular dispositions are deeply entrenched. Developing a well-formed habitus depends on whether the factors that structure the habitus have been reproduced faithfully and fully rather than only partially (Thompson, 2008; Bourdieu, 1986). However, when Bourdieu writes of the struggles a habitus negotiates, he frames his discussion with the belief that the habitus is 'durable but not eternal' (Bourdieu, 1990 p. 53; cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 133). Even the most durable habitus will show some evolution, although it may be underpinned by entrenched dispositions. This is built upon by Dressman and Wilder (2008) who speak of the 'almost invariable tendency' of agents to incorporate change into their historical position rather than to change their practice completely. However, with a less durable habitus, alternative positions, of resistance to change, or alternatively, 'taking up the new in … innovative ways,' will emerge (Albright and Luke, 2008, p. 132).

In discussing the habitus of the teachers, not only the individual habitus but the collective, or group habitus is important. According to Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 291; cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), common dispositional tendencies will often relate to the social or formal structures that agents have encountered, because much of the habitus is 'socially constituted.' Teachers who share an educational or social background may share aspects of a habitus and this is shown in the work of Gennrich, (2015), who mapped common tendencies in the group habitus of a cohort of teachers from Limpopo province in South Africa, re-qualifying at Wits University. In a similar way, the group habitus can impact on the structure of the field, embedding norms and values in the field, through common practice.

However Burawoy (2012) explains that individual family structures also account for much of the formational aspects of the habitus. He explains that Bourdieu considered these family

structures the most impactful of all the structures an agent encounters in their life (Bourdieu, 1996). This is one of the ways in which the habitus is a unique structure.

2.1.3 The concept of capital

Bourdieu's concept of capital moves beyond the Marxist interpretation of capital as material wealth. Bourdieu refers to capital which include economic, cultural, social, and linguistic abilities, and forms of knowledge, taste or accomplishment that have been acquired by an agent. An agent's capital is often *symbolic*, which means it has no physical value other than being 'recognised as legitimate by (particular) institutions or groups of individuals' (Dixon, 2007, p.38). Capital is what make an agent distinctive in the field, and brings value to their daily practice (Bourdieu, 2006; Albright and Luke, 2008; Moore, 2014).

Bourdieu introduces the idea of *cultural* capital, which is often symbolic and can be manifested through *embodiment*, in the mind and body of the agent, and the way the agent acts and reacts; through *objectification*, seen in the objects that the agent creates, uses and values, and through *institutionalisation*, in a formal way, for example in the form of qualifications, the type of education that an agent has undergone, or in awards (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 26). Bourdieu compares cultural capital to monetary capital, showing how the two are often aligned, but also explaining situations where the two are not aligned, for example, in the case of a poorly-paid academic who nevertheless commands respect because of the knowledge she has attained (Bourdieu, 1986).

Another type of capital Bourdieu identifies is social capital, which is capital in a field acquired through social networks, relationships and connections to others. However, in the field of education, it is the concept of *cultural* capital that is often discussed, particularly in relation to the cultural capital that children bring to school. This is shown in a longitudinal study by Reay & Lucey (2000) which attempts to explain the unequal academic achievement of, and lack of choices available to, children in parts of London, where the children come from families with less of the cultural capital required by the system. With teachers, Hargreaves & Fullan (2010) have extended the idea of cultural capital to include 'professional capital'. The authors identify the four different types of capital that are are assoicated with 'professional capital' and effective teaching, including human capital in the form of expertise, but also decisional capital.

Working with Bourdieu's later writing about cultural and scientific capital, Moore (2014) works with the idea of capital by outlining some of the features of this capital. He explains that capital will be demonstrated in daily practice; that it is acquired gradually, through exposure to different formal or familial structures (in the same way that the habitus is formed), and that it reflects the inculcating structures in which it was formed. He goes on say that, as personal agency is always a factor, capital will be always be formed in a unique context. He also introduces the concept that a well-formed, durable habitus (Bourdieu, 1986; Moore, 2014, p. 114) will invariably lead to the acquisition of stronger capital.

An important point is that although Bourdieu emphasises that capital will bring the agent some distinction in the field, he believes it is only recognised as capital because others in the field value it. The implication is that an agent could have strengths and abilities which are not valued in the field. Also, that what is regarded as capital in one field may not be seen as capital in another so that these teachers, having been identified as 'out-standing' in one context, may have capital which is not transposable to other subfields or fields.

Importantly Bourdieu believes that any capital will only be recognised in proportion to the status of the field or subfield itself (Thompson, 2014, p. 14). The capital that these teachers possess positions them within the schools in which they teach and may position them in a particular subfield, but within the broader field, their positioning will depend on where the school and subfield is positioned. Thus a teacher who has knowledge of teaching reading in an African language, which is valued in one subfield, might not be highly valued in a subfield where children are being taught to read in English. The question of whether their capital is transposable and whether a teacher would stand out in a different subfield or in the broader field is discussed in Chapter 7.

The teachers in this study emerged from different socio-cultural contexts. Being wholly immersed in one context throughout one's schooling, teacher-training and work experience can constitute capital by producing a well-formed habitus, but only when the context represents a dominant one. A historically dominated subfield can marginalise even out-standing teachers by denying them forms of capital that teachers in other subfields may take for granted (Janks, 2009).

Working in a transforming field, where conditions have changed, complicates the issue of capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Burawoy and Von Holdt, 2012). What counts as capital will change as the field continues to change. However, if the capital recognised in the new field merely

replicates the capital recognised in the historical field, this could have two implications. It could lead to a reproduction of aspects of the field, so that the status quo is maintained (Bourdieu, 1986) and it could lead to the danger of *misrecognition* of capital, where capital is not recognised for what it is. Bourdieu's example of misrecognition is his interpretation of the Algerian Kabyle people's gift-giving practices as strategy but misrecognised as generosity (Bourdieu, 1986). In this study, misrecognition was not evident. However, there were instances of the teachers having attributes that strengthened their practice, but which were not recognised as capital. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Finally, in the relational alignment between capital, habitus and field, because agents make up part of the field, their capital, which positions them in the field, contributes to the structuring of the field. As the habitus evolves, and different capital becomes more or less valued, the structure of the transforming field evolves to reflect this.

2.1.4 The concept of practice

Bourdieu's equation, representing a theory of practice, provides a rational and nuanced explanation of the teaching practices of this group of teachers. Bourdieu's contention that there is a logic to all practice is based on this theory as he believes practices are governed by three regulatory influences: the field, and the habitus and the capital of the agents who are a part of the field. When these three underpinning influences are considered, practice can be understood.

However, in using Bourdieu's equation to explain practice, his concept of *doxa* is important. Bourdieu first used the term to explain the unquestioned, embodied and 'natural' practices of traditional societies (Bourdieu, 1977; Deer, 2014). His later work explains doxa in modern society as unquestioned shared beliefs which are enacted unconsciously and which can produce and reproduce inequalities if not examined (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Deer, 2014). That the field of education can provide examples of this is seen when a teacher faithfully and unquestioningly follows a particular approach without making a conscious choice to do so.

Bourdieu explains two further concepts linked to doxa. The first occurs when different but legitimate practices are explicitly discussed and a *field of opinion* emerges which leads to particular practices being more thoughtfully enacted, or even changed, so that practice moves beyond doxa. Bourdieu uses the term *heterodoxy* to describe this situation and contrasts this

with *orthodoxy*, which occurs when the arbitrary aspects of doxa are enacted, but with the awareness that this is, in itself, a choice. The change from doxa to heterodoxy, or alternatively, to orthodoxy, is often precipitated by a crisis which causes people to begin to question embedded understandings, such as after a political or economic upheaval (Bourdieu, 1977; Deer, 2014, p. 123).

The post-apartheid education field in this country has been one of upheaval and change and remains in state of flux. Bourdieu's equation provides a tool to explain the effect of the field and habitus on the teaching practices of these twelve out-standing teachers. It reveals the extent of the teachers' reproduction of historical practices and of historical positions of dominance. However, as a post-Marxist theory, it also explains the role of individual agency in adapting to changed conditions and the emergence of individual practices in particular contexts.

2.2 THE SOCIO-HISTORIC FIELD OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.2.1 Education systems under colonial rule and apartheid

Both the colonial and apartheid educational systems in South Africa were unequal systems, with prescribed educational options for both the dominators and the dominated. During colonial times, educational options were provincially determined, and although these options were different in each of the four provinces, education was broadly administered according to race and language, with much of the education of 'black' South Africans, from primary to tertiary level, delivered under the auspices of different Christian churches (Hartshorne, 1995). However, early into the apartheid regime, the central state took control of education for 'black' students, and implemented educational policies that aligned to the political agenda of enforced separate development (Hartshorne, 1999). The Bantu Education Act of 1953 legislatively separated the education of 'black' South Africans from the education of the rest of the population and put it under the control of the Department of Education and Training (DET) (Government Gazette 47, 1953; Hartshorne, 1999; Shimahara, Holowinsky and Thompson-Clarke, 2001).

In 1984 this central control was extended to three other racial groups, mirroring changes to the South African Constitution of the time, in which three chambers of government had been created (Christie, 1985; Du Plessis, 2003; Bunting, 2004). These chambers were the House of Assembly (HOA) for 'white' people, the House of Representatives (HOR) for 'coloured'

people, and the House of Delegates (HOD) for 'Indian' people. Education was legislated as an 'own affair' in each of these three chambers. However, the education of 'black' teachers and children in South Africa remained a 'general affair', governed by the Department of Education and Training (DET). This meant that the DET remained under the direct control of the 'white' HOA rather than the 'black' community it served (Christie, 1985; Du Plessis, 2003; Bunting, 2004). The other three systems were administered by representatives of their own racial groups. In the 'white' education sector, certain powers were retained provincially, while the other three were administered centrally. The separate systems were unequally resourced and this inequity was evident in the different fiscal spend allocated per child within each of the systems (See Table 1).

Table 1: Education systems in South Africa in 1984

Chambers of apartheid government	Education departments	Apartheid race classification	Spend per child per annum
House of Assembly (HOA) for 'white' South Africans	Four provincial education departments, each linked to a province: Transvaal Education Department (TED), Natal Education Department (NED), Cape Education Department (CED), Orange Free State Education Department (OFSED)	'White'	R1,211.00
House of Delegates (HOD)	HOD Education Department	'Indian'	R771.00
House of Representatives (HOR)	HOR Education Department	'Coloured'	R498.00
House of Assembly (HOA) for 'white' South Africans	Department of Education and Training (DET)	'Black'	R146.00

Source: Christie (1985)

Bourdieu believes that the overarching field that impacts on all other fields is the economic field, and that this is one of the ways in which privilege and dominance are perpetuated (Bourdieu, 1994d, p. 144, as cited in Thompson, 2008, p. 73; Christie, 1985; Hartshorne, 1999). The implications of having four separate and unequal education systems in one country were significant, and created a hierarchy of privilege. The DET system for 'black' children was allocated only one-tenth of the funding of the most privileged group, so the resourcing, teacher-training, class-size, and level of infrastructure were all severely compromised, and the other systems were proportionately compromised or privileged.

The ideological principles behind each of the four systems was to prepare children of different race-groups for different positions in society by providing them with specific forms of cultural capital. This ensured the perpetuation of the status quo (Christie, 1985; Hartshorne, 1995; 1999; Worden, 1994; Du Plessis, 2003).

2.2.2 The post-apartheid education system

After South Africa became a democracy in 1994, attempts were made to transform the educational field through a series of legislative acts. The over-arching purpose of these acts was to 'reverse the damage of apartheid' (Chisholm, 2004, p.18) and equalise education in line with the changes to the broader political field (Willenberg, 2004; South African Schools Act No 84, 1996; National Education Policy Act No 27, 1996). The legislative changes that were implemented included the standardisation of child-teacher ratios in all schools and the provision of additional funds for the upgrading of school infrastructure in areas of low socio-economic status (SES). Most importantly, it made segregated schooling illegal and introduced a single national curriculum. The only issue that remained locally determined was the issue of the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). This decision was a reaction to the heavy-handed language policies of the apartheid regime, which had led to the 1976 Soweto Uprising. This began with 'black' high school students protesting against being taught in some subjects in English and others in Afrikaans (Willenberg, 2004; Chisholm, 2004; Harley and Wedekind, 2004).

The legislation that effected this change included the South African Schools Act No. 84, the National Education Policy Act No. 27 and Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DoE 1997). Certain aspects of the field were transformed relatively quickly. In Johannesburg, in the TED, HOD and HOR schools, a rapid desegregation was experienced, which changed the demographics of many schools between 1995 and 2005 (Chisholm and Sujee, 2004; Du Plessis, 2003). The shift reflected a movement of children into schools traditionally associated with a more privileged group, because of the perception that these schools would ensure that children acquired more capital, for example, linguistic or educational capital (Sujee, 2001, p. 17). Soudien (2004) explains that because of this, there was a one-way shift of 'coloured' and 'Indian' children to schools which had formally served 'white' children, and 'black' children to schools which had formally served 'coloured', 'Indian' and 'white' children, and not vice versa. The initial shift often involved the children of socio-

economically privileged families, because the shift had financial implications, for example higher school fees and transport costs (Soudien, 2004).

However, a second shift of 'black' children from families of a lower socio-economic status occurred a few years later. Soudien (2004) describes this second shift as an exodus of middle-class children of all races from particular government schools into semi-private, private, religious, or specific formerly 'white', government schools situated in the more affluent areas. This was aligned to a shift of working-class 'black' children into the schools from which the middle-class children had exited.

Staff changes also occurred in many Johannesburg schools. A comparison can be made to an unrelated study of Californian schools, which recorded a similar shift of experienced urban teachers to middle-class-dominated suburban schools: the unintended consequence of the implementation of a new policy (Stecher et al, 2001).

The introduction of a single national curriculum was a critical aspect of the transformation of the field after 1994. The first national curriculum was outcomes-based and was introduced in 1997, in an effort to standardise academic input across all the schools in the country (DBE, 1997; Chisholm, 2004). Ideologically, the curriculum was very different from those used in the apartheid education systems. According to Harley and Wedekind (2004), it had the effect of destabilising the majority of less privileged schools, in part because the legacy of apartheid had left many teachers unable to enact a curriculum that assumed high levels of subject-knowledge and teacher training (Chisholm, 2004). The second and third national curricula, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2002; 2011) moved back towards a more structured, conventional type of curriculum. This appears to have impacted the field more positively, although, again, with less disruption to the more privileged schools (Chisholm 2004, Jansen and Taylor, 2013).

Another change that affected the field significantly was the change in the language policy for schools (DBE, 1997), which gave new choices to schools with regard to the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). When given the choice, during the early post-democratic period, the majority of schools in this country opted to go straight for English (Fleisch, 2008). A second shift occurred when schools were encouraged to use the children's home language as the LoLT in the first years of school, and this has remained a departmental imperative, although not a legal requirement, since that time (Heugh, 2008). However, because the

composition of many schools was no longer as homogenous as it had been under apartheid, the take-up was not consistent, with the majority of schools in Gauteng going straight for English to accommodate the new, multilingual classes (GPLMS, 2013; Fleisch, 2008).

The literature provides insight into the precise structures and conditions teachers would have experienced historically, so that embedded reproductions of historical practices can be recognised.

2.3 CONSTRUCTIONS OF LITERACY

The reason for reviewing literature and documents around how literacy is constructed is that I believe it is not always considered when curricula or literacy interventions are designed. It is often a taken-for-granted ideology, even though it underpins every choice made in the early reading classroom.

What is evident from the literature is that two broad strands of thought have underpinned constructions of literacy, and research into literacy, in the twentieth and twenty-first century. These can be loosely defined as a *meaning-based* and a *skills-based* construction of literacy.

2.3.1 Ideological constructions of literacy

A meaning-orientated construction of literacy is seen in the writing of Paulo Freire (1982), working in Brazil. He sees literacy learners as creative subjects who should be taught to think critically about the purpose of reading and writing in order to be able to use literacy as a way of interacting with the real world. He speaks of using written and spoken language to *problematise* situations so that action is taken and the world is somehow transformed. Freire's focus is on what literacy does rather than on what it is, and his views remain relevant in a post-colonial world.

This view also underpins the seminal text by Frank Smith, *Understanding Reading* (1971). Smith's understanding of literacy is influenced by work in a number of fields such as cognitive psychology and psycho-linguistics (Chomsky, 1965), developmental cognition (Bruner, 1956), as well as constructivism (Vygotsky, 1962). Smith sees literacy as a complex cognitive activity that is meaning-based and enacted in a social context, rather than a set of learnt perceptual skills enacted in an undefined context (Smith, 1971). Similarly, Clay (1972) and Goodman (1986), who observed the strategic behaviours of early readers, extend this

idea to describe how literacy 'emerges' in early childhood as part of a broader set of print-based behaviours situated in the societal and cultural norms in which a child is immersed.

The cultural and social roots of literacy are also shown in the work of Vygotsky (*Thought and Language*, translated in 1962), who, in describing the relationship between thought, language, learning and culture, reinforces the idea of strong links between literacy, literacy acquisition and culture. This underpins the concept of different *literacies*, applied by researchers in the identification of different forms of textual communication in different social, economic and geographic domains (Barton, 1994; Barton and Hamilton, 1998).

Looking at different forms of literacy from a cultural/social viewpoint led to ethnographic research such as Brice-Heath's (1983) ten-year study of literacy practices in three American communities. She shows how different literacies or different forms of literacy prevail in particular communities, which may or may not coincide with the dominant, school-based literacy taught to young children.

Street (1984) also employs an ethnographic approach, this time in Iran: he questions Western academic models of literacy and uses the terms *autonomous* and *ideological* to describe what he saw as two opposing constructs of literacy in that country. The ideological model describes literacy practices as social practice seen in cumulative everyday literacy 'events' and literacy 'practices'. The opposing autonomous model describes literacy as a discrete set of skills, used principally in an educational context. Street sees the Western educational context and the autonomous model as the privileged or dominant model (Street, 1983). Barton and Hamilton (2000, p.8) express a similar view, summing up literacy practices as 'the general cultural ways of utilising written language… more usefully understood as existing in the relations between people, within groups and communities, rather than as a set of properties residing in individuals.' They place literacy firmly in a socio-cultural context within the ideological model.

The New Literacy Studies (NLS) applied the ideological model (Street, 1984). They saw literacy more broadly, as semiotic meaning-making, and explored the ways in which it is enacted by describing particular literacy events and everyday literacy practices in different socio-cultural contexts (Barton, 1994; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Stein, 2004). An example of this is a study by Kress (1997) of the multiple ways in which a young child makes meaning in his world, using different textual modalities and what is 'to hand.' This concept is built

upon by Lancaster (2001) and Pahl (1999), working with young children both in and out of the formal school context.

In Australia, within this socio-cultural construction of literacy, following the work of the NLS and drawing on the work of Halliday (1978), Cambourne (1988) developed a theory of literacy development built around the social and classroom conditions in which literacy acquisition thrives, particularly reading. Based on his work, a social model of reading was described by Freebody and Luke (1990) known as the Four Roles of the Reader, which can be applied in the classroom context. These 'roles' are those of code-breaker, text participant, text user and text analysist (Freebody and Luke, 1990). This model builds on earlier models of the reading process, which positioned socio-linguistic aspects of reading as equal in importance to graphophonic knowledge, seen in the models developed by Rummelhart (1977) and Gregory (2008). The 'Four Roles' model adds further social and critical elements to these models.

Seeing literacy from a socio-cultural perspective also underpins the work of Gee (1996) in the United States, who links local literacies to the prevailing Discourses found within a community. Gee developed the concept of Discourse, with a capital 'D', as a set of social practices, as opposed to discourse, with a small 'd', which represents the literal meaning of the word in oral or written exchanges. Different Discourses are evident in different contexts or social spaces which are specific to a situation and to a community (Gee, 1996).

In another strand of research based on the idea of literacy as a social practice, and on the work of Pahl (1999), literacy 'spaces' are defined (Dyson, 1998, p. 2003). These include both physical and metaphorical spaces where literacy practices are enacted through literacy events outside the classroom as well as inside it. Literacy teaching within the literacy space of the classroom might or might not be aligned to practices in the literacy spaces of the community, for example, with religious or technological literacy. Often, the literacy spaces outside the classroom, where local literacy practices prevail, are created and perpetuated by less formal, more flexible social structures, while the literacy space inside the classroom is controlled by rigid, formal structures such as an education department. An example of this is seen in the work of Bizos (2009), who examines the in-school and out-of-school practices of a group of children in a state school in Soweto, showing examples of sophisticated out-of-school practices contrasting with rigid, pedestrian, in-school practices.

In an earlier shift, but also following the NLS, the anthropologist Ruth Finnegan (2002) explored the multimodal nature of all human communication, moving beyond traditional methods of communication to examine how acts of performance or gesture are a form of literacy. Drawing on this work in South Africa, Stein (2008), and Stein and Slonimsky (2006) discuss multimodal constructions of literacy, describing instances of literacy expression in South Africa that are more culturally appropriate than those associated with the dominant, traditional, print-based construction of literacy. An example of this is the oral tradition of praise-poetry, which Stein (2008) describes as a subversive but culturally admired practice in a school in Soweto.

Parallel to this, the idea of *critical literacy*, following the original work of Freire (1970), is a further strand in the conceptualisation of literacy and also supports the idea of what literacy can do in the modern world, specifically in terms of perpetuating or mitigating social injustices. This view is applied in a South African context in the work of Janks (2009) and McKinney (2005), who explore critical literacy practices that could be applied in South African classrooms. Critical literacy is particularly relevant in South Africa, as some post-colonial theorists find literacy 'deeply implicated in the continuing colonization of the world by Euro-Western ways of being and thinking' (Ghandi and Loomba, 1998 in Viruru, 2003, p.35). Post-colonial theory underpins questions about the hybridities that have emerged through prolonged colonisation, as aspects of traditional and local ideologies are merged, creating new practices (Viruru, 2003; Canagarajah, 2004). Canagarajah (2004) views the common-sense or autonomous model of literacy as sinister, in that the acquisition of this set of specific, discrete skills is learnt for the purpose of perpetuating a Western type of education, often in less than transparent ways, that leads to assimilation into Western culture.

2.3.2 Autonomous constructions of literacy

As early as 2000, the NLS (cited in Cope and Kalantzis, 2000, p.9) described the autonomous view of literacy as 'restricted to formalised, monolingual, norm-, cultural- and rule-governed forms of language'. It is interesting that, looking back over the twenty-first century, this remains the dominant view. It underpins many widely-used models of reading, such as those developed by Gough and Tunmer (1986), Scarborough (2001) and Wren (2001), which will be discussed in the following section. This dominant construction often underpins the statements of interested political structures about literacy and about education in general. For example, in 2003 the World Bank described the need for literacy in the world in purely

economic terms, saying that a 'knowledge economy' requiring 'an educated and skilled population' is 'transforming the demands of the labour market in economies throughout the world' (World Bank 2003, p. 66). This view reflects the essentially colonial view that literacy is equivalent to 'time, work and money, (and) part of the economy', rather than a range of practices to develop individual self-worth or achieve social justice (Gee, 1996, p. 70).

The UNESCO Institute for Education (2004) also aligns literacy with formal education, stating: 'Without basic literacy … education remains out of reach', thus ignoring a broader definition of education, which may move beyond the Western model. The document goes on to quote the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2006), which states, 'Literacy is a critical tool for the mastery of other subjects and one of the best predictors of longer term learning achievement.' This reinforces school-based, autonomous constructions of literacy and accepts the dominant Western position regarding education (Street, 1984). There are deeper implications, however: Gee (1996) explains how, in the dominant Western view, the illiterate subject is often negatively contrasted with the literate subject. The literate subject is portrayed positively as 'productive, cosmopolitan…and less locally-orientated …less likely to commit a crime, and more likely to take education and the rights and duties of citizenship seriously' (Gee, 1996, p. 70).

2.3.3 The current construction of literacy in South Africa

In their policy statements, the post-apartheid Department of Basic Education of South Africa follows the implicit construction of literacy as a commodity; this is seen in policy statements. The preamble to the National Literacy Strategy (2008) states:

> Reading is part of nation building: It promotes confidence; ... (and provides) access to new information and knowledge; helps learners to move through the education system; improves matriculation results; and brings economic benefits for the country by producing skilled workers' (DBE, 2008, p. 58).

The social aspect of literacy and the possibility of different and local literacies developing in South Africa is not considered in any depth and the focus is on the alignment of literacy to the economy.

It is interesting that an alternative view of literacy underpinned the first national curriculum in South Africa's new democracy: Curriculum 2005 (DBE, 1997) included socio-cultural elements and the first post-democratic national literacy intervention pedagogies associated

with this ideology. However, the concept of literacy as an autonomous set of skills underpins the current national curriculum, CAPS (DBE, 2011), as well as many of the more recent literacy interventions such as the GPLMS (2013-2015) and RCUP (2015-) (Fleisch and Schoer, 2014; Fleisch, Taylor, Schoer, and Mabogoane, 2015). Excell and Linington (2014) have found that the autonomous view of literacy is also widespread in pre-school literacy practices in in South Africa. Although the reason for the dominance of this view may lie in the perception that a skills-based construction of literacy is more suited to the needs of this country at this time (van der Berg, Spaull, Wills, Gustafsson, & Kotze, 2016), this presents the possibility that historical colonial social structures will be reproduced and the type of literacy that is learnt will do little to change the position of the dominated in our society (Canagarajah, 2004; Janks, 2009).

The work of Bourdieu helps to explain this position. He sees literacy as a form of cultural capital that is socially and locally embedded, but which has a direct link to economic capital, for example when it leads to further qualifications or employment (Bourdieu, 1986; 2006). Even though the type of literacy that is acquired in formal educational structures may have a disconnect with community literacies and, more significantly, may be complicit in maintaining an unequal status quo by reproducing the inequalities of historically embedded patterning, high unemployment levels and poverty are overwhelming issues in South Africa at this time and educational capital is seen as a rational way of dealing with these problems (Haldenway, 2003).

2.4 TEACHING EARLY READING

In the introduction to *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures,* Cope and Kalantzis (2000, p. 3) ask the question, 'What constitutes appropriate literacy teaching in the context of increasing local diversity and global connectedness?' In contemplating this question, we need to consider global trends, drawing on the constructions of literacy described above but moving into the realities and practicalities of teaching early reading in the classroom: the pedagogies, instructional strategies and programmes teachers use to teach children to read. This section presents a brief review of the teaching of reading in mass-schooling situations in the Western, English-language context. This is relevant in our post-colonial situation, as most teaching practices are based on this paradigm, which has been transferred, sometimes in a hybridised form, to our country. In this study, knowledge of the international trends in the teaching of reading helps to position the practices of the twelve

teachers in a wider context and explains the origins of some of the choices the teachers are currently making.

As with the discussion of constructs of literacy with regard to the teaching of early reading, two distinct approaches can be identified in the literature. One is *skills-based*, with a code-emphasis, aligning with the autonomous construction of literacy, and one is more *meaning-based*, aligning with a social construction of literacy.

To put this into a historical context, Gregory (2000 pp. 8-9) begins a concise chronological history of the teaching of reading in English by describing how children learnt to read from the Bible in the 1800s, using a rote-learning type of reading instruction in which whole words and sentences were memorised. Vestiges of this method of mass education in the United Kingdom remained until the 1920s (Gregory, 2000), when it was superseded by a phonics-based approach to learning to read. As a method of teaching reading, this approach used and made explicit the system of grapho-phonemic correspondences that underpin all alphabetic languages. The result was that learning to read became more systematic, with a focus on the learning of discrete sounds matched to letters, rather than on the shapes of whole words (Gregory, 2000). The appropriateness of the phonics-based approach with more patterned, orthographically-regular written languages is undisputed, and as 80% of English is phonically regular this can be justified, even though the irregularities create inconsistencies (Goswami, 2005). The phonic method of learning to read is aligned to the concept of reading as a 'bottom-up' decoding process, where the reader is expected to move from the smallest unit of sound, the phoneme, or the smallest unit of meaning, the morpheme, to decode a word and then a sentence, thus foregrounding the learning of graphophonics before meaning-making (Jolliffe, 2004).

By the 1940s and 50s, this approach was pervasive in both the United Kingdom and the United States, but in an attempt to mitigate the de-contextualised learning which is often associated with a phonics approach, graded (or basal) texts were developed. These were initially based on a cumulative collection of restricted, phonically decodable words, graded according to the complexity of the phonic patterns and the number of words used. The discourse in the text, however, was often stilted and artificial because of the constraints of excluding words that were not phonically decodable (Gregory, 2000).

As a reaction to this approach, in the middle of the previous century there was a resurgence of the historical whole-word approach, this time in the form of the *look and say* method of learning to read, where children were taught to recognise key high-frequency words by sight (Gregory, 2000). By learning the shapes of common words, regardless of length or phonic patterning, meaningful text could be read at an earlier stage. Reading schemes and readers were developed based on this concept, including the British *Janet and John* series (O' Donell, 1949) and the later Canadian *Ginn 360* series (Heinemann, 1968), which used the repetition and recycling of high-frequency words as the basis of texts with less didactic story-lines. This often resulted in more interesting narrative texts which were graded. In time, some reading series used a systematic combination of both phonic and whole-word approaches to develop early readers (Jolliffe, 2004).

The pedagogies associated with the use of these reading programmes moved away from earlier transmission methods of teaching and learning. The use of graded readers meant an implicit acknowledgement that children learn to read at different rates. Reading in small groups, individual reading and class reading became common (Jolliffe, 2004). This was mirrored in a move away from the Morphett and Washburn (1931) concept of universal reading-readiness, where children in a class learn to read in lock-step, assuming a zero knowledge base, and towards the concept of 'emergent reading' that was formulated by Clay (1972) who saw literacy learning as a continuum, beginning in the pre-school years through incidental exposure to print.

2.4.1 Top-down approaches

In the late twentieth century, new understandings of the socio-cultural and socio-linguistic roots of literacy, described in the section above, saw the emergence of new classroom practices, sometimes described as 'top-down' approaches.

A more culturally-sensitive literacy pedagogy had been described half a century earlier in the work of Ashton-Warner (1952), who responded to the literacy needs of children who were part of a marginalised community in New Zealand. The dominance of the autonomous model at that time meant that many of the concepts she wrote about were only recognised as appropriate much later. However, this early work was built upon in the 1970s: in the United States, Goodman (1986) developed the whole-language approach to reading development and suggested that reading be developed in classrooms in much the same naturalistic way as a child develops language competency.

This approach aligned with new understandings about the role of authentic children's literature in literacy development. In Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, research conducted by Holdaway (1979) and later by Elley (1989) and Beard (1987) shows that children exposed to high-interest, well-illustrated children's texts learn to read more easily and quickly than those only exposed to textbooks or word-restricted graded readers. Elley's (1989) research in New Zealand shows significant gains in vocabulary and reading development from listening to stories in a classroom context. Working in both first- and second-language situations in the Pacific Islands, he also shows the effect on reading development of resourcing classrooms with a 'book flood' of authentic texts, rather than relying on a single textbook (Elley, 1989; 1992).

The influence of the whole-language movement and the use of authentic texts led to the development of new instructional strategies. Shared reading, developed by Holdaway (1979), is a methodology based on the storybook reading done by some parents in the home. Transferred to a classroom, the reading teacher uses oversized books (referred to as Big Books) with enlarged print and illustrations, to simulate a similar situation (Strickland & Schickendanz, 2009). Independent reading of authentic books, chosen by the child and read at the child's pace, also became an important early reading classroom practice (Hill 2008; Goodman, 1986; Smith, 1988). Group-guided reading was a third instructional strategy, which was refined by Fountas and Pinell (1999, 2012). In this strategy, children read and discuss levelled texts in small groups, with the teacher's support. Together, these methods form a cline of scaffolded reading instruction, from fully supported reading to fully independent reading (Harris, Turnbull, Fitzsimmons, and Mackenzie, 2001; Hill, 2008). This aligns with the constructivist principle of working at the Zone of Proximal Development of individual children (Bruner, 1999; Vygotsky, 1962).

These pedagogies are all underpinned by a more interactive, meaning-emphasis, collaborative and problem-solving approach to reading development (Rummelhart, 1977; Morrow, Tracey, Woo, and Pressley, 1999; Harris et al, 2001) and is sometimes described as a top-down understanding of the reading process: the children are assumed to use their prior knowledge to interpret a text, focusing less on its graphophonic elements and more on overall meaning-making (Goodman, 1986).

The whole-language approach was formally introduced into classrooms in the United Kingdom through the National Literacy Strategy (1997), and was used in conjunction with

the ‘searchlights’ model of phonics instruction, where phonics was taught as and when it was needed, in the context of meaningful text, using methods of analogy with known words (National Literacy Trust 2010; Jolliffe, 2004). Teachers structured literacy lessons in a ‘whole to part to whole’ pattern, where all skills-based teaching was done within the context of meaningful text (Gregory, 2000, p. 9; Burns, 2006). Clay (1998) used this approach to develop her book-based remedial reading programme, *Reading Recovery*, in which children read and discuss authentic, levelled texts on a daily, one-to-one basis.

In Australia, the social model of reading which had been developed by Freebody and Luke (1990) was used by the New South Wales Department of Education (1997) as the basis of all early literacy teaching and learning (Harris et al. 2001). Freebody (1992, p. 3) explains that the Four Roles model is an approach to literacy driven by socio-cultural requirements, so that reading success is described ‘in terms of the civil, sociocultural, and job-credential demands and expectations that any particular culture places on its members in terms of the degree to which and the ways in which they deal with written texts’. Serafini (2012, p. 151) explains how Luke and Freebody later ‘revised their original concept of the roles readers needed to fulfil … from predetermined ways of acting and thinking … to a set of resources or social practices that readers draw upon to make sense of their worlds.’ The essence of the theory remains constant, however, and the cultural sensitivity of the theory seems particularly applicable to the South African situation.

2.4.2 Bottom-up and balanced approaches

From the beginning, there were negative reactions to both the look-and-say and the whole-language approaches. Early resistance was built around the text *Why Johnny can’t read* (Flesch, 1935), in which whole-word methods of learning to read are compared to the learning of Chinese symbols. Flesch describes Chinese as a pictographic language in which symbols are memorised as shapes and explains this is what is required when learning whole words by sight. He believes that with alphabetical languages, teaching sound-letter correspondences, even in irregular languages such as English, represents a more efficient and logical way of teaching reading. A resurgence of this view was seen half a century later by Chall (1983) and Adams (1990), who both believed that systematic phonic programmes were more effective than incidental phonics teaching such as the Searchlights model, and that a code-emphasis approach to beginning reading produced better results when compared to a meaning-emphasis or whole-language approach.

These contrasting views led to the so-called ‘Reading Wars’, which created an unhelpful binary between two sets of classroom practices (Wren, 2001). In response, the National Reading Panel (NRP) (1997) in the United States was constituted to conduct a long-term study of different early reading programmes in mass-schooling. They concluded that the reading teacher was more important than a specific approach or reading programme, but identified five skills that were developed in the classrooms of highly-effective reading teachers in the US. These were: phonemic awareness, word recognition (phonics and sight words), comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Significantly, although the panel did not specify a particular method of teaching reading, it did identify phonics as a critical part of learning to read, thus beginning a decline in the purely meaning-based emphasis in learning to read.

After the report, ‘balanced’ reading programmes were implemented to replace purely whole-language programmes in many states in the United States (Wren 2001; Snow, 2005). In the United Kingdom, a similar ideological change was enacted through the implementation of the Simple Model of reading instruction (Gough and Tunmer, 1986) by the Education Ministry, based on recommendations in the *Independent review of the teaching of early reading* report (Rose, 2006). The Rose Report was, in part, informed by the results of the seven-year Clackmannanshire study (Johnson and Watson, 2007), which showed the benefits of using a synthetic phonic approach rather than the analytic phonic approach used in the earlier model. They found that the synthetic approach was particularly successful with working-class children and produced better long-term results (Goswami, 2005). Although the study has since been criticised, the Rose Report (2006) ended national debate around phonics versus no phonics and synthetic phonics versus analytic phonics, arguing the case for synthetic phonics so convincingly that it emerged as a key component of the new literacy curriculum in that country (Education Ministry, 2008).

According to Wren (2003, p. 1) ‘Very few educators today would describe themselves as strict advocates of either a Phonics approach or a Whole Language approach - most would describe their teaching as “balanced”.’ However, he acknowledges that the balance can veer towards one side or the other. An enactment of the balanced approach is seen in models of reading from the turn of the new century (Scarborough, 2001; Wren, 2001), in which reading skills are identified and grouped around the twin components of learning to decode and learning to comprehend text.

2.4.3 Other approaches to the teaching of reading

Partly as a result of these models, specialised areas of study have been generated in the broader field, breaking down the twin components into smaller and more specialised units. The work of Adams (2010) and Strickland (1998; 2011) focus on the development of phonemic awareness in early reading, both as a necessary precursor to learning to read and an indicator of later reading attainment; Goswami (2005), Johnson and Watson (2007), Hill (1999) and Strickland (1998) focus on the teaching of phonics, explaining aspects of phonics in different languages, systematic phonics programmes and the effect that early phonic development can have on reading development. Snow, Griffin and Burns (2005); Block and Pressley (2002) and Duffy (2003, p. 9) explain how explicit instruction around the comprehension of text, once considered less important in the early stages of reading, can and should be used. Biemillar (2005), Nation (1990) and Wolf (2013) alert us to the crucial effect of a large oral and reading vocabulary on automaticity and fluency in reading. Specific targets for vocabulary learning have since been set, as Nation (2001) explained that without a minimum of 3,000 to 5,000 words, readers are unable to read authentic English texts in the upper grades, a skill that is needed when children read to learn.

Based on this research, literature describing exemplary early literacy classrooms show print-rich classrooms, containing both authentic books and graded readers. A range of instructional strategies are used which are associated with both whole-language and phonic-based approaches. These include both explicit teaching and self-directed reading development (Morrow et al, 1999).

The agency of the teacher and the children in the reading development process has been foregrounded by Chall (2000), who believes this is an issue yet to be resolved. An example of child-directed learning is the ‘inquiry method’ (Postman and Weingartner, 1969), in which children direct their own learning by exploring their own interests, but are guided by the teacher. Reading is taught in the context of these inquiries in order to enable their explorations, but not as an end in itself. Chall (2000) finds this a threat to effective early reading instruction and believes the teacher-directed classroom and the well-trained teacher represent the greatest hope for literacy development. The importance of teacher skills and knowledge in facilitating effective reading instruction is also foregrounded and expanded upon by Snow et al (2005) and Stipek (1992), who identify the precise skills and knowledge that teachers need in order to teach reading effectively.

Neurological models of learning to read have gained some prominence in recent years. They describe the reading process as a complex physical task that uses different parts of the brain, including the parts responsible for short-term memory, language, visual and auditory memory and long-term memory (Cavallera and Leiguarda, 2006; Dehaene, 2009). Wolf (2013) describes learning to read as the physical development of neural pathways between the areas in the (prehistoric) brain that have been adapted for the relatively recent task of learning reading skills. Areas of the brain used for this task include the area where language is processed and the area where visual memory is imprinted. Wolf contends that, for physiological reasons, it is easier for some brains to acquire these pathways, and that practice and explicit links between letters, sounds and the meaning of words are crucial. This has implications for classroom pedagogy in that Wolf believes that both decoding and meaning-making may need to be explicitly taught to some children in a systematic and cumulative manner, in order to ensure that the children become readers (Snow et al, 2005; Dehaene, 2009).

Different ways of teaching reading have impacted directly on mass schooling in South Africa. In colonial South Africa, the chronology of different methods used in the United Kingdom is reflected in the methods used to teach 'white' children in government schools, moving from phonics to whole-word approaches with the extensive use of graded readers at a similar time period. The colonised children in this country were initially educated by missionaries according to prevailing views about indigenous peoples. The missionaries themselves were usually products of the way reading was taught in the early mass-schooling systems, principally in the United Kingdom, but also from countries such as the United States, Germany and Switzerland (Hartshorne, 1995).

During the apartheid regime, which was inward-looking and which isolated itself from global opinion, there was little exposure to world trends. An example is the whole-language approach, which seems to have been largely absent from education systems for both the dominant, and the dominated, sectors during the 70s, 80s and 90s in this country. My own exposure to the approach was due to my work with the READ organisation which had global connections at that time. Through working with Margaret Meek, Kenneth Goodman, Warwick Elley, David Pearson and others, I was able to gain an understanding of the whole-language approach and how it could be applied to the South African situation. After 1994

some of these whole-language influenced practices were incorporated into the new national curricula.

In this study, it was important to consider the impact of successive trends on the teaching of early reading, as they also affected the teaching practices of the sample group of teachers directly and significantly, depending on their exposure to alternative approaches and their individual choices. The choice of the Four Roles model of reading (Freebody and Luke, 1990) as a tool of analysis is discussed in Chapter Seven. The model provides criteria against which to compare the teachers' implicit understandings and practices, and is a personal but logical choice. It is discussed in the context of the teaching practices in Chapter 7 (7.1). The model seems appropriate for a country grappling with its past but looking to the future. It incorporates aspects of the two main constructions of literacy described in a balanced approach, but also incorporates genre theory and critical literacy, and, if applied, would develop South African children as skilled, aware and critical readers in our democratic, multicultural and multilingual country.

2.5 TEACHING EARLY READING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

When discussing the ways in which the out-standing teachers taught early reading, the specific historical context and the current situation in South Africa needs to be understood in detail, drawing on the work of Fleisch (2008), Hartshorne (1999), Du Plessis (2003), Christie (1985), Chisholm (2004) and Worden (1994). This section refers to the two previous sections but focuses on the early reading situation in South Africa rather than in a global context, and describes both pre- and post-democratic trends, highlighting changes and interventions in the latter period.

2.5.1 The pre-democratic situation

Pre-democracy, 'white' student-teachers were trained at a handful of well-resourced teacher training colleges, where the quality of training was considered to be of a global standard (Du Plessis, 2003). However, the underlying, flawed and isolationist ideologies of Christian National Education (CNE) were an integral part of this training. Teachers were taught to teach reading in a single language, either English or Afrikaans, using pedagogies that were generally teacher-directed and skills-based, with a strong code-emphasis (Du Plessis, 2003).

‘Black’ teachers were trained at 120 under-resourced teacher-training colleges scattered across the apartheid-created ‘homelands’, which were the designated living areas for people of a specific ‘tribe’ (Hartshorne, 1999). These teachers were also trained to teach reading in one language, an African language, using whole-class, mainly oral transmission-type pedagogies which could be traced back to the early European missionaries and were influenced by Victorian phonic methods of teaching children to read (Hartshorne, 1999). The standard of the ‘black’ training colleges varied considerably but the entrance requirements were low and teachers would often emerge with limited content knowledge (Hartshorne, 1999). However, using a phonics approach represented a logical choice for the orthographically-regular African languages used in the colleges, but this was taught at the expense of meaning-making (Gains, 2010).

Specifically-designated ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ teacher training colleges trained students to teach reading in either Afrikaans or English. The principal literacy pedagogy taught at these colleges, contrary to the pedagogies at the ‘white’ or ‘black’ teacher training colleges, was based on differentiated group-work and often used more innovative pedagogies, although the approach to literacy, as in the other systems, remained skills-based, with a code-emphasis (Gains, 2010).

A teacher’s race would therefore determine the extent of their skills and knowledge. After the pre-service experience, teachers’ racial profiles would also determine the schools in which they taught and which curriculum they would follow. These curricula were enforced through rigid but separately administered educational structures (Chisholm, 2004). ‘Black’ teachers worked within a less regulated, poorly-funded infrastructure and were clearly aware that they had been given and were providing an inferior education compared to what was available in the other three systems. At school level, they fought an inhumane system in various ways, often through non-compliance with the education authorities (Meredith, 1988; Muller, 1987; Hartshorne, 1999).

Resourcing at the schools was significantly different. Many educationalists today find it inconceivable that children can learn to read without exposure to books, whether these are authentic children’s books or graded readers (Clay, 2001; Meek, 1982). Yet there were few resources in the majority of Grade 1 classrooms in schools for ‘black’ children in South Africa at that time: at most, a single reading textbook for the year (READ Reports, 1999-2009). Conversely, the schools for the more privileged groups, particularly those for ‘white’

children, were often print-rich and graded reading schemes and school or class libraries were very common (Equal Education, 2011).

2.5.2 The post-democratic situation

During the post-democratic period, imbalances in the school systems began to be addressed. The segregated teacher training colleges were closed or incorporated into desegregated universities (Du Plessis 2003; Chisholm, 2004) and teaching qualifications were awarded by universities only (Bunting, 2004). It was hoped that the introduction of a single national curriculum would standardise teaching practices in the classrooms. However the majority of Foundation Phase teachers who were working during this post-democratic period had been trained in one of the earlier systems (Prinsloo and Stein 2004, Sailors, Hoffman, Pearson and Mathee, 2007, Fleisch 2008). The problem of the legacy of unequal resourcing for literacy learning was not resolved in the years following the introduction of the unified education system; this is shown in the work of Sailors et al (2007), Gains (2010) and Stein and Mamabolo (2010). Sailors et al (2007) show the positive impact that a 'book flood' had in a group of schools, while the other three studies (above) reveal the lack of resources in many South African classrooms.

The other critical issue that affected teaching practice immediately after the 1995 legislation was the changed language situation, the effects of which are described by Heugh (2008) and Mda (2008). These are discussed in Chapter 2.6.

What was uncontested in the emerging democracy of the early 2000s was that evaluations of South African literacy levels showed low levels of achievement, leading to the perception of a literacy 'crisis' and drawing attention to how reading was taught. These evaluations must be discussed in greater depth than they were in Chapter One in order to gain a better understanding of the situation in which the teachers in this study worked.

The first post-apartheid literacy evaluation, commissioned by the National Department of Education in 2001, focused on children's reading and writing ability at Grade 3 level. 51,000 children were tested and 61% of them were found to be reading below grade level (DBE, 2001). A follow-up evaluation of 35,000 Grade 6 children showed that 72% of Grade 6 children were unable to read at grade level (DBE, 2003). These evaluations were the first empirical indication of the post-democratic literacy situation. A series of international studies, conducted between 2002 and 2008, confirmed these low levels of literacy. The

international TIMMS study, testing the reading comprehension of 10,000 children at Grade 8 level, found South African children's scores lower than those of the other 50 participating countries (Fleisch, 2008). The Progress in International Reading Levels Study (PIRLS), conducted by the University of Pretoria, found that the reading ability of South African Grade 5 children was lower than that of Grade 4 children in other participating countries (Howie et al, 2007; 2012; 2017). The 2007 study showed that 71% of the children were reading at a rudimentary level, and that only 6% were able to read at an advanced level. The evaluation also revealed that South African teachers spent most of their instructional time teaching basic reading skills and that the teaching of more complex reading skills was introduced at a much later stage than in other countries, so that comprehension remained a problem. It also showed that 70% of classrooms were under-resourced. The two later PIRLS studies show little improvement, and in the 2017 study, found 78% of Grade 4 children were not able to read for meaning.

Howie et al (2007) and Fleisch (2008) show that the literacy problem was particularly dire in the historically 'black' schools. This confirms the earlier assessment of reading levels of 10,400 Grade 4 South African children for UNESCO's Monitoring Learning Assessment Project (2000) which found that, with regard to levels of reading achievement in Africa, South Africa is one of the weaker countries, behind Uganda, Mali, Senegal and other participating countries. Narrowing it down to the South-East African region, the SACMEQ I and II studies found the reading comprehension levels of Grade 6 children in South Africa were less developed than those of children in most other countries in the region (SACMEQ, 2000; 2007). Fleisch's book *The Primary School in Crisis* (2008) provides a meta-analysis of literacy research in South Africa, and describes the worrying situation.

2.5.3 Literacy interventions

In response to these evaluations there have been a number of literacy interventions which have formed an important part of the post-democratic educational thrust. Literacy interventions are not unique to South Africa. Robyn Lee, cited in Hugo, argues:

> International experience shows that even in the most developed countries in the world it cannot be assumed that primary education will routinely achieve 80% literacy among learners. Virtually every country has had to launch campaigns or special initiatives to achieve a higher literacy rate (Hugo, 2010, p. 10).

South Africa was no exception.

The *Learning for Living* intervention, the first country-wide literacy intervention in post-democratic South Africa, was implemented by READ between 2000 and 2004 in 957 schools across the country. The schools were selected on the basis of being the 'most disadvantaged' in each province (Schollar and Associates, 2005). A budget of R153 000 000 enabled READ to go to scale with their whole-language model. Each of the approximately 10,000 schools received a 'book flood' (Elley, 1989), classroom support from trainer-mentors and training in whole-language instructional strategies (READ reports, 1999-2005). The final report showed that reading levels had increased in the participating schools by 8.4%, and writing by 5.3 %, giving an overall literacy improvement of 6.85% (Schollar et al, 2005). Qualitative research in individual schools showed the positive impact of the intervention. Sailors et al (2007) showed that children did considerably more reading and writing than before the intervention. The concerns about the intervention were framed in the low gains versus the high cost of replicability (Schollar and Associates, 2005). After this intervention, READ-led interventions became largely provincially-based. One example was a small pilot study conducted in Eastern Cape (Zenex, 2008). At that time, READ was moving away from a whole-language approach towards a balanced approach to the teaching of reading. Their revised model included systematic lesson-plans and a more structured treatment. A graded reading programme, with Big Books and group readers in the children's primary language, replaced the more generic 'book flood', and whole-language instructional strategies were expanded to include a systematic phonics programme in a whole-part-whole framework of weekly lesson-plans. Evaluations of this project showed significant literacy gains at a relatively low cost (Zenex, 2008), but the scale of the intervention made the results unreliable.

A second national literacy intervention occurred in 2008, when the National Department of Education launched the *Foundations for Learning* campaign, which aimed to 'put reading firmly on the school agenda; to promote reading across the curriculum and to ensure that not only teachers, learners and parents, but also the broader community, understand their role in improving reading' (DBE, 2008, p. 11). This campaign was a direct response to the international evaluations cited in the section above.

In Government Gazette 30880, the following targets were set: 'to ensure that by 2011 all learners are able to demonstrate age-appropriate levels of literacy' and to 'increase leaner performance to no less than 50% - an improvement of between 15%-20% in four years' (DBE, 2008). To support teachers in this initiative, instructional booklets were published by the DBE which aimed to deepen understanding of the curriculum, provide assessment

procedures and supply systematic work programmes. They included *The National Literacy Strategy* (February 2008), *Teaching Reading in the Early Grades* (January 2008) and *The Assessment Framework* (April 2008). In addition, *Quarterly Assessment Activities* (February 2009) and later *Foundations for Learning Lesson Plans* (2010) were published. However, the campaign was largely conceptual, with no classroom resources or teacher training provided. The uptake in under-resourced schools and among under-qualitied teachers seems to have been low, judging from later feedback. The campaign was soon overshadowed by publicity around the introduction of another new curriculum, CAPS (DBE, 2011).

The Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) was the first of a number of provincial initiatives funded by provincial structures. In this case, it coincided with the introduction of the new curriculum (Fleisch, 2010; Fleisch and Schoer, 2014). The intervention targeted the province's underperforming schools, initially 792 (of approximately 1,500) primary schools, identified through the results of the Systemic Evaluation (DBE, 2001; 2006) and the Annual National Assessment (ANA) results of 2009 (Fleisch, 2010). The design of the intervention in the Foundation Phase was based on what Fleisch referred to as the 'triple cocktail' (Fleisch, 2010, p. 3) of classroom reading resources, literacy mentors/coaches and published phonic workbooks (GDE, 2010, p.14). Six literacy NGOs were contracted to source, train and employ 130 coaches who would work with Foundation Phase teachers in a ratio of 30:1, and graded readers and phonic workbooks were supplied to schools.

The theory of literacy learning underpinning the intervention was the Simple Way of teaching reading (Gough and Tunmer, 1986), described in the intervention as 'the assumption of the importance of both '"decoding" and "comprehension" in the teaching of early reading' (Fleisch, 2010, p. 14). Significant innovations were made after seven months, informed by feedback from the initial findings of a baseline study of the strategy (Schollar and Assoc., 2012). These changes included re-provisioning classrooms where initial resources, particularly in African languages, were found to be unsuitable (SAIDE, 2012); the replacement of publisher-sourced phonics workbooks with the newly-available government language and literacy workbooks; the up-skilling and standardisation of the NGO-supplied literacy coaches and their practices; the introduction of detailed lesson-plans and the introduction of a 'catch-up reading programme' at the beginning of the Intermediate Phase (Fleisch and Schoer, 2014).

The intervention was discontinued after two years due to changes in provincial leadership; its duration was not long enough to show conclusive results, but there were early indications that it worked well in some schools, particularly more functional ones (Fleisch and Schoer, 2014). Criticisms of the GPLMS were often conflated with criticisms of the new CAPS curriculum, in that both programmes were seen as too content-rich. Teachers at both ends of the competency spectrum struggled, in particular, with the lesson-plans that were provided, for different reasons (GPLMS Reports, 2013-14). Some teachers found the pacing inherent in the lesson-plans unachievable, while others found that the lesson plans stifled their creativity. However, many teachers found the resourcing, coaching and lesson plans helpful. These were elements of the intervention, and the views of the out-standing teachers were interesting in this regard.

Literacy gains were seen as a result of the 'catch-up' reading programme (RCUP) (Fleisch and Schoer, 2014) and a version of this programme was trialled the following year in KwaZulu-Natal. Unlike the Gauteng results, there were few gains in reading or spelling. This was attributed to the low base-line levels of English language skills in the schools (Fleisch et al, 2015).

2.5.4 Successive national curricula

Another type of intervention, also aimed at increasing literacy levels and changing literacy practice, was the implementation of successive national curricula after 1994. This was the democratic government's strategy for changing and standardising the disparate literacy practices in this country. The first post-apartheid curriculum, Curriculum 2005 (DBE, 1997), provided a set of outcomes, which, although underpinned by solid democratic values, were not grade-specific and no guidance was provided regarding content or pedagogy. It was criticised as having a destabilising effect and failing to provide support for the teachers with poorer training (Chisolm, 2008). The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DBE, 2008) that followed, offered more support to literacy teachers by outlining the content to be covered, grade by grade and strand by strand, in the Reading and Phonics sections of the Language and Literacy curriculum. However, for novice or under-qualified teachers of reading, the NCS did not provide a sequence of learning, or pedagogical or assessment guidelines (Chisolm, 2008), which again disadvantaged less qualified teachers. The subsequent curriculum, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011), developed the NCS into a more detailed, sequenced and structured learning

programme with embedded pedagogies, in an attempt to provide more support for teachers in the implementation of the curriculum and, ultimately, for effective reading instruction.

Critiques of this curriculum are evident in the monthly GPLMS Reports (GPLMS, 2013), as the GPLMS and the introduction of the curriculum coincided. For some Gauteng teachers, the reading curriculum had become too detailed and prescriptive, while for others there was still not enough detail. An example of the latter is an instruction for English Reading and Phonics, Grade 1 Term 3, specifying that 'blends' needed to be taught. Exactly what blends are, which blends should be taught, and how they should be taught are not explained. The assumption is that the teacher is familiar with the discourse, pedagogy and scope of teaching phonics in English (DBE, 2011).

The alternative literacy curricula, provided in ten South African languages other than English, are also problematic, as they were versioned directly from the English reading curriculum and do not take into account the entirely different agglutinative structures of the African languages (Katz, 2013).

Much of the content of the curriculum is organised around particular instructional strategies or pedagogies which are associated with the whole-language approach and entail the use of a large number of different literacy resources, such as Big Books. The construction here is of a school that has a rich supply of resources, and teachers who are familiar with these methodologies. The inclusion of an explicit, fast-paced synthetic phonics programme is also problematic for many teachers (GPLMS Reports, 2013). In effect, the curriculum is an interpretation of the balanced approach, one which Wren would call 'mixing some Phonics with Whole Language' (Wren, 2003) and it carries with it the confusions Wren identifies. It was introduced, without resources or training, into South African schools in 2013.

2.5.5 Reasons for the mixed outcomes

The reasons for the mixed results of the post-democratic literacy interventions and of the successive curricula are complex, and lie in factors associated with both the pre-democratic and post-democratic education systems (Van der Berg, Spaull, Wills, Gustafsson and Kotze, 2016). Some of these factors are discussed here.

One factor is the 'weak teacher competence and pedagogical skills' which Van der Berg et al (2016, p. 44) call a 'binding constraint' on the raising of literacy levels in this country. This

was evident as early as 2005, when Taylor and Moyana (2006) evaluated the Khanyisa programme in 400 schools and found that the teachers writing the National Systemic Evaluation test for Grade 6 learners achieved an average score of 55%. This suggests that teachers' own literacy skills were below standard. Snow (2008) shows how this impacts directly on the teaching of early literacy.

A lack of effective pedagogical knowledge was shown in the South African Systemic Evaluation (DBE, 2003), which revealed that over 70% of Foundation Phase learners in South Africa did very little or no independent reading in class, and 60% of learners did no or less than fifteen minutes of writing. The GPLMS Baseline Report gave further insights into Foundation Phase teaching practices in Gauteng. The Report stated that 'one of the biggest differences in inputs between high and low performing schools… is the difference in the number of weeks of instruction provided to learners' (Schollar and Assoc., 2012, p. 26). The Report found little evidence of effective literacy teaching or the presence of literacy routines in the teaching of early reading in the GPLMS schools in the province at that time (Schollar and Assoc., 2012). This is corroborated in the monthly reports submitted to GPLMS management by the literacy coaches (Fleisch, 2016).

Similar weaknesses in teacher practice have been identified by Spaull (2016) and Van der Berg et al (2016) who have described patterns of mismanagement of the literacy curriculum, and a lack of teaching and learning routines, as mitigating against improved literacy achievement in the Foundation Phase. The *NEEDU National Report into Foundation Phase Literacy Teaching (*Taylor, 2012, p. 15), which examined the practices of Foundation Phase teachers' country-wide, described teachers who 'either "won't" or "can't" teach reading effectively.'

Another reason for the mixed results of the literacy interventions was identified as the design of the interventions. Hugo and Wedekind (2013) describe six educational fallacies which may not have been considered by intervention designers in this country. One of these is the 'presence of pedagogy' fallacy, which they define as the attempt to change pedagogy from one modality to another 'when there is no actual form of pedagogy to work with in the first place… Sometimes the issue is the absence of pedagogy, not its modality' (Hugo and Wedekind, 2013, p. 45). They compare the situation in many South African primary schools to the set of conditions described historically by Beeby (1966) for 'Stage 1' schools. Beeby, who worked in both first- and third-world schooling systems, outlined a hierarchy of

functionality in schools, with Stage 1 schools represented the lowest rung. He describes these as schools:

> … where the syllabus is vague … teachers fall back on the very narrow subject content they remember from their own schooldays. It consists of little but the completely mechanical drill of the 3 Rs and memorising of relatively meaningless symbols occupies most of the time…all except the brightest children cease to make progress (Beeby, 1962, p.6 as cited in Hugo and Wedekind, 2013).

Hugo and Wedekind's (2013) point is that a possible absence of pedagogy may not have been considered in post-democratic literacy interventions.

They also outline a second fallacy, which they call the 'imitation fallacy' (Hugo and Wedekind, 2013, p. 4). This is the tendency 'to assume that the end-point aimed at by a developing education system should be imitated in its beginning.' In other words, 'if a progressive end point is desired, then it has to be progressive from the beginning' (Hugo and Wedekind, 2013, p 4). They believe curricula and interventions might focus on changing teaching practice to the desired outcome immediately, without intervening steps. This is an assumption that Beeby (1966) also discussed, explaining that a Stage 1 teacher might need to progress through a number of stages before they become 'self-actualised' as effective teachers.

The increasing use of lesson-plans in more recent South African literacy interventions (EGRS[8] I, 2014, NECT[9], 2013; EGRES II, 2015) (DBE, 2017) seems appropriate for the conditions described by Hugo and Wedekind (2013). Scripting what is said and done and establishing basic routines and pedagogies where none may have existed could ensure the systematic teaching and learning of reading skills, regardless of the level of teacher knowledge, skill or will.

The case for lesson-plans has been made convincingly by Hiebert and Morris (2012). In a meta-analysis of school improvement programmes in the United States over the last hundred years, they question the sustainability of teacher improvement (rather than teaching improvement) models, saying that '(a)rtefacts or knowledge products survive individuals and

[8] Early Grade Reading Study

[9] National Education Collaboration Trust

can be shared and improved over time' (Bereiter, 2002, cited in Hiebert and Morris, 2012, p. 3). Regarding the form of these instructional products, Hiebert and Morris (2012, p. 4) say 'Two kinds are especially useful: specially annotated lesson-plans and common assessments.'

However, a further factor in supplying lesson-plans is the support teachers receive when using them. This is revealed in early results from the EGRS studies, which showed a marked difference in children's literacy levels where teachers were supplied with lesson-plans and where teachers, in addition, also received classroom support (Fleisch, 2016), demonstrating the positive effect of coaching.

The number and range of literacy interventions in South Africa in the pre- and post-democratic education systems attest to the country's determination to find a solution to the literacy situation. However, although Spaull (2016, p. 1) calls the problem 'easily solvable', questions remain. Spaull (2016) is working from an economic rather than educational viewpoint and may not have considered the nuances evident in the transforming education field. In a country with such large variations in teaching conditions, interventions using a single treatment for all schools can be contested. This aligns with Beeby's (1962) model of incremental change, depending on the context. Essentially, with different financial and logistical constraints, each intervention has to consider how the greatest good can be achieved in a particular situation.

Although I have worked in a number of the literacy interventions described above, time has given me some understanding of their design flaws. The teachers in this study have all experienced at least one of these interventions and have their own opinions about their usefulness. This is shown in the following chapters.

The sections *Teaching early reading*, and *Teaching reading in South Africa* represent the lengthiest sections in this literature review, which is appropriate in the context. By establishing current perceptions of Foundation Phase teachers' practice, and considering the interventions and curricula the teachers may have experienced, the teaching practices of the out-standing teachers can be positioned as atypical or not. Further, consideration of the teacher's different practices within the different socio-cultural contexts in which they work (shown by the literature to be grounded in different traditions) helps to position aspects of their teaching practice.

2.6 THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE ON LITERACY

Language is an issue that impacts on literacy, particularly in early childhood. In South Africa, as in many other African countries, this has been complicated by prolonged colonisation. Africa is home to over one-third of the world's known languages, but has been dominated by European languages (ADEA conference, 2002). This has created tensions throughout the Southern African region regarding language in education policies. Wolff (2004) identifies the two language models that dominate: these are the *subtractive* model and the *transition* model. In the subtractive model, the mother-tongue is taken out of the formal school system as a medium of instruction and also as a subject. In the transition model, the target is still the official/foreign language, but learners begin with mother-tongue education and move to the official or foreign language. If the transition from mother-tongue takes place within three years, it is called 'early exit'; if it is later, it is called 'late exit'.

According to Heugh (2002) there is a convergence towards early exit models across sub-Saharan Africa. Many Francophone and Lusophone countries have moved away from subtractive models to early exit models, and many Anglophone countries have shortened their late-exit models to early-exit models.

An alternative to these models is the additive bilingual model which has been adopted in South Africa, seen in the LiEP (DBE, 1997). Ideally, with this model, the primary language is maintained throughout the formal education process, with the additional language taught as a subject. Gradual use of the additional language as the LoLT may be introduced alongside the primary language, but is never used for more than 50% of teaching instruction. Additive bilingualism is often called a *strong* bilingual model. Heugh (2002, 2008) explains that strong bilingualism is essential for initial literacy acquisition and for the move from Basic Interactive Communication Skills (BICS) to Cognitive Academic Skills (CALP). These are the terms that Cummins (1979) uses to describe the theory of the transference of progressively complex linguistic skills from one language to another. Heugh (2002) cites five separate longitudinal studies to back up her contention that a strong bilingual model is the best way to ensure academic success for all in Africa. The five studies cited by Heugh (2002) include the following: MacDonald (1990); Heugh (2002); Hartshorne (1992); Ramirez et al (1991); and Malherbe (1943). However, the relevance of the Malherbe and Ramirez studies can be critiqued in terms of the current situation. The Malherbe (1943) study is situated in the

'white' apartheid education system, and deals only with English and Afrikaans. The size and scope of this study, as well as the Ramirez (1991) study, throw doubt on their applicability to the current multilingual, multicultural field. In addition, the findings of the MacDonald (1990) and Hartshorne (1992) studies are variously interpreted and are sometimes used to mitigate against Heugh's position.

Post-democracy, school governing bodies could decide on their schools' language policies. Many parents saw the acquisition of English as one of the chief purposes of the education process, associating English with upward economic and social mobility. Crystal (2003, p. 10) explains the hegemony of English globally: 'It may take a militarily powerful nation to establish a language, but it takes an economically powerful one to maintain and expand it.' In other words, the language may have been imposed on people initially, but in the post-colonial world it has become an economic imperative. By 1999, most South African schools were going straight for English from Grade1 level, in theory if not in practice, as the majority of teachers had not been trained to teach in English. In the Learning for Living Project, READ found that out of 869 schools in the project in 1999, 97% were going straight for English (READ Reports, 1999-2009). A survey of Eastern Cape schools in 2003 showed 98% of schools going straight for English (Eastern Cape Educational Conference, 2003). Statistics from the first systemic evaluation in 2001 showed that for 93% of learners, English was the medium of instruction (DBE, 2001).

This shift to English may have had an effect on literacy learning, although this is contested. The language situation was blamed for the literacy 'crisis' and a growing call for the rehabilitation of African languages resulted, influenced by PRAESA and specifically by Alexander (1989) and Heugh (2002). In a speech in 2004, Pandor, the Minister of Education, called for the mother-tongue to be used throughout the Foundation Phase and threatened to close down school governing bodies that did not endorse this practice. This was endorsed by the subsequent Minister of Education (2010).

However, implementation of the LiEP is problematic in multilingual schools, particularly in Gauteng, where teachers may have a large number of different primary languages represented in their classes. Furthermore, since they live in an urban environment, these children are more likely to be exposed to English through access to television, radio and social interactions, and in many Johannesburg homes English has become the lingua franca rather than an African language.

That a mass change to a new language is possible is seen in the change to a new home language amongst South Africans of 'Indian' extraction, which occurred less than sixty years ago, when HOD schools made the decision to go 'straight for English' (Mesthrie, 2002). Some schools in townships[10] in Johannesburg and elsewhere in Gauteng have opted for a straight-for-English policy to stem the tide of learners leaving for schools in the suburbs; for most urban schools, education through the medium of English is assumed, although it is not the primary language of the learners, and despite the Minister's orders (READ 1999-2009; GPLMS, 2013).

Even when children are able to learn in their primary African language for the first three years of formal schooling, in Gauteng they change to English in the fourth grade. The pedagogy and pace used to teach the additional language, English, is therefore critical in these schools (Fleisch, 2008). The lack of development of many African languages, particularly regarding standardised spelling and the vocabulary needed for technical subjects, remains a problem (Katz, 2013). For the increasing number of children whose primary language is an African language other than that used as the LoLT in a particular school, the learning burden is heavier, particularly when they switch to English in Grade 4 (Nation, 2008). Such children, often from other provinces or African countries, need to learn to read successfully in two unfamiliar languages.

2.6.1 Learning to read in a new language

That it is possible to learn to read in a new language is explained historically by Gregory (1996, p. 8), who comments: 'We need to remember that a large majority of countries in the world are multilingual. In many of these, there will be a lingua franca or common language for formal education.' She provides examples of this and describes the situation in European countries, where more or less help is given to emergent bilinguals learning to read in the dominant language, depending on the country in which the learners find themselves. She concludes 'However unpromising the conditions, then, we know that children can and do learn to read for the first time in languages which they cannot yet speak and that this need not be regarded as something strange.'

[10] Township is the word historically used to describe the areas designated for 'black' South Africans under the apartheid regime. The term is synonymous with areas of low socio-economic status.

Gregory (1996; 2008) believes that emergent bilinguals bring special understandings to early literacy learning, such as a meta-knowledge of the language learning process itself, and that skilled teachers could build on these strengths. Writing about reading instruction for young emergent bilinguals, Lenters (2004, p. 330), believes that Canadian-French immersion programmes have shown that '(t)he language of initial literacy need not be the children's native language'. She believes that, once the learners have grasped basic concepts of print and are beginning to read, it will be meaning-making that is a particular challenge for the bilingual child. Working in the 1990s, Baker (1993); Au (2002) and Krashen (1982) suggest that pedagogy is the crucial factor in both language and reading instruction for emergent bilinguals. However, the principle applied at that time was that:

> … (e)mergent bilinguals are largely absent from research into reading. Studies on the reading process, methods of teaching and materials, tended to assume either some oral fluency in the language in which tuition takes place or some literacy skills in the first language' (Gregory, 1996, p. 9).

Although the number of studies of emergent literacy has increased in South Africa since 1994, similar assumptions are often made.

In South Africa, the language issue has sometimes clouded the problems of poor pedagogy and linguistic knowledge (Foley, 2004). Research by Sailors, Pearson and Mathee (2002) of children who were part of the Living for Learning intervention showed that the effects of first-language early literacy instruction, as opposed to second-language early literacy instruction in English, did not result in significant differences in literacy levels by Grade 4. These conclusions are similar to those of Spaull (2016), who found that emergent bilingualism was a smaller factor in general literacy levels than originally thought.

2.6.2 Linguistic ideologies in South Africa

Despite the studies showing that learning to read in a new language is not uncommon or unachievable, there are deeper issues around language and literacy in this country. Many of the problems and perceptions around language in South Africa are rooted in the historic use of language for political purposes and the overt privileging of particular languages in the broader education system, which occurred in colonial and apartheid times. Current teachers' ideologies may be rooted in the past, in the apartheid language policy, which constructed languages as 'stable, bounded entities, clearly differentiated from one another' and which

problematised multilingual situations or code-switching (Makoe and McKinney, 2014, p. 660).

During apartheid, this ideology was based on a policy of linking languages to separate identities and of creating a hierarchy of language and identities within this ideology, in which two languages were privileged and the other languages were associated with a lack of cultural capital. Apartheid language-ideology was a part of the apartheid geographical plan of segregation. Makoni (1999) and Alexander (1989) have pointed out how language was used as part of a divide-and-rule strategy that was intended to separate people geographically, according to both race and language. 'Verwoerd said Africans who speak different languages must stay in separate quarters' (Alexander 1989, p. 21 as cited in Janks and Makalela, 2016, p. 225).

Ironically, the role of the current LiEP is complicit in resurrecting aspects of this construction of language according to Makoe (2007): 'As was the case in the past, post-apartheid policies continue to advance and invest in monoglot ideologies that legitimise and give authority to standard English language at the expense of pluralism and diversity' (Makoe, 2007, p. 67). Mda (2004) also explains the hegemony of English in post-democratic South African schools. She believes African languages have become even less privileged and have less prestige than English. Makoe (2007) and Makoe and McKinney (2009; 2014, p.669) show how children's ability and success at school is often based entirely on their level of English, which marginalises some children. In research involving two Johannesburg schools, they found that 'while the majority of the learners have wide linguistic repertoires, the regime at the schools constitutes them as monolingual and frequently as deficient monolinguals.' Some children's identities are threatened by this construction, through their positioning as somehow deficient. Thus, although the transformed educational structures have attempted to equalise the field, until the language issue is explicitly dealt with, the historical field will be reproduced and the children from families with lower status or less economic and cultural capital will remain disadvantaged through their perceived lack of linguistic capital (Mda, 2004).

English is unquestionably the 'legitimate' language for many parents and teachers in South Africa today. Ironically, Makoe (2007, p. 65), found that 'consensus on the legitimate language depends on both those who benefit from the ideology as well as those disadvantaged by it.' This explains why the parents may elect to have their children taught in English even though they do not speak the language at home and could entail bussing their

children to a school in a different area. Makoe (2007, p. 65) concludes that in many South African schools, 'English is discursively constructed as indispensable and the only medium of education, and institutional discourses suggest that good proficiency in English is privileged above all else.' This seems to be the prevailing belief and is a strong indicator of how a school is positioned in the field. It is also an indicator of why particular schools are chosen above others by parents as they are perceived as 'more English', and thus represent objectified and institutionalised capital.

English has become the 'legitimate' language for many parents in South Africa, and this hegemony has significant implications for the teaching of early reading and teaching practices in Johannesburg classrooms. Literature on the language situation is important because language underpins the teaching of reading, and the teachers in this study, working in multilingual Johannesburg schools, complied with an interpretation of the LiEP (DBE, 1997) in their particular schools.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter attempted to map the areas of research that have influenced this study. A number of different areas were drawn upon to explain the interdisciplinary nature of the study.

Because I am using a Bourdesian lens to understand the teachers' practice, I discussed in some detail his principal concepts of field, capital, habitus and practice. In order to understand the teachers' practices in the field, I investigated different constructions of literacy and related them to the South African situation and the teaching of reading. This was discussed in a global, historical, and also a South African context. Finally I looked at literature around language and literacy, because of the multilingual nature of South African society.

Overall, sixteen years is not a long time for transformative, positive changes to literacy practices to become institutionalised, with an outcome of sustainable, grade-appropriate literacy levels. That this remains the vision of educationalists in the democratic South Africa is seen in the number and extent of the post-democratic literacy interventions described, which are an indication of the collective will to raise literacy levels and change practices around the teaching of reading as quickly as possible. This is a complex and historically-

rooted problem which may not be easy to solve; its complexity is shown by the scope of the literature reviewed in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Applying Bourdieu's theories means incorporating a particularly rigorous reflexivity in relation to the researcher's position in the research (Grenfell, 2008). In a field where there have been succeeding and contested paradigms of conducting research, I have made choices which represent my own construction of how I believe I could answer my research questions. By considering strategies for obtaining and analysing the data, even before I began to interpret it, my subjectivity is implicit in this study

This chapter describes and explains the choices I made regarding the design of this research. I begin by referring back to Chapter 1 in order to review my research questions and expand on the earlier research studies which formed the basis for the design of this study. I then outline the research paradigm and the approach used to gather the data. The data set is then described, as well the instruments used to obtain the data, the site and the choice of participants. Throughout the chapter, my own concerns are described as part of my attempt to reflect on my practice.

3.1 BACKGROUND

The impetus for this research arises from my personal and professional history, and includes two previous studies on effective early reading instruction that I was involved in. In the field of early literacy development in the South African context, where low literacy levels are evident, I have, for some years, been interested in the teaching practices of teachers who 'beat the odds' to consistently produce literate subjects (Cunningham and Allington, 2007). Finding these teachers and understanding their practices is one way of discovering more about what it means to teach reading successfully to young children in this country, and the implications for improving practice.

In Chapter One, I described how, in 2007, I conducted a year-long ethnographic study of an effective literacy teacher who worked in an area characterised by extreme poverty. The teacher was brought to my attention in my capacity as a READ manager involved in the Living for Learning literacy intervention. The READ trainer-coaches with whom I worked had found this teacher's enactment of particular instructional strategies exceptional, and she was recommended to me as the prospective subject of a training video. The teacher was

working in a marginalised area in Soweto where most of the residents spoke Xitsonga, which was, and remains, a marginalised minority language in this country. In her classroom, although the primary language of the teacher and most of the children was Xitsonga, the LoLT was English (Botha, 2007). In this context, the teacher had developed her own systematic, vocabulary-based reading programme. In order to understand her teaching practices in depth, I observed her literacy lessons and classroom discourse over the course of a school year in an ethnographic-type study. Through this, I was able to develop an understanding of how she operated in the classroom and of her literacy teaching practices, reinforcing the concept that effective teaching can be found in difficult teaching contexts.

The insights I gained prompted me to extend my research and to find further examples of exceptional early literacy teachers, working across both the contexts described by Fleisch (2008). In 2011, having left READ to join the University of the Witwatersrand's School of Education (WSoE), I began a second study to identify and interview exceptional teachers of reading.

I had retained close ties with READ and I turned again to READ's trainer-coaches, working daily in hundreds of schools in order to identify reading teachers who stood out. I was provided with the names of four teachers. Three of them worked in schools in Soweto which were associated with the dominated sector of education for 'black' children in the apartheid era. The fourth teacher worked in a school which had historically been a school for 'coloured' children during the apartheid regime, although there were an equal number of 'coloured' and 'black' children in the school at that time. To balance these four contexts, I identified an out-standing teacher working in a historically 'white' school. This teacher was identified by the school principal when I visited the school in my capacity as a supervisor of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum.

I interviewed each of the five teachers to find out more about their teaching practices and their responses to then-current conditions in the field. From these interviews, I gained an understanding of their reading programmes and the choices they made in order to meet the needs of the children in their classes. I also became aware of the nuanced differences between their programmes.

Before completing this study, I was seconded to the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to work on a provincial literacy intervention, the GPLMS, described in Chapter 2. My research was interrupted as I immersed myself in the GPLMS for three years. Upon my return

to the WSoE, I found the field had altered significantly and some of my findings seemed out of date. However, I drew extensively on my earlier study when designing this research, to the extent that it could be termed a 'pilot' study.

Findings from these interviews revealed how different early reading programmes could meet children's needs in particular socio-economic and socio-linguistic contexts, and that effective practice looked different in different contexts. These different practices seemed to be shaped both by the teachers' and schools' socio-historic, socio-linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. I also found that interviews were useful in foregrounding teachers' own perceptions and truths regarding their teaching of reading more efficiently than the lesson observations which I had used in the first study.

The scope of the study is shown in Table 2. It explains each participant's pre-service training, number of years of experience, grade level and the site and LoLT of the school. The number of contact visits is also shown. This 'pilot' study established the framework for the research paradigm, approach, site and selection of participants used in the current study.

Table 2: Pilot study

Teacher	**Pre-service training**	**Teaching exp.**	**Initial contact**	**Site of school**	**Gr**	**Contact visits**		
Magate	DET college for 'black' students	15 yrs	READ trainer	Meadowlands, Soweto. **LoLT: IsiZulu**	1	Principal interview	Teacher interview	
Jane	DET college for 'black' students	25 yrs	READ trainer	Chaiwelo, Soweto. **LoLT: Tshivenda**	1	Principal interview	Teacher interview	
Thandile	DET college for 'black' students	15 yrs	READ trainer	Jabavu, Soweto. **LoLT: English**	2	Principal interview	Teacher interview	
Marjorie	HOR teacher training college for 'coloured' students	30 yrs	READ trainer	Coronationville, Jhb West. **LoLT: English**	1	Principal interview	Teacher interview	Interview continued
Sally	TED 'white' students	30 yrs	WSoE	Alberton, JHB South. **LoLT: English**	1	Principal interview	Teacher interview	Interview with teacher

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN OF THIS STUDY

3.2.1 Research paradigm

My research questions for this study required a particular research design. The questions were: *What are the teaching practices of a small group of out-standing reading teachers in different socio-cultural contexts?* and *How are these practices a response to the conditions in which the teachers work or worked?* There were four research aims: to understand the pedagogies and the reading programmes the teachers used, to determine how these originated, and to compare practices across the group. This requires a socio-cultural, socio-historic and socio-economic analysis of the schools and teachers.

This study can be located in the applied social sciences and could have been underpinned by a number of different research paradigms, each influencing the approach and methodology of the research (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Mukerji and Albon, 2015, p.11). However, the two main paradigms underpinning research in this area are either positivist or naturalistic, and a naturalist paradigm seemed best suited to this research (Kumar, 2014, cited in Mukerji, 2015, p. 11).

A positivist paradigm is associated with positivist thinking, and often employs a quantitative approach and methodologies which require the use of large cohorts of participants, which results in the gathering of numerical data (Mukerji & Albon, 2015). In education studies in South Africa, this approach has been used successfully to evaluate the impact of large scale literacy interventions (Fleisch, 2014; Spaull, 2014; Taylor, 2013). Conversely, a naturalistic paradigm is associated with a broad area of philosophical thinking which includes interpretivism, constructivism, critical theories and post-structuralist theories, and lends itself to qualitative approaches and theories. With a qualitative approach, the focus is on ‘gaining detailed information about a small population’ (Mukerji, 2015, p. 30). Using the metaphor of a torch, Denscombe (2010) compares this process to shining a light on an object from close up rather than moving back and looking at a wider field in less detail. This aligns with the aims of this research, which are concerned with identifying the individual practices and thoughts of a small number of teachers.

Five properties of qualitative research can be identified, each of which justifies this choice. First, a qualitative approach is associated with inductive rather than deductive thinking, so that hypotheses may be tentatively formulated, based on the findings of the study, rather than

deductively, beginning with a universal truth (Knobel and Lankshear, 1999). This study works inductively from the teachers' own descriptions of their practice, in order to formulate understanding of and reasons for their individual practices.

A second property of qualitative research is that it generally provides a deeper understanding of the social phenomena being researched than that gained from quantitative data (Silverman, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2001). The social phenomena in this case were the teaching practices of identified teachers, and it was through interactive conversations rather than numerical data that the detail I required could be obtained.

Third, a qualitative approach can involve working with rich descriptions, which are achieved with words, photographs or field notes (Merriam, 2009). Rich descriptions are associated with the thick descriptions found in anthropological studies, but can also apply to the social sciences (Geertz, 1983). Rich descriptions of the teachers and their schools are presented in Chapter 4 and are important in establishing the different socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-historic contexts in which the teachers are immersed.

Fourth, qualitative research examines the everyday behaviours and practices of subjects in their natural settings (Merriam, 2009), and it was the teachers' everyday practice with regard to the teaching of reading that was the focus.

Finally, qualitative research enables the researcher to carry out an investigation that will explore the complexities of a situation in order to 'get under the skin' of the participants and to view the topic 'from the inside out' (Gillham, 2000, p. 11). The teachers' own perceptions, thoughts and feelings, described in their own words, were crucial elements in doing this.

3.2.2 The case-study approach

The data-set in this study comprises a case study of the teaching practices of twelve outstanding teachers of early reading.

According to Knobel and Lankshear (1999) a case-study approach is often used in the qualitative research paradigm, studying human behaviour by recording and reflecting on life as it is. Some researchers consider it the 'bedrock' of investigation in an interpretivist paradigm, since it is both manageable and in-depth, due to its size and focus (Bromley, 1986; Mukerji, 2015). Gillham (2000, p. 1) identifies four features of a case-study approach that

distinguish it from other approaches: it looks at ‘a unit of human activity embedded in the real world’; it ‘can only be studied or understood in context’; it ‘exists in the here and now’; and it ‘merges in with its context’. All these criteria applied to this study, as the research was centred on teachers who taught reading in functioning schools; it also focused on their reading programmes, which formed part of their everyday teaching practices.

Another important feature of a case study is that it is intrinsically bounded. This concept of ‘boundedness’ can be tested by considering how finite or specific the data collection will be, as opposed to examining random instances of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009, p. 43). The finite boundedness of this group of teachers is discussed in section 3.4.

There is no single model for the construction of a case study and there are a number of options a researcher can consider. A case study can be the study of an individual or of a group of participants, and it can operate at one or a number of sites (Merriam, 2009, p. 49). It can be small or large (Johnson and Christensen, 2012). This study was situated at a single site, in the sense that was located in one city, but it would more properly be called a multisite case study because the participants worked in different areas of the city. Multisite case studies offer an advantage over single-site studies in that they enable comparisons to be made, and capturing and comparing diverse teaching practices is one of the aims of this research. This case study looks at the practice of more than ten teachers, so it is larger than the average collective case study, which is set at ten cases (Johnson and Christensen, 2012).

According to Mukerji and Albon (2015), this size and the number of sites could have adversely affected the accuracy of the data and detracted from the details of individual cases, as the information about each subject would necessarily have less depth. This concern was addressed by focusing on individual teachers in different chapters, to illustrate particular phenomena. A further danger that Mukerji and Albon (2015) mention is that comparisons, rather than the case itself, can become the defining feature of the research design. This is addressed by explaining the practices of selected individual teachers, as well as by identifying the practices common to the whole group.

Yin (1993) explains that case studies may also be defined according to their purpose rather than their composition, and this can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. This study was intended to be less exploratory than descriptive and explanatory, in that the aim was to

describe the teachers' different practices and to explain why these programmes and pedagogies were used, drawing on the teachers' own words.

Case studies have limitations as a method of investigation. According to Yin (1990), the three most common criticisms are the relative absence of systematic procedures, the lack of reliability or replicability of a study and the issue of generalisability. For the first, I have clarified the procedures and protocols that I used and the reasons for my choices. For the second limitation, the explanation of the procedures means the study could be replicated, but with the knowledge that this is the study of a group of individuals, so the results will be different. With the third limitation, the purpose of this study was not to generalise about all South African teachers or to describe the ideal teacher, but to describe particular teachers in different socio-cultural contexts.

3.3 PARAMETERS OF THE CASE STUDY

3.3.1 Johannesburg as a research site

The research site was limited to schools situated in one city. Johannesburg is the largest city in South Africa and the provincial capital of Gauteng, which is the wealthiest province in the country. It is one of the fifty largest urban agglomerations in the world and is positioned as the industrial and commercial hub of the sub-continent (Brinkhoff, 2016; SA Stats, 2011). Because of this, people from within South Africa and from other countries in Africa come to Johannesburg to look for work opportunities. The result is that the city encompasses a wide range of different, and shifting, socio-economic contexts (Brinkhoff, 2016), from ultra-wealthy to distressingly poor; the areas range from those characterised by brick buildings and sophisticated infrastructure to places where people have settled informally and built houses from waste materials on unoccupied land. It thus provides a variety of socio-cultural contexts that meet the research aims.

These contexts are linked to socio-geographic factors. Johannesburg sprawls in all directions from the original central metropolitan area, so that it now includes multiple nuclei, each with different socio-economic standards and cultural affiliations (https//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannesburg). The teachers in this study were drawn from different geographical areas in and around Johannesburg, with different socio-cultural and socio-historical nuances.

All government schools in Johannesburg are currently administered by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). It administers the 2,059 schools, in the province, 1,363 of which are primary schools. Overall, they are responsible for the education of 17% of the total number of school children in the country (DBE, 2013). However, significantly, the province also has 593 private schools, which comprise 22.4 % of the total number and educate 10.8% of the children in the province. This is a substantial number of schools when compared to other provinces. However, this study looked at the practices of teachers in government schools, as these schools constitute the majority in the city, the province and the country, and present most of the challenging contexts where teachers need to 'beat the odds' in order to create literate subjects.

Compared to the rest of the country, the GDE currently has the second-lowest teacher-student ratio, which is 28.5:1, and the largest number of students per school, with an average of 804 per school (DBE, 2015). The GDE is therefore not the least privileged educational structure in the country, since it has large schools and a more manageable teacher-student ratio than most other provinces. This is shown in the results of the national school-leaving examinations. The Gauteng and Western Cape Departments of Education are the two provinces that regularly achieve the highest scores in the country each year (DBE, 2015).

However, the GDE schools in Johannesburg, like the suburbs surrounding the city, are positioned in a cline of privilege. They range from well-resourced, semi-private government schools, with significant infrastructure and resources where most of the parents pay prescribed fees, to utilitarian schools with a poor built environment; these are often no-fee schools with limited resources (GDE, 2013). The teachers in this study are drawn from a range of schools.

3.3.2 Out-standing teachers

The selection criteria for participants in any case study need to be explicitly foregrounded (Le Compte & Pressle, 1993, as cited in Mukerji, 2015). It was explained in Chapter 1 that the use of the term 'out-standing' is not synonymous with best practice, but is closer to the concept of a 'practising' reading teacher, or of a teacher who 'beats the odds' in developing literacy subjects in difficult contexts. It could be argued that most government schools in the city represent 'difficult contexts' in terms of the teacher-student ratios, lack of resources and the SES of many students (Fleisch, 2008). Importantly, these teachers should 'stand out' from other early-grade teachers at a particular school or in a specific context.

It took over twelve months to identify the twelve teachers that made up the case study. In Johannesburg, particularly effective teachers of reading in government primary schools are hard to identify, not because they don't exist but because there have been no post-democratic, large-scale evaluations of reading teachers. In addition, the results of the intermittently administered national learner evaluations, the ANAs[11], have proved problematic, not least because they are marked by the teachers who administer the test. An approach was made directly to the GDE for the names of teachers who 'stand out' as reading teachers but this was unsuccessful.

In the 2007 research study, which was based on one exceptional teacher (Botha, 2007), the teacher was one of only a dozen teachers identified by READ teacher-coaches, selected from the over 10,000 teachers who participated in the intervention. In the pilot study, only four teachers were nominated by two of READ's trainers, who, between them, worked with over 100 teachers in the city (READ reports, 1999-2008). The fifth teacher was identified by the principal of a functioning school which I had visited in my capacity as a lecturer.

The criteria for selection of the teachers in this study was that they were 'experienced early grade reading teachers who stood out from their peers by consistently producing readers at or beyond grade level' (Appendix B). I began my search for these teachers by approaching educational structures, networks and individual people whom I believed had the experience and expertise to identify participants for the study. These included individual colleagues at the WSoE, READ teacher-coaches with whom I had worked before, selected staff members at a large organisation promoting language and literacy, with whom I had worked in the GPLMS, and selected officials working at the GDE who had been part of the GPLMS. The resulting recommendations were few in number, and, overall, there seemed to be a reluctance to identify out-standing teachers either across schools, or within particular schools.

The reasons for this reluctance are unclear. The 'experts' were uncomfortable recommending individual teachers either because they doubted their own ability to identify 'out-standing' practice, believed they had not observed 'out-standing' practice, or were reluctant to position one teacher as better than others. A Bourdesian analysis suggests that the destabilizing effects of the transforming field in which they worked, and the struggle for their own re-positioning in the changed field, may be part of this reluctance (Bourdieu, 1986).

[11] ANAs are the Annual National Assessment tests which were introduced by the DBE in 2010.

I therefore decided to employ a strategy I had used to find one of the teachers in the pilot study. This was to approach principals of highly-functioning government schools with a request that they identify which early reading teachers 'stood out'. I rationalised that a competent and experienced principal in a functioning school would be able to identify the teacher, or teachers, who best met the criteria of consistently producing readers at grade level. This method had identified an exceptional teacher in the pilot study, but I understood that the selection would depend on the experience and expertise of the principals I approached. However, I was not looking for an ideal teacher, but at a group of 'practising' reading teachers (Pearson and Hoffman, 2011).

This meant identifying high functioning government schools with experienced principals. To do this, I approached colleagues in the WSoE Teaching Experience (TE) Office[12], who have contact with over 300 schools in the Johannesburg area. The Office has been working with many of the schools for decades in order to allocate students for their practical teaching experience. The staff regularly review the schools in which they place students and receive ongoing feedback on them from students at all levels, as well as from the lecturers who supervise the students and visit the schools. Over the years, specific schools have been particularly helpful in mentoring students, and the lecturers and students allocated to these schools provide feedback describing them as highly functional in that systematic, organised, learning is taking place, and strong leadership is evident. Not all these schools are situated in privileged areas; they are often in the areas in which the diverse students of the WSoE themselves live. Through discussions with the WSoE TE office, I was able to generate a list of thirty schools across the greater Johannesburg region, representing various socio-cultural contexts but all highly-functioning schools with strong principals. The definition of 'functioning' or 'strong' was not objective, but was based on the WSoE TE office's extensive knowledge of the schools.

[12] The WSOE student teachers have six weeks of practical teaching experience in Johannesburg schools over the course of the year. Their teaching is evaluated by supervising lecturers who visit them in the schools in which they are placed. This teaching experience is coordinated and controlled by the staff at the Teaching Experience Office.

3.4 PARTICIPANTS IN THE CASE STUDY

3.4.1. Selection procedure

I initially used emails to request introductory interviews with the principals of these schools, but there were no results; subsequent telephonic requests generated only three responses. I then visited each of the selected schools and spoke to the school reception staff to request interviews with the principals. Of the schools I visited, all the principals agreed to see me, some immediately, and some after I had made an appointment.

On describing the criteria for an out-standing reading teacher, the principals, without hesitation, nominated one or two teachers on their staff. This lack of hesitation was significant, as it confirmed that, atypically, good practice is as noteworthy and memorable as bad practice. It was interesting that these nominations seemed to require little thought, which indicated that the teachers clearly stood out from the other teachers. Although I was aware that the principals' interpretations of a good reading teacher did not guarantee that the teacher was highly effective or outstanding in the macrofield, I rationalised that they would nominate teachers who met the criterion of being 'out-standing' in the micro-context of the school.

Each principal either called the nominated teacher to meet me in their office, or arranged a time for me to come back to meet the teacher, or assured me that they would pass on the information letters I had provided. This did not always result in contact being made, and many of the teachers who were initially identified did not respond to my follow-ups. Table 3 outlines the profiles of the teachers who were nominated and documents my attempts to follow up on the nominations.

Table 3: Withdrawals and refusals encountered in the study

Teacher	Pre-service training	Current school	Initial contact with school	Follow up 1	Follow up 2	Follow up 3
Teacher 1	TED college for 'white' students	Ex-TED, inner city	Principal: telephonic/email	Teacher declined via email		
Teacher 2 and Teacher 3	HOR college for 'coloured' students	Ex-TED, Eastern Johannesburg	Principal: interview	Teachers: school visit	Teachers: no response to email requests	
Teacher 4	DET college for 'black' students	Ex-DET, Soweto	Principal: letter and interview	Teacher: classroom visit	Teacher: cancelled interview	Teacher cancelled interview
Teacher 5	DET college for 'black' students	Ex-DET, Soweto	Principal: letter and interview	Teacher: classroom Visit	Teacher: lesson observation	Teacher: cancelled 2 interviews
Teacher 6:	TED college for 'white' students	Ex-TED, Northern Johannesburg	Principal: Letter and interview	Principal: interview	Teacher: no response to interview requests	
Teacher 7 and Teacher 8	HOR college for 'coloured' students + HOD college for 'Indian' students	Ex-TED, Western Johannesburg	Principal and deputies: telephone and interview	Teachers: short visit	Teacher: no response to interview requests	

On reflection, although I had known that the identification of out-standing teachers would be a challenge, I was surprised by the number of refusals and withdrawals. I realised that in the earlier studies, at READ and the GPLMS, I had been in a position of authority, in a managerial position, and could arrange to speak to teachers and principals without difficulty. However, as a WSoE researcher I was positioned differently: I was dependent on the goodwill of the principals and the teachers.

I also believe that the climate in the schools had changed since the pilot study had been conducted, four years earlier. The introduction of the content-rich CAPS curriculum in 2013 meant that teachers were spending more time dealing with its demands. Many participants told me later in their interviews that they felt overwhelmed by current teaching demands.

There is also the possibility that the lack of co-operation might have been caused by some resistance to the GDE, who, it was explained, had given permission for the study. The teachers might have misunderstood this, so that the study might have been viewed as part of an authority structure that they wished to resist. There might also have been some subversive resistance to their principal, who could be seen as making another demand on their time, or to

the university, which they might have associated with privilege. I also believe that the topic itself caused some concern. At least three teachers, probably very conscientious ones, explained that they felt they were *not* exceptional and therefore felt uncomfortable about being nominated.

Because I was comparing the practices of teachers in different contexts, it was important that the teachers worked in a variety of areas, that they represented different cultural groups and that they had been trained at different institutions. Ensuring this diversity added a layer of complexity to the process and meant some of the selected schools were not approached.

I was ultimately able to identify fourteen out-standing teachers. If a teacher nominated by the principal agreed to an interview, I made arrangements and interviewed them without further selection. In two cases, I realised during the interview that the teacher was not suitable. One teacher was not currently teaching in the Foundation Phase, and therefore did not meet the principle criterion. In the other case, I realised that the teacher did not meet the equally important criterion of being 'out-standing', in that she followed the lead of another reading teacher and could not explain her practices coherently.

It became evident in the interviews that ten of the twelve participants had been involved in the GPLMS. This is the intervention with which I had been involved in 2013. This introduced an additional layer of subjectivity and highlighted the necessity for careful scrutiny of the transcripts for any bias on my part.

It also became evident that my quest for socio-cultural diversity related only to the teachers, and to the geographical position of the school, but not to the children. This contrasted with the pilot study four years earlier, where the identified teachers and the children in their classes were linked to specific communities. In contrast, for this study, the landscape had changed significantly. Many schools were now staffed by teachers with a range of different cultural backgrounds who sometimes had no link to the geographical area in which they taught. In addition, across all twelve classrooms, there were now mainly 'black' children, all with a similar socio-economic status (SES). The children were often not linked to the geographical area in which the school was situated and were bussed to school. These changes revealed the impact of the demographic shifts described in Chapter 2.

3.4.2 Participant profiles

The profiles of the participants are summarised in Table 4, which lists each teacher and says how they were identified, where they received their pre-service training, their years of teaching experience, the type of school in which they currently taught, where it was situated, the grade level at which they currently taught and the SES of the children. Pseudonyms are used in the table and throughout this report.

Key to Table 4: Grouping according to pre-service training

These five teachers trained in colleges associated with the DET education system for 'black' children and began teaching in DET schools.
These two teachers trained in colleges associated with the TED education system for 'white' children and began teaching in TED schools.
These three teachers trained in colleges associated with the HOR education system for 'coloured' children and began teaching in HOR schools.
These two teachers trained in colleges associated with the HOD education system for 'Indian' children and began teaching in HOD schools.

Table 4: Participants in this study

Teacher	Source of nomination	Pre-service training	Years of teaching	Current school	School and Site	SES*	Grade
1.Thandeka	WSoE + Principal of school	DET college for 'black' students	17	Ex-TED school for 'white' children	Allendale Sch. Inner-city	Low	3
2. Sunette	WSoE + Principal	TED college for 'white' students	18	Ex-TED school for 'white' children	Ashford Sch. Inner-city	Low	1
3. Marian	WSoE + Principal	TED college for 'white' students	16	Ex-TED school for 'white' children	Blairwood Sch. Suburban, Northern Jhb	Mediu m	1
4. Violet	WSoE + GDE+ Principal	HOR college for 'coloured ' students	35	Ex-HOR school for 'coloured' children	Vooruit Sch.. Suburban, Western Jhb	Low	1
5. Anelle	WSoE + GDE+ Principal	HOR college for 'coloured ' students	35	Ex-HOR school for 'coloured' children	Coronation Sch. Suburban, Western Jhb	Low	2
6. Brenda	WSoE + GDE+ Principal	HOR college for 'coloured ' students	22	Ex-HOR school for 'coloured' children	Vooruit Sch. Suburban, Western Jhb	Low	1

Table 4: Participants in this study continued

Teacher	Source of nomination	Pre-service training	Years of teaching	Current school	School and Site	SES*	Grade
7. Gabu	WSoE + GDE+ Principal	DET college for 'black' students	15	Ex-HOR school for 'white' children	Hoogland Sch. Suburban, Western Jhb	Low	2
8. Devi	WSoE + Principal	TED college for 'white' students	20	Ex-HOD school for 'Indian' children	Sandalwood Sch. Suburban, Southern Jhb	Low	3
9.Fatima	WSoE + Principal	TED college for 'white' students	15	Ex-HOD school for 'Indian' children	Cosmos Sch. Suburban, Southern Jhb	Low	2
10. Pulane	WSOE + Principal	DET college for 'black' students	18	Ex-HOD school for 'white' children	Eastern Sch. Suburban, Southern Jhb	Low	1
11. Lerato	WSOE + READ	DET college for 'black' students	30	Ex-DET school for 'white' children	Reliant Sch. Inner city	Low	1
12. Kholo	WSOE + Principal	DET college for 'black' students	22	Ex-DET school for 'white' children	Tembalihle Sch. Township, South-West Jhb.	Low	1

*Socio-Economic Status

3.5 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

3.5.1 Interviews

Merriam (2009, p. 1) believes that research focused on discovery, insight and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied, offers the greatest promise of making a difference in people's lives.' I particularly wanted to record and analyse the teachers' own perspectives of their reading programmes, in order to understand what they had prioritised in terms of pedagogy and content. I attempted to record their truths about their practice, and how they believed their practice had developed and changed over the years. The instrument used for this was the semi-structured interview.

Interviews are a common research instrument. Fielding and Thomas (2008) believe an interview is more purposeful than a conversation, but not as rigid as a questionnaire, and by its nature remains personal. Interviews have an added advantage that probing is facilitated. This is crucial for clarifying areas of interest and for determining the underlying thoughts of the subjects (Mukerji and Albon, 2015). A semi-structured interview allows for even more

flexibility. Cannold (2001, p. 179) calls the semi-structured interview a 'structured conversation.' Because response categories are not fixed, there is space to elaborate or provide different responses (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), which makes the semi-structured interview a good fit with the aims of the research.

There are certain procedures associated with an interview. An interview is planned and there is an agenda, there is always prior contact and an interview is more likely to be recorded and analysed (Mukerji and Albon, 2015). These procedures were followed in order to establish an element of professionalism in the interaction. They are described in section 3.5.

The set of questions around which the interviews were organised is presented in Appendix B. The questions are sub-divided into six sections: 1. Biographical information; 2. Changes experienced in the classroom over the years; 3. The reading programme; 4. Why and how this originated; 5. The impact of various reading interventions; and 6. What makes a good reading teacher? I drew on the questions asked in the pilot study (2008-2011) and then refined, rephrased or eliminated questions where the context had changed or the questions which had proved problematic in the pilot study.

I understood that interviewer bias and interviewer effect would be constraints during the interviews (Breakwell, 1995). Interviewer bias refers to the way in which interviewers often foreground only those constructions that confirm their preconceived ideas or support their research standpoint (Breakwell, 1995). I was aware that this would become evident in the transcripts. Interviewer effect refers to the way the participants may be influenced by the interviewer's gender, age or perceived status and attempt to provide views and opinions that will please the interviewer (Breakwell, 1995). To deal with this I revealed a little of my own background, and how I had worked in different contexts in South Africa. This was to build some rapport with the participants before I began asking questions.

The interviews were transcribed and rechecked against the recordings.

3.5.2 Observations and informal conversations

3.5.2.1 Observations

According to Merriam (2009, p. 117), 'Observations take place in the settings where the phenomenon of interest naturally occurs and represent a first-hand encounter with the

phenomenon of interest.' Merriam goes on to say that it is more than just paying attention; it involves using a fresh perspective to re-evaluate what may be commonplace to the researcher. I drew on Geertz's (1983) explanation of 'thick' descriptions to frame the observations.

Merriam (2009, p. 121) suggests having a mental checklist of elements to observe, which could include the physical setting, the participants' actions, the interactions observed, the conversations heard, and also more subtle factors, including one's own behaviour and responses. For my own mental checklist, I drew on the pilot study, where I had become conscious of differences in the public spaces and time management of the various schools I visited. I was particularly interested in the different ways in which public spaces were used at different schools, the access procedures to the school and principal, teacher-principal interactions, and evidence of any routines. My field notes were supplemented with notes made immediately after each visit.

Two of the participants invited me to observe them conducting a literacy lesson. In these observation sessions, I looked for evidence of their literacy teacher practice. I observed the reading resources, classroom print and particularly the ways in which the teacher mediated literacy learning. I recorded these observations as field notes while sitting at the back of the classroom.

During the research, I also had access to some of the other teachers' classrooms before or after the interviews and sometimes observed the beginning or end of a lesson. I was able to observe artefacts, interactions and evidence of routines in these classrooms, and made field notes, particularly as these pertained to literacy teaching practices.

3.5.2.2 Informal conversations

Conducting the research involved a number of informal discussions with the principals and teachers. These were conversations that took place in the preliminary visit to the school, the initial appointment with the principal and the initial meeting with the nominated teacher. During subsequent visits to the school there would often be conversations with the principal or teacher in the course of normal interactions. These informal discussions were unstructured, which distinguishes them from a semi-structured interview (Cannold, 2001). In addition, after the initial meeting with the principal, these were not planned, there was no agenda, and they were not recorded; they therefore did not meet the criteria associated with interviews (Mukerji and Albon, 2015).

The informal discussions with the principals proved a rich source of information regarding the culture, climate and positioning of the school. Although there was no official 'agenda', my mental checklist during these discussions was to confirm, add to and probe my initial observations of the school (i.e. the history of the school, the make-up of the student body). The discussions were also particularly valuable when they concerned the individual teachers who were nominated and the principal discussed what made them out-standing. Invariably, these discussions lasted some time and the principals discussed a wide range of issues such as the state of education, the school, the SES of the children's families, language issues, discipline issues, resourcing issues and the way the demographics had changed with regard to both the children and the staff. The relevant aspects of the conversation were captured in field notes or notes made immediately after the school visit.

Similarly, informal conversations with the teachers, in their classrooms or in the staffroom before or after a teacher interview, or when arranging an interview, often proved useful in providing background information. These conversations sometimes involved the principal or other teachers, and were usually lively as well as informative, as the teachers spontaneously volunteered opinions about the teaching of reading. Again, aspects of the conversation were captured in field notes or subsequent notes.

The content of the informal discussions was used with the permission of the principals and teachers and these, together with observations during school visits and lesson observations, were used for triangulating information from the teacher interviews and confirming aspects of the field, teacher habitus and capital, and professional practice among the teachers.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data collection began with a preliminary visit to each school. The purpose of this first visit was to set up an appointment with the principal and to familiarise myself with the location. I also observed the context of each school and gained information about the socio-historic, socio-cultural and geographic context of the school.

The second step was to meet each principal, usually by appointment. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the aims of the research and to ask the principal to recommend an out-standing reading teacher.

The third step was a meeting with the nominated teacher. These initial meetings were informal and their purpose was to give the teachers the information letter, answer their questions, exchange contact details and explain the consent form. In particular, I explained the confidentiality and ethical issues.

The fourth step was to set up the interview. I provided the interview questions to the participants beforehand, giving them a chance to formulate responses that were unaffected by my presence. I explained that although the questions would focus the discussion, they were welcome to add to, or ignore, any of the questions, and to answer in whatever degree of detail they preferred.

The interview time and place was confirmed a few days before a scheduled appointment. Even at this late stage, some teachers altered the time, date or interview site because of unexpected school or home commitments, again revealing very tight schedules.

Each of the interviews was conducted in a place of the teacher's choosing. These included a quiet corner of the staffroom, an empty classroom, a vacant office, and in one case, in my own office, since the teacher had recently left the school at which she had worked.

In the pilot study, I had found that a one-and-a-half to two-hour interview would be needed for participants to answer all the questions and this proved the case in this study. Two interviews were conducted at one school and the teachers talked to each other for some time, although I conducted separate interviews with them. There was also one joint interview.

Using recommended interview techniques (Robson, 2011, p. 82), I tried to listen more than speak, put the questions in a clear but non-threatening way and tried to eliminate cues prompting the interviewees on how to answer. Reviewing the tapes, I found I had not always been entirely successful in this and noted where this had occurred. Also, in line with Robson's suggestions, I began each interview by confirming the confidentiality agreement.

During the interviews, it became apparent that the participants were more interested in some questions than in others, and they answered questions accordingly, in more or less detail. Unsurprisingly, English home-language speakers tended to answer questions with more elaboration than those who were less confident in English and it is a weakness of this research that I could not conduct interviews in an African language.

Teachers were asked if they would be amenable to follow-up interviews or to have lessons observed. They all responded positively, but none of them contacted me in this regard and I decided not to pursue this. I do not think that this compromised the study, as I was looking at general approaches to the reading programme, as described by the teachers, and not at the execution of individual lessons. Although the single lessons I saw provided a valuable example of a particular teacher's teaching style and relationship with the children, it did not necessarily give insights into the overall content of the reading programme, or the 'how's and why's' of the pedagogical choices the teacher had made.

Table 5 summarises data collection procedures. After the interview with Brenda and Violet, participants in the joint interview, Brenda said, 'I really liked this time we shared. I wish we had more time to talk about what we do and learn more about what other teachers do.' This was gratifying because it showed that at least one teacher had enjoyed participating in the research.

Table 5: Data collection: Observations and interviews

Teacher	School and Site	School	Contact 1	Contact 2	Contact 3	Contact 4
1.Thandeka	Allendale Sch. Inner-city	Ex-TED, inner-city school.	Principal: office	Teacher: classroom	Teacher: classroom	Teacher interview: WSoE (2 hours)
2. Sunette	Ashford Sch. Inner-city	Ex-TED, inner-city school	Principal: office	Teacher: classroom	Teacher: Lesson observation (2 hours)	Teacher interview: classroom (3 hours)
3. Marian	Blairwood Sch. Suburban, Northern Jhb	Ex-TED, suburban school	Principal and deputy: office	Teacher: classroom visit	Teacher: classroom	Teacher interview: staffroom (2 hours)
4. Violet	Vooruit Sch.. Suburban, Western Jhb	Ex-HOR, suburban school	Principal: office	Principal and teacher: office	Teacher interview: staffroom (3 hours)	
5. Anelle	Coronation Sch. Suburban, Western Jhb	Ex-HOR, suburban school	Principal: office	Principal and teacher: office	Teacher interview: staffroom (2 hours)	
6. Brenda	Vooruit Sch. Suburban, Western Jhb	Ex-HOR, suburban	Principal: office	Principal and teacher: office	Teacher interview: staffroom (3 hours)	
7. Gabu	Hoogland Sch. Suburban, Western Jhb	Ex-HOR, suburban school	Principal: office	Principal and teacher: office	Teacher interview: staffroom (1 hour)	
8. Devi	Sandalwood Suburban, Southern Jhb	Ex-HOD, suburban school	Principal: office	Teacher: staff room	Teacher interview: staffroom (1.5 hours)	
9.Fatima	Cosmos Sch. Suburban, Southern Jhb	Ex-HOD, suburban school	Principal: office	Teacher: staff room	Teacher interview: staffroom (1 hour)	
10. Pulane	Eastern Sch. Suburban, Southern Jhb	Ex-HOD, suburban school	Principal: office	Teacher: staff room	Teacher interview: staffroom (1.5 hours)	
11. Lerato	Reliant Sch. Inner city	Ex-DET, inner-city school	Principal: office	Teacher: staff room	Teacher interview: classroom (1 hour) Lesson observation (1 hour)	Teacher: lesson observation (2 hours)
12. Kholo	Tembalihle Sch. Township, South-West Jhb.	Ex-DET township school	Principal: office	Teacher and principal: office	Teacher interview: staffroom (1.5 hours)	

3.7 DATA SET

3.7.1 Coding the interview data

Each interview transcript was dated and numbered and a thematic content analysis was undertaken. The themes were arrived at inductively, which, as Babour (2014) explains, has its origins in grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Babour, 2014). The themes which emerged were similar to the groupings of the questions but included further topics which hadn't been anticipated. The themes were: biographical data; teaching experience; changed classroom conditions; changed children and parents; language issues, reading homework issues; reading programme sequence; reading programme pedagogies, teaching decoding, teaching comprehension; resourcing for reading; what makes a good teacher; own reading habits.

Noting Silverman's warning that data that did not fit with my own preconceptions, or that did not fit into a category, or that were deviant cases, still needed to be included in some way, I included any outlying positions on each theme (Silverman, 2005).

The analysis established the principle themes but also highlighted the specific comments that could be used to illustrate particular aspects of teaching practice.

3.7.2 School visit field notes

With the field notes, I again used a thematic content analysis, classifying the data into three broad themes. These themes were also arrived at inductively. The first theme concerned the schools' use of space and time, evident on school visits. The sub-themes that emerged were: the school building and grounds; procedures for gaining entry to the school; parking facilities; reception areas; use and layout of staff rooms; evidence of school routines; orderliness; school notices; principal's availability; and layout of their office.

The second theme concerned the climate and culture of the school. This was derived from the informal conversations that had been held with principals and teachers during school visits. The sub-theme identified included the history of the school; the make-up and SES of the student body and staff; the contents of the current curriculum; the role of the GDE; bussing practices; parental involvement in the school; school fees; waiting lists; and reasons for the identification of outstanding teacher. This last theme was significant as it justified the

principal's selection of the teacher and provided insight into the teachers' strengths or capital. This analysis provided valuable information regarding the school culture and climate, and the positioning of the school in terms of privilege.

The conversations varied considerably in depth: as they were unstructured, not all the themes were covered with all the participants. The interactions depended on the communicativeness of the principal, the time available and the number of incidental meetings over the course of the research. This resulted in an uneven amount of information about different schools or particular teachers, and this influenced the selection of example schools and teachers to illustrate particular issues.

The third theme was concerned with literacy practices in the literacy classroom. This was derived from the lessons or parts of lessons observed during both informal and pre-arranged classroom visits. The sub-themes that emerged included examples of the reading programme; pedagogies used; reading resources in the classroom; classroom print; and teachers' interactions with children. This analysis was useful in establishing aspects of teacher practice and triangulated the information provided by the teachers in the interviews.

The analysis of the field notes and other notes, based on observations and conversations during school visits, formed the second data-set.

The two data sets, derived from the teacher interviews and field notes from the school visits, complimented each other and allowed me to triangulate the data. The informal discussions and observations could confirm aspects of the information from the teacher-interviews.

3.7.3 Reference codes

Referencing codes are used to indicate specific references to the data sets. The codes refer to individuals, whether the data is derived from interviews or informal discussions, and are dated. For example in *TI/T4/24.7.15*, TI refers to *Teacher Interview*. T4 refers to *Teacher 4* (Pulane) and 24.7.15 refers to the *date on which the extract was recorded (day/month/year)*. Principals are referred to as PD and the code contains the teacher reference from their school e.g. PD*/T4/23.7.15*.

For more general observations used to describe the general conditions in a particular school,

or a pattern across all the teachers, the code does not include a specific date, but identifies the source of the information. An example is *SO, T1-12* which refers to school observations over the whole case-study, with all twelve teachers.

Table 6: Codes for data and teachers

Codes for the context in which the data was obtained

Data	Teacher Interview (Interview Transcripts)	Principal Discussion (Field Notes)	School Observation (Field Notes)	Lesson Observation (Field Notes)
Code	TI	PI	SO	LO

Codes for the teachers

Teacher	Code
1.Thandeka	T1
2. Sunette	T2
3. Marian	T3
4. Violet	T4
5. Anelle	T5
6. Brenda	T6
7. Gabu	T7
8. Devi	T8
9.Fatima	T9
10. Pulane	T10
11. Lerato	T11
12. Kholo	T12

3.7.4 Using Bourdieu's theory of practice

Bourdieu's theory of practice is the organising theoretical principle around which the data was analysed after the thematic content analysis. I used Bourdesian principles to determine the deeper, sociological patterns that underpin the teachers' practice. Punch (2009) explains that using theoretical literature means identifying the thinking behind the social behaviours, and this is what I attempted to do.

Bourdieu's own research in education always began by identifying an empirically identified practice or social phenomenon and then uncovering the social and individual processes underpinning the practice. This is the process that I followed, beginning with the reading programme taught by twelve teachers.

Bourdieu suggests a three-level approach (Waquant, 1992, cited in Grenfell, 2008). These are: to analyse the field and power relations within the field; to map the positioning of the agents in the field, referring to their capital; and to analyse the habitus of the agents or their dispositions, acquired in the field but also generating aspects of the field (Waquant, 1992, cited in Grenfell, 2008). To this process, I added an analysis of the practices described by the teachers.

To analyse the field, I drew principally on data from the school visits, where my field notes related to the built environment and the spatial and temporal organisation of the schools. I also drew on the informal discussions I had held with the principals and teachers regarding the culture of the school, where the socio-cultural, socio-historic and SES of the children and teachers at the school were discussed. From this data, triangulated with information from the teacher interviews, I was able to describe the changes to the broader field, identify the subfields, and to understand the power relations that this suggested in terms of privilege and reproductions of the hierarchical, historical field.

The habitus of the teachers was then considered, as it was acquired in this and other fields. I focused on the structures with which the teachers had interacted, as well as evidence of their individual agency, drawing principally on the biographical information provided by the teachers in the teacher-interviews. I also drew extensively on their descriptions of how they had responded to the changes to the field. This was triangulated with the informal discussions I had, and observations I made, during school visits. In this way I was able to build up a picture of the relational alignment of the field and habitus regarding each teacher, and gain insight into patterns of adaptation, resistance or assimilation. Three areas of interest emerged in this relational alignment and a full account is given in Chapter 5. This led back to the field, where it was evident that the habitus of the teachers was impacted by, and had impacted on power relations in the field, through their struggles and strategizing in the transforming field. This was a struggle for adaptation to new conditions but is underpinned by an unconscious struggle for more capital and thus more power in the changed field.

The relational alignment between field and habitus was then examined in terms of the capital that individual teachers had acquired, which positioned them as out-standing in their particular schools or in the field. For this analysis, I drew on the teacher interviews, in which teachers were probed about why they thought they stood out as reading teachers. I also drew

on their descriptions of their practice and compared this to practices described in the literature about South African, and effective reading teachers in other countries. I triangulated the data from the teacher interviews with field notes made during the school visits, particularly discussions with the principals in which the teacher's strengths were described. Once I had identified a teacher's capital, I was able to classify the form of the capital, using Bourdieu's categorisation. To understand the origin of the capital, I looked at the biographical information the teachers had provided, particularly concerning their formative years and pre-service training. Finally, I considered how the teachers' capital positioned them both in their school, and hypothetically, in the broader field.

As a final step, I looked more deeply into the teachers' descriptions of their practices, revealed during the teacher interviews, to investigate the field-habitus-capital-practice alignment and to determine to what extent the historic field generated the teachers' current practice and how the teachers' practice had generated aspects of the microfield. This was triangulated with field notes.

Using the Bourdesian lens, I sought to identify the ways in which the teachers' teaching practices were revealed as social practices that emerged from the socio-cultural and socio-historic contexts in which they had spent their formative years and in which they had worked, and still worked. It was important to take cognisance of patterns of dominance that underpinned some of their practices, as well as reproductions of historic practice and ideology, and the symbolic 'suffering' that was endured by teachers who had been exposed to the dominated sector for many years (Grenfell, 2008). Bourdieu was particularly aware of the way in which individuals could experience symbolic violence, and explained that they may even lead to agents reproducing conditions detrimental to their own interests or the interests of others. This was observed in the practices of some of these teachers, where the unconscious reproduction of some practices they facilitated was not always beneficial to the children. Although many of them had experienced prejudice and marginalisation, some of them reproduced this is the way particular children were treated (Bourdieu, 1972b, Grenfell, 2008, pp. 2-5). This is shown in the discussion on habitus in in Chapter 5.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This study is the story of twelve teachers who are 'practising' teachers of early reading in Johannesburg schools. They were specifically selected because of a common trait, that they stood out as effective reading teachers in their schools. The data-set was based on the teachers words, recorded during interviews, as well as on field notes made during school visits. The teachers' words revealed their own truths with regard to their teaching practices while my observations were underpinned by my experiences in the field. The data could be seen as anecdotal, and it is certainly subjective, but it captures a moment in time and includes perceptions based on my own and the teachers' individual socio-cultural and socio-historic backgrounds, which are not intended to be generalised or imposed on others but which show both individual practices and common threads which may not be obvious in the field, and which may be useful to anyone concerned with early literacy in South African.

In the following chapters, I will explain the patterns that the data reveals concerning these twelve out-standing teachers, individually and as a group.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE FIELD-The contexts in which the teachers work

[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, Bourdieu's concept of *field* is drawn upon in order to 'map' the field. It is through an analysis of the field, and the relational quality of field to habitus and to capital, that the teaching practices of the twelve out-standing teachers can be understood in the context of Bourdieu's theory of practice, (1977 [1972]; Albright and Luke, 2008). This theory of practice is represented by the equation, '[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice]' (Bourdieu, 1977 in Maton, 2012, p.51).

The field is mapped at two levels: at the broader macro-level of formal education in this country and at the micro-level of the schools in which individual teachers work.

The four qualities that Bourdieu attributes to the concept of *field*, explained in Chapter 2, form the framework for this chapter. These qualities are as follows: first, a field is an abstract 'space' which is autonomous and structured, with clear boundaries and clear but often invisible rules. Second, fields are not static: evolutionary or generational changes in a field can be expected, but when structures change suddenly and significantly, fields can be 'transformed' (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Third, within a field subfields may be identified, each with its own nuanced set of rules and norms and its own hierarchy of power relations (Bourdieu, 1977; Albright and Luke, 2008, p.69; Thompson, 2008, p. 73). Fourth, an analysis of the field enables the researcher to determine who and what is privileged, and how agents are positioned in the field (Wacquant, 1992, cited in Grenfell, 2008; Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]).

There are two overarching fields in which this study can be situated, the field of education in South Africa, and the narrower field of teaching early reading which is described below.

Regarding the field of education, in this study, I argue that two almost contradictory qualities are evident. The first is that the field is a transforming field in a Bourdesian sense, in that sudden and significant changes have occurred over the last twenty years, reconstructing the field and impacting on the teaching practice of these teachers. The second is that, despite these wide-ranging changes, the historical education system is reproduced in identifiable subfields corresponding to the four education systems of the apartheid era. This results in a field that remains unequal and which positions particular schools and teachers differently, thus privileging some children's reading development above others.

4.2 THE FIELD OF EARLY LITERACY

I begin by defining the abstract spaces that constitutes the field in this study. Aligned to the focus of this study, the first field is located in the field of early reading and the teaching of reading to young children in a school environment. In this way it is thus limited to one aspect of literacy, to one stage in the acquisition of literacy, and to one age-group in the education of children, and is a recognised 'space' in education worldwide. Although limited in scope, it is an extraordinarily significant space, both in terms of a child's individual development (Wren, 2001; Scarborough, 2001; Wolf, 2013), and their social development (Barton and Hamilton, 2000; Gregory, 2000).

It certainly represents a critical space for the thousands of children learning to read in Johannesburg at any one time, and, in particular, for the children in the these teachers' classes. It is also a space that is recognised as an area of specialisation for teachers. The out-standing teachers in this study have worked in this area for most of their teaching careers and see this as their area of expertise. For many of them, it is a particularly rewarding space in which to work. Devi, one of the out-standing teachers, said of her teaching: 'It is a blessing for us … because you take a child who knows absolutely nothing and then suddenly you've made him read, write' *(TI/ T9/27.8.15).* Kholo said: 'I enjoy to see these little ones reading…they come and show me, "Teacher, teacher I can now read" ' *(TI/ T1/27.7.15).*

It is also area of education in which progress is startlingly clear, as many children progress relatively quickly through the early stages of reading development and go on to become readers, and it is associated with an age at which children often express their emotions openly. Some teachers respond positively to these conditions and the choice of this field may

indicate particular dispositional traits in their habitus, which will be explored further in Chapter 5.

4.3 THE TRANSFORMING EDUCATION FIELD

One of the most significant properties of the broader educational field in this study, is the magnitude of the change it has undergone over the last twenty years. Although fields are not static and changes are inevitable, these changes have not been slow or generational.

The changes were implemented through a series of legislative acts that were passed, in rapid succession, after 1994, in order to 'reverse the damage of apartheid' (Chisolm, 2004, p. 18), by equalising and standardising education in this country. These included the unification of the previous four education departments into one national department, the desegregation of the racially divided schools, and the introduction of a national curriculum. The scope of these changes are discussed in more detail below, but the impact of the changes first deconstructed and then restructured the education system, to the extent that the field was partly transformed (Bourdieu, 1977).

The teachers in this study had all experienced this transformational change because of their length of service. However, they each experienced it differently, depending on their own background, the schools in which they had worked, and their immersion, historically, in one of four separate education systems of the apartheid era, described in detail in Chapter 2.

Historically, each education system had its own nuanced set of rules and norms, as well as a hierarchy of power relations, and this individual exposure to a particular system impacted on how the teachers experienced the transformation *(TI, T1-12).* Three of the groups of teachers might have been positioned as more privileged than the fourth group in terms of their pre-service training and early work experience, while the group educated within the least-privileged DET system would have experienced symbolic violence by being part of the most dominated sector of society. Each of the changes listed above will be discussed in the context of these groups of teachers.

4.3.1 Changes to the field since 1994

First, concerning administrative changes, in 1995, all the schools in Johannesburg were placed under the administration of the GDE and divided into four geographical school districts, with district officials drawn from all four of the previous education systems (GDE, 2017). Teacher salaries, now standardised, were paid centrally by the national DBE, which oversaw the newly-formed provincial educational structures. This change in leadership and administration impacted all twelve teachers equally and meant they now worked within and were answerable to a wholly new formal structure.

Second, demographic changes occurred as a result of the desegregation which began in the 1990s. Schools in Johannesburg all experienced a demographic shift as 'black' children moved into schools historically associated with other race groups (Soudien, 2004). Although these demographics had begun changing in the years immediately before 1994 and happened slowly at first, by the time of this study the situation had accelerated and the result was similar for each of these teachers. They all taught classes of 'black' children, or classes which had a majority of 'black' children. Before the transformation of the system, the teachers had taught either exclusively 'black', 'white', 'coloured' or 'Indian' children, in line with apartheid policy.

However, a second demographic shift has occurred, described by Soudien (2004) as a class shift because of the exodus of middle-class children of all races from many government schools. This shift had been experienced by eleven of the twelve teachers and could be seen when the teachers described the 'different parents' of the children they currently taught *(TI/T2/15.4.15)*. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Third, changes in class size occurred after 1994, when the teacher-pupil ratio was set nationally at 1:40. This affected all the teachers in this study. Seven of the twelve teachers taught classes which were larger than before, and five teachers, those who began teaching in DET schools, had classes which were smaller *(TI, T1-12).* This is shown in Table 7, below. This aspect of the field privileged the five teachers who, historically, had taught larger classes, and disadvantaged the seven teachers who began teaching in TED, HOR or HOD schools. This was one of the few instances in which the historically dominated group were privileged in the changed field.

Table 7: Class-size changes after 1994

Teacher	Sunette	Marian	Anelle	Violet	Brenda	Devi	Fatima	Gabu	Pulane	Lerato	Thandi	Kholo
Pre-1994 education structure	TED	TED	HOR	HOR	HOR	HOD	HOD	DET	DET	DET	DET	DET
Apartheid racial classification	'white'		'coloured'			'Indian'		'black'				
Historic class size	25-30	25	35	35	35	30	30	45-50	45-50	45-50	45-50	45-50
Current class size	40	35	42	45	40	40	41	42	42	45	40	38

Fourth, there were changes to admission requirements regarding zoning. Before 1994, most government schools drew children from surrounding areas, and living locally was a criterion for admission. After 1994, however, it was recognised that this could perpetuate and entrench the racial divides between schools. In this study, nine of the twelve teachers, mainly those who taught in suburban rather than inner-city schools, taught classes in which the majority of the children were bussed to school from other areas. This change was linked to the demographic shifts experienced in schools, as most of the bussed children lived in townships and attended schools in suburbs with a higher SES. The bussing was not official and was arranged privately, using mini-bus taxis to transport ten to fifteen children to and from school. This meant that many schools were no longer community schools. This impacted on teaching practice, particularly in terms of the young children's levels of fatigue. Gabu, a teacher at a school in the west of Johannesburg, where most of the children are bussed in from Soweto, said: 'They arrive tired….some have to get up at 4 or 5 to get to school in time' (*TI/T5/27.8.15).*

Fifth, there were language changes in many schools. As a reaction to divisive apartheid language policies, the post-democratic school language policy, the LiEP, allowed schools to

choose their LoLT, and many schools in Johannesburg chose to go 'straight for English' in Grade 1, a sensible choice in a multilingual, multicultural city (DBE, 1997). However, the teachers' pre-service training in the apartheid era meant that each teacher had learnt to teach reading in a specific language, either English, Afrikaans or one of the indigenous African languages. Historically, each school in Johannesburg had a specific LoLT and the teachers in the school had been trained to teach initial literacy in that language. However, after the policy change, all of the schools in this study that did not have English as the LoLT changed to English. Eight of the twelve teachers were forced to begin teaching reading in a language that was not their primary language and in which they had varying degrees of proficiency. Five of the eight teachers had been trained in DET colleges in an African language and had had very little exposure to English *(TI, T3, 4, 5, 8)*. Only four of the teachers had been using English as the LoLT prior to 1994.

This shift is shown in Table 8, which shows the LoLT these teachers used prior to 1994. The three teachers who were not forced to change their LoLT are clearly privileged, as they have not been forced to re-train themselves. Having English as a primary language also positions these teachers favourably in the broader field, as many parents see English language proficiency as capital. In a Bourdesian sense, this constitutes cultural capital as English is considered the 'legitimated' language in the field (Makoe, 2007; Mda, 2004). The language has symbolic power that positions some teachers differently from others.

Table 8: LoLT of classes before 1994

Teacher	Sunette	Marian	Anelle	Violet	Brenda	Devi	Fatima	Gabu	Pulane	Lerato	Thandi	Kholo
Pre-1994 education structure	TED	TED	HOR	HOR	HOR	HOD	HOD	DET	DET	DET	DET	DET
Apartheid racial classification	'white'		'coloured'			'Indian'		'black'				
Language of teaching and learning	Afrikaans	English	Afrikaans	Afrikaans	English	English	English	SeTswana	SeTswana	Xitonga	IsiZulu	IsiZulu

However, all the teachers had been equally disadvantaged in that they had been required to adapt to teaching children to read in a language which is not the children's primary language. Historically, the children's primary language corresponded with the LoLT. Although this remains the position for many of the children in Marian's classroom in an area with a higher SES, in the other eleven classrooms, the majority of the children do not speak the LoLT as a primary language. This is as a result of the demographic shifts (Soudien, 2004), but also because of the hegemony of English (Mda, 2004). Brenda, working in an ex-HOR school says, 'You have a child where English is probably the third, fourth, fifth language that the child is dealing with' *(TI/T7/27.8.15).* To complicate the matter further, in most of these classrooms a number of different primary languages were represented. Although she was working in a homogenous area in Soweto, Kholo found that *'*(t)here are at least six languages spoken in my class' (*TI/T1/27.7.15).* The language situation in the changed field has been documented and problematised by researchers such as Mda (2004) and Makoe and McKinney (2009; 2014) and represents a significant change in the field.

Sixth, there had been resourcing changes, and this is a critical area for teachers of early reading. Since 1994, the GDE had been funded directly from the South African Treasury and all GDE schools received equivalent resource funding based on the number of children in the school (DBE, 2015). This amount was considerably higher than DET school funding pre-1994, but considerably lower than TED school funding pre-1994. Each school ordered their own materials, and reading materials for the lower grades were not ring-fenced[13] in any way. This had resulted in discrepancies in resourcing, not only because some schools had access to additional funds because of higher school fees, but because some historically privileged schools had retained the resources supplied before 1994. In addition, some schools preferred to use the funding for resources for the higher grades. The importance of using books when learning to read was not always recognised by teachers who had been trained in the resource-poor DET colleges.

The resourcing issue thus positioned the teachers differently, depending on the schools in which they taught and on their pre-service training. This led to different expectations. Sunette, who had been immersed in the historically privileged education sector, was dissatisfied with her collection of over fifty titles, and multiple copies, of graded reading

[13] Ring-fenced: Protected, only used for a particular purpose

books. She said, ‘We only have limited resources in a class’ *(TI/T11/22.7.15)* because the books were part of an old collection of graded readers with some titles missing. Another teacher, Kholo, was satisfied with one set of twelve graded reading books, with six copies of each title, which she received from the GPLMS literacy intervention. Her background was in the least privileged education system, and she had never worked with graded readers before (*TI/T1/27.7.15).* The teachers’ perceptions regarding resources were thus the result of their positioning in the historical situation. Schools from the historic DET or HOR systems for ‘black’ and ‘coloured’ children had had fewer literacy resources before 1994 because of the discriminatory funding model (Chisolm, 2004). Conversely, the schools previously administered by the TED or HOD systems for ‘white’ or ‘Indian’ children usually had school libraries and sets of graded readers in English or Afrikaans (Chisolm, 2004). Table 9, below, shows the pre-1994 situation and the current situation in relation to these teachers.

Table 9 also shows the impact of the GPLMS-supplied materials on particular schools which for some schools was significant. Eight of the nine teachers supplied with these resources used only the GPLMS books and no other resources, while others supplemented the material with resources such as older readers or photocopies of readers. Lerato used the GPLMS lesson-plans voluntarily and had not been supplied with the GPLMS resources.

The same table reveals that the situation regarding resourcing remained unequal, and this privileged teachers working in schools that previously fell under the TED or HOD. Teachers in the schools that were previously HOR schools could not use older readers as these were in Afrikaans, and ex-DET schools had few resources to begin with. Marian, in a more affluent suburban school, was able to make new purchases of readers, using school fees. Speaking of acquiring new books, she said that there were ‘few restraints’ (*TI/T12/7.9.15).* This contrasts with Lerato, in a new, hybridised inner-city school, who has not been issued with any reading books. She relied on ad hoc book donations from a literacy NGO (TI/T3/4.11.15). The importance of resourcing in early reading classrooms was shown in the PIRLS report of 2011 (Howie et al, 2012), which links higher results in reading tests to children in classrooms with well-stocked classroom libraries and access to school libraries. This correlates with studies in other countries (Elley, 1989; Fountas and Pinell, 1999).

Table 9: Resourcing changes after 1994

Name	Sunette	Marian	Anelle	Violet	Brenda	Devi	Fatima	Gabu	Pulane	Lerato	Thandi	Kholo
Pre-1994 education system	TED for 'white' children		HOR for 'coloured' children			HOD for "']Indian' children		DET for ''black' children				
Typical resources at that time	Multiple sets of graded readers in English or Afrikaans, and a school library.		One set of graded readers, in Afrikaans			Multiple sets of graded readers in English and a school library		One reader per year in an African language				
Current school	EX-TED	EX-TED	EX-HOR	EX-HOR	EX-HOR	EX-HOD	EX-HOD	EX-HOD	EX-HOR	NEW SCHOOL	EX-TED	EX-DET
Current position regarding resources	Pre-1994 readers + school library		GPLMS graded readers			GPLMS graded readers supplemented by pre-1994 readers and school library			GPLMS graded readers	NGO supplied books	Pre-1994 readers	GPLMS graded readers

A further change experienced in the field related to curriculum changes after 1994. The twelve teachers had experienced four different curricula over the previous sixteen years. The curricula the teachers used during the apartheid era varied considerably in content, sequence and depth, but all were prescriptive (Department of Basic Education, 1999; 2005, 2012; Chisolm, 2004; Harley and Wedekind, 2004; Jansen and Taylor, 2013). The first national South African curriculum, Curriculum 2005, was implemented after 1994. This was an outcomes-based curriculum which has been described in Chapter 2. It was referred to negatively by some of the teachers in this study. Violet, who had worked in the HOR system for 'coloured' children, referring to Curriculum 2005, said, "OBE has caused major problems. It has brought about being lax to be honest' (*TI/T6/27.8.15).* Devi, who worked in the HOD system for 'Indian' children, said, 'Oh, that curriculum was a disaster! ...It was a logistical nighmare….it was tricky' (*TI/T5/27.8.15).* This aligns with research that reveals the negative impact of this curriculum (Hugo, 2016; Chisolm, 2004; Jansen and Taylor, 2013).

The NCS, which followed this curriculum, was more structured, and included an outline of the content to be covered in Language and Literacy, which the previous curriculum had not done (DBE, 2005). The next curriculum, CAPS, was introduced in 2011, and was more detailed than the NCS, with prescribed time allocations and pedagogies for each strand of literacy (DBE, 2010). Research shows that the first national curriculum and the further curriculum changes may have disadvantaged poorly-trained teachers more than well-trained teachers (Hugo, 2013). This suggests that the teachers in this study, who were trained in a variety of socio-historic contexts, remain positioned by the quality of their initial training in their interpretation and implementation of the current national curriculum.

4.3.2 Implications of the changes

The changes described represented a deliberate and necessary step in the evolution of social justice in this country, since they were implemented with the explicit aim of equalising the previously unequal field (Chisolm, 2004). However, they were also legislated within a short period of time, had far-reaching consequences and were largely unsupported. They therefore meet the Bourdesian criteria for a transformation of the field. This transformation impacted significantly on each of the teachers in this study and the field could be termed a site of struggle (Bourdieu, 1972), in that the teachers had to adapt rapidly to the changed conditions and strategize to maintain a position of expertise in the changing field.

The current teaching conditions are similar for all the teachers. They follow the same curriculum, work within the same official structure, in the same city, and with a prescribed number of children. However, the data in this study suggests that the changes have not resulted in standardisation or equalisation of education in the field because the teachers, variously skilled, could only adapt to, and implement, the changes based on their individual habitus, and influenced by their own backgrounds, initial training, teaching experience and the types of schools to which they had been exposed. In terms of the aims of the legislation, the changes did not have the intended outcomes of fully transforming and equalising the education system. The data reveals that the field remains in a state of flux, where the results of the transformation are still being played out nearly twenty years into our democracy, making this a transforming field.

4.4 THE PERSISTANCE OF SUBFIELDS IN THE FIELD

The schools in which the out-standing teachers taught represented a second, micro-level in the field, which was particular to each teacher. At this level, there was evidence of different teaching conditions that went beyond the differences that could be expected within one unified education system. This was because the schools had retained particular practices and ways of operating, based on the geographical, sociocultural and historical foundations of the school. They revealed an enduring connection to the apartheid-era education systems in which they were historically immersed. Because of this, the schools in which these teachers worked could be grouped into four distinct subfields, each with its own set of rules and norms. There was one outlier school, which will be discussed below.

To establish the extent of this historical reproduction in individual schools, I chose one school from each of the subfields to describe in more detail. The purpose of these descriptions was to create a sense of the norms and rules that prevailed in the school, to gain an understanding of the different sociocultural and socio-historic contexts in which these teachers worked, and to show how the historical field was being reproduced, and is still positioning schools and teachers in the current field. This will justify the identification of the subfields.

The example schools are listed in Table 10. The schools are allocated pseudonyms appropriate to their historical positioning. They have also been assigned photographs of schools which look similar to those in the study, in order to preserve anonymity. In addition to the four schools aligned to historical subfields, a fifth school, which I have termed a hybridised school, is also described, as this, I would argue, may represent the future of schools in Johannesburg.

Table 10: Example schools, representing different subfields

Allocated school name	Historical association
Ashford	TED (for 'white' children)
Tembalihle	DET (for 'black' children)
Vooruit	HOR (for 'coloured' children)
Sandalwood	HOD (for 'Indian' children)
Reliant	Hybridised

Three aspects of school life are discussed in order to illustrate the differences between these schools. These are: the built environment, the use of public spaces and the management of time. These aspects of school-life emerged as themes in the thematic analysis of the field notes. To explain the built environment, I describe the buildings and grounds of the school. With reference to the use of public spaces, I describe the reception area, staffroom and principal's office. Regarding the management of time, I focus on the school routines I observed during my visits to the school, and those described by the teachers and principals. Analysing these aspects of school life provides insights into the organisation, culture and climate of each school.

4.4.1 Ashford School

Figure 1: An ex-TED school



4.4.1.1 Built environment and use of space

Sunette worked at Ashford School. Before 1994, the school fell under the Transvaal Education Department (TED), and served mainly 'white', English-speaking, South African children. It had prestige as one of the oldest schools in Johannesburg. At that time, classes were small, all the students and staff were 'white' aside from support staff, and the school had a boarding-house. There were extensive facilities, including a library, a swimming-pool, sports-fields, a dining-room and a large school hall and the surrounding suburb was affluent.

The area surrounding the school has deteriorated over the last fifty years and the school, once situated in a leafy suburb, now finds itself in a densely-populated, slum-like flatland. Since 1994, children of different races have attended the school, but the pupil body is now 98% mono-racial, with mainly 'black' children. Most of the children live within walking distance of the school, in the flatland described. The staff remains multi-cultural and Sunette is 'white.' She teaches a class of 42 children, including a child with special needs. *(PI/T11/3.6.15; TI/T11/22.7.15).*

Externally, the school remained identifiable as a school built in the colonial tradition, with Victorian buildings and the extensive grounds. A path led from the covered parking for visitors and teachers to an imposing, high-ceilinged reception area. Inside the buildings there were various historical references: framed photographs depicting the original principal and first pupils, in turn-of-the-century clothing, were visible on the walls. The staffroom was furnished with comfortable but faded chintz-covered chairs, grouped around low tables. The principal's office was wood-panelled, with an oversized desk and large bookcases; it opened onto a creeper-covered patio. The overall impression of the built environment suggested a sense of privilege (*SO/T11/9.3.2015).*

The use of space at the school was tightly controlled. Access to the school property and to the principal's office was closely monitored. The principal was seen by appointment only, and was constructed as removed from both parents and staff. The staff were constructed as the next rung in the hierarchy; they were waited on by service staff, who served the tea and provided cleaning services. Children were placed within their own hierarchy of prefects, seniors and juniors. Spaces were supervised at all times. For example, at break time, the tuck-shop delivered food to the classrooms and children ate their lunch under the supervision of the teachers before they went to the playground.

Assemblies were held in the large school hall on Fridays, and a strict procedure was adhered to. Children first lined up outside their classrooms, and were then led into the hall by their teachers, in order, from the lowest to the highest grades. They sat in horizontal rows on the floor, watched by prefects who sat in chairs alongside each row, while the teachers sat at the back of the hall *(SO/T11/16.3.15).* Hierarchy and surveillance were embedded in this formalised ritual (Foucault, 1977).

4.4.1.2 Time-management

Routines at this school were fixed and date back over fifty years. Children's attendance and punctuality were monitored, with specific consequences for non-compliance. The school day was divided into forty-minute periods, marked by an electronic bell. At intervals during the day or week, Sunette's Grade 1 children left the classroom, supervised by the teacher, to go to the library, the music room, or a PE class on the large, tree-lined sports-field. Because of the involvement of other teachers and migration to other spaces, the timetable had to be rigidly adhered to. Tight time-management extended to the teachers themselves: they signed the attendance register as soon as they arrived at school. Daily attendance was expected and a previous principal was known to have driven to the home of an absent teacher in order to establish the reason for her absence (*PI/T11/3.6.15; SO/T11/16.3.15).*

Through this structured management of time and space, a child at this school was constructed as needing both control and protection. The staff were the controllers and protectors, but were also controlled themselves, thus reinforcing the hierarchy. This use of time and space reflected an orderliness and discipline that is embedded in Western, middle-class school culture and formed an enduring connection to the historical field (Thompson, 1990). These values kept the children at the school safe and cared for. The system of controlling time resulted in ring-fenced teaching and learning time, making it easier for the teacher to deliver the curriculum.

4.4.2 Tembalihle School

Figure 2: An ex-DET school



4.4.2.1 Built environment and use of space

Historically, this township school fell under the administration of the Department of Education and Training (DET), which was responsible for 'black' South African children. It was situated in Soweto, in a predominantly Zulu-speaking area, where Zulu families were re-settled in the 1950s as part of the apartheid regime's social re-engineering, in order to establish silos of ethnicity (Thompson, 2001). The children at the school at the time of this study were drawn from a slightly wider catchment area, including a nearby informal settlement. Because many of the local children were bussed to suburban schools, it was only the least privileged families and newly-arrived migrants who sent their children to this school. The built environment was modest and functional, with no sports facilities, no hall and no music room (*PI/T1/23.7.2015; SO/T1/27.7.15).*

Access to the school was only nominally monitored. The school gate was locked but was readily opened to cars and pedestrians. At break, vendors set up their stalls outside the school gate. Children of all ages moved freely out of the gate to buy food, then returned into the school grounds.

There was no clear path to the school offices, which were indistinguishable from the classrooms. Visitors' cars were parked in the unpaved courtyard in which the children played at break, indicating that visitors are rare. The teachers' cars were parked at the back of the

school, in rough veld, revealing that a parking area was not envisaged at the time when the school was built. All the classrooms and offices opened onto long verandas rather than enclosed passages. The principal's office was small and a desk, three chairs, and two filing cabinets were squeezed into it. The school administration officer was in a second small office, which also served as a staffroom. Eight straight-backed chairs lined the walls, while the administrator and his computer occupied one corner. A bench outside the office accommodated waiting parents. This was a no-fees[14] school, so few finances needed to be administered; however; there was a steady stream of parents and grandparents to see the principal. If he was busy the custom was to wait, sitting on the bench. The stream of visitors I observed confirmed the principal's status, which is that of a respected member of the community.

Like Ashford, the school seemed outwardly unchanged from the way it must have looked fifty years ago (*PI/T1/23.7.2015; SO/T1/27.7.15).* It looked similar to mission schools in Victorian photographs, and was thus reminiscent of colonial times. Unlike Ashford, however, it reflected a school of the colonised rather than the coloniser (Thompson, 2001; Hartshorne 1999). The less vigilant access procedures and surveillance constructed the school as serving a predominantly local community, with children less in need of protection. The construction of the principal was of someone respected in the community and readily accessible. The staff and parents were also constructed as part of a local community, perhaps not affluent (no car park). With regard to the parents, they were not expected to be highly literate (no appointments). The staff and parents were functioning within a less defined, flattened hierarchy (*SO/T1/27.7.15).*

4.4.2.2 Time-management

When I visited the school, some children who lived in a nearby informal settlement arrived late for class. They explained that their taxi-driver was sick. The teacher accepted this as a legitimate excuse for lateness, showing her fund of local knowledge.

Punctuality seemed flexibly managed for both children and teachers. Kholo, the out-standing teacher at the school, said she was always at school on time but some of her colleagues were not, as the principal made unspoken allowances for days on which staff needed to pay their

[14] No-fees schools are in areas of low SES and are determined by the provincial structure.

rent or school fees at another school. During the day, the Foundation Phase children remained in a single classroom, so that, although there was a timetable, there was also flexibility regarding lesson times. This flexibility extended to break-time; the hand-bell signalling the beginning of break was rung when the feeding-scheme 'mothers' were ready to serve the government-sponsored midday meal. Children from different grades stood in line for this meal, and then sat on the edge of the veranda to eat it. There were no checks about which children had eaten. A similar informality was observed at the assembly, which was not a regular, scheduled event. It was held outside in the paved courtyard, with the principal and staff standing on the veranda. The children sat on the brick paving and were quietened by singing a hymn without accompaniment (*SO/T1/27.7.15).*

Overall, the construction of children at Tembalihle was different from those at Ashford School. There was less surveillance and children were constructed as more independent, and as a part of the community. In the past they would have been answerable to all the adults in the community and the core value of the school would have been that of a community facility.

Flexible routines and timetabling suit particular teaching styles, but can impact negatively on curriculum delivery (Dixon and Dornbrack, 2015). Historically in this community, teaching in a school or attending one would have constituted social and economic capital. At the time of this study, the school lacked symbolic capital because of its poor infrastructure, which created a sense of poverty. It was associated, not only with the colonised, but with the poorest of the poor, who did not have the option of providing a suburban education for their children.

4.4.3 Vooruit School

Figure 3: An ex-HOR school



4.4.3.1 Built environment and use of space

Previously, Vooruit School educated Afrikaans-speaking 'coloured' children. It was situated in a modest working-to-middle-class area, formerly designated as an area for 'coloured' people (Welsh, 1998). Past pupils, including many of the teachers, such as Violet, used to live near enough to walk to school. At the time of the study, 80% of the children at the school were 'black' children, bussed in from townships up to 20 km away *(PI/T6/22.7.15).*

Access to the school was not difficult. Although the gate was monitored, there seemed to be free access into the school by adults. A first impression of the school was that it was like a modern, more compact version of Ashford, with a school-hall and sports field, but smaller grounds and buildings. The small reception area contained modern furniture and bilingually labelled counters reflecting the linguistic history of the school. On the wall were framed photographs of the President of South Africa, the Minister of Education and the MEC for Education, showing the patriotism which was a core value at the school. Nearby, the staffroom had low tables and comfortable chairs, but was only one-quarter of the size of the staffroom at Ashford School. The staff serve themselves with tea and coffee *(SO/T6/22.7.15).*

Of all the schools visited, this reception area seemed the busiest. The receptionist, teachers, parents and even the children moved through the area and had short, friendly exchanges in English or, more frequently, in Afrikaans. Visitors and staff were greeted formally by their surnames and everyone was treated politely, regardless of whether they were parents asking for a place at the school, SGB[15] members who say they were '[p]opping in to see the principal' or children paying fees. The principal's position as the head of the school was evident in the size and furnishings of her office and in the way she was deferred to by staff and children alike. The construction of the principal, as at Tembalihle, was of someone who was a respected member of the wider community, with a corresponding stream of local visitors *(SO/T6/22.7.15).*

4.4.3.2 Time-management

Routines at the school seemed to be similar to those at Ashford School, in that they were procedural and orderly. The receptionist and fees officer followed strict procedures, whether dealing with parents or children. Attention to detail and adherence to regulations seemed to

[15] School Governing Body, consisting of parents and members of the community

permeate all aspects of the school. Teachers spoke of strict compliance with departmental directives such as the filling in of retention schedules, but also of adherence to the curriculum, following directives word for word. The teachers explained the procedure for conducting the weekly assembly, which always opened with the singing of the national anthem and a prayer. Working together was a core value, and children were encouraged to share their lunches with those who had none, although the Grade 1 teachers often brought additional sandwiches for any hungry children who 'forgot' to bring lunch (*TI/T6/27.8.15; SO/T6/22.7.15).*

Vooruit School showed distinct and enduring connections to the historical field from which it emerged. Afrikaans was used frequently at the school and there was a general adherence to rules and a strong Christian ethos. The school hall was used as a community Bible church on Sundays and the teachers I interviewed showed deep pastoral concern for their pupils. These attitudes indicated an enduring connection with the historical HOR field, which was grounded in Christianity and promoted a strong sense of community within the segregated and hierarchical political system of the time (Du Plessis, 2003; Thompson, 2008) (*SO/T6/22.7.15).*

In the Calvinist tradition, children were constructed as needing to be taught correct behaviour in order to know right from wrong and to be good citizens. There were explicit codes of behaviour, and set punishments and rewards. The general orderliness produced a structured framework for learning and this was recognised by parents.

Though historically positioned at a lower level than schools in the TED and HOD systems, this school was now positioned as a school with capital, as it has 100% enrolment and a long waiting list, despite the fees being the highest of all the schools in this study. I believe the perceived capital might be partly related to the well-maintained buildings and clean, neat environment, efficient administration, welcoming reception area and bilingual administrative staff.

4.4.4 Sandalwood School

Figure 4: An ex-HOD school



4.4.4.1 Built environment and use of space

This school had its own distinctive culture. It was situated in an affluent area which was designated for 'Indian' people during the apartheid era. Historically, the school had English as the language of teaching and learning and served both Muslim and Hindu families in the surrounding community. At the time of the study, all of the children at the school were 'black' children, bussed in from townships up to 30 km away. They were predominantly Christian, but the staff were culturally diverse (*SO/T10/22.7.15; TI/T10/3.8.15).*

The built environment was physically unlike that of the other schools. The building was single-storeyed but widely spread out, with two sports-fields, a library and a hall. Large trees surrounded the building and there were benches and a shaded gazebo in the grounds. Unfortunately the grounds showed signs of neglect and the sports-fields were overgrown. Inside the school, the double rows of classrooms were connected with very wide, airy, passages, roofed with clear Perspex sheeting and giving an indoor-outdoor feel to the building. In these light, domed spaces there was ample room for the rows of school-bags outside each classroom, an indoor water feature, and grouped pot-plants. It was probably not a coincidence that historically, HOD schools were found mainly in the KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa, since the design of the building was suited to a tropical climate *(SO/T10/22.7.15).*

The hall was detached from the school. During one visit, the hall had been rented out for a 'Diwali Shopping Festival'. The principal said that the hall was also popular in the immediate community as a venue for weddings, and that this brought in revenue for the school.

Access to the school was even more tightly controlled than at Ashford; the gates were padlocked and there was a permanently-employed guard who only opened the gates after some persuasion. However, once inside, the principal had an open-door policy, even though there was little human traffic at the times when I visited. The principal himself was quietly-spoken and his administrative 'angel' (*PI/T10/22.7.15)* ran the school finances, which were recorded in immaculately arranged rows of files, indicating good record-keeping and suggesting careful administration, similar to that at Ashford and Vooruit. The staffroom was configured as a workspace rather than a social space. A number of large tables had been pushed together to form a large central table surrounded by twenty plastic chairs, like a board room. This indicated a focus on work, which appeared to be a core value at the school (*PI/T10/22.7.15; SO/T10/22.7.15).*

4.4.4.2 Time-management

The school routine was similar to the routines at Ashford and Vooruit, in that the timetable was followed rigidly, using an electronic bell. Staff members signed in and out each day in the administrator's office. The gates were opened thirty minutes before school began and closed thirty to sixty minutes after the final bell. The school was entirely empty by 16.00, clearly showing the change from a community school to bussed-in school (*PI/T10/22.7.15).*

Unlike the busyness at Vooruit, the quietness at this school was striking. The culture of calm and hard work was an enduring connection to the values of the surrounding community, in which academic achievement was traditionally seen as a way of moving out of the historically segregated economic field; the resulting prosperity could be seen in the large houses surrounding the school. There was also a particular construction of family in this school that resonated with the traditional values of the community; the family provided religious, nutritional and emotional support while the school provided academic training. The school currently remained focused on the academic development of the children rather than on broader social issues or the creation of the 'whole child', in that sports, music and other activities were not part of the curriculum (SO*/T10/22.7.15).*

However, the changed demographics had created a disjuncture between the school and the surrounding community and the school was positioned as devaluing the neighbourhood. There had been complaints about the number of buses and taxis transporting children to school, the principal had been threatened and there was little interaction between the school

and the community. This was symbolised by the padlocked gates that kept the children in and the community out. However, the school retained symbolic capital for parents from the townships because of the facilities and the perceived linguistic and professional capital of the teachers, most of whom spoke English as a primary language.

4.4.5 Reliant School

Figure 5: A 'hybridised' school



4.4.5.1 Built environment and use of space

As an outlier, this was what I termed a 'hybridised' school, which mitigated against the idea of four subfields. This school was the workplace of one of the out-standing teachers, Lerato. It was a newly re-opened school that had historically been a TED school for 'white' children, which had been closed in the 1980s because of low pupil numbers. It re-opened in 2014 when the need for more school places in inner-city areas became critical. What remained of the earlier school was the built infrastructure, which had been used as a district office in the interim. The newly-appointed principal and teachers were drawn from different types of schools representing three of the four historical subfields, with two teachers coming from different provinces. This was a similar profile to that of the children, many of whom were the children of migrants from other countries or provinces *(PI/T3/4.11.2015).*

The school had the original layout of a TED school, in that it consisted of a small field and a set of substantial brick buildings built around a quadrangle, as well as a large school hall and an office section. However the spaces were not used in the traditional way. The hall has been divided into three classrooms with screens and curtains, sectioning off the two Grade 2 classes; the field had become the teachers' parking area and the quadrangle doubled as the playground and a parking area for visitors. Very old playground equipment had been left on a

narrow strip of grass in front of the three prefabricated classrooms at the far end of the quadrangle, and these housed the Grade 1 classes. The large classrooms and sash windows in the main buildings, as well as the wide verandas, were similar to those at Ashford, but the furniture in the office section and staff room was new and very sparse. The principal's office had no comfortable furniture, curtains or books, but there was a large desk in the middle of the room. The separate secretary's office and fees office were similarly furnished *(SO/T3/4.11.2015).*

4.4.5.2 Time-management

Time is managed somewhat flexibly, and is regulated with the use of hand-bells, but there is a sense of efficiency that was different from the easy-going atmosphere at Tembalihle. There is a staff register and a timetable in the office; the teachers and children were all in their classrooms during my visits and the gate was locked.

Vestiges of the past were enacted in classrooms by individual teachers, each of whom had their own teaching style, according to Lerato. Her own teaching practices, which were innovative, reflected those she had used in the township school where she had taught before moving to this post. However, unlike her previous classroom, the walls in this classroom were bare and there were no books except government workbooks, which lay in piles on the floor. The re-opened school had been equipped with little furniture, and no resources *(SO/T3/4.11.2015).*

Most of the staff remained in their classrooms during break. This might have been because of the utilitarian furniture in the staffroom and the lack of a kettle, or because the staff did not share a primary language. The staff-room was furnished with two large desks and one computer, which was being used whenever I passed by. Some of the procedures were similar to those I had observed at Ashford, such as limited access to the principal. Lerato explained that the principal, an ex-high school deputy, had strict administrative standards for the teachers and complied with all district directives *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).*

Overall, the school seemed to have created a climate where learning was valued and procedures and protocols were instituted 'by the book' rather than by tradition, but with a little more flexibility and informality than Ashford, Sandalwood or Vooruit. Teachers, however, seem to have more autonomy in their classrooms than at those schools, and the

multicultural and multilingual nature of the student population was celebrated by many of the staff, according to Lerato. She explained how multiculturalism was celebrated in her own classroom and how it was a common theme at assemblies *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* The construction of the agents in the school was mixed. The children were protected, and diversity was accepted, sometimes celebrated, but there was an absence of a strong pastoral or work-related ethos.

4.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PERSISTANCE OF THE SUBFIELDS

4.5.1 Use of spaces in the subfields

The differences between the external, built environments of the schools in this study were significant. From the overall size of the campus and number of facilities such as libraries, music-rooms or sports-fields, to the parking arrangements, the differences were marked and constructed the schools on a cline of privilege. This privilege was based on the schools' built environments but was linked to the schools' positioning in the historic field, so that the cline moved from Ashford to Sandalwood to Vooruit to Reliant, and finally, to Tembalihle. This was despite the fact that funding for schools had been equalised by 2002, and a redress model had been applied to the poorest schools in the country (Motala, 2006; Fleisch, 2008, p. 84).

The infrastructure, facilities and resourcing also remained disparate, which had implications for the quality of teaching and learning at the different schools. This is confirmed by the work of Case and Deaton (1999), who specifically link school infrastructure, as an input, to improved educational outputs in South Africa. In this study, teachers in the schools associated with the dominant historical education systems, such as Ashford and Sandalwood, were privileged in that they had access to sports-fields and separate rooms for different activities, as well as a school hall, a school library and storage facilities, which the teacher at Tembalilhe did not have. These teachers worked in a more orderly, spacious environment that was conducive to teaching and learning.

Agents in each example school were constructed differently. This can be visualised on an axis: the spaces and procedures at Ashford and Reliant constructed parents on an axis of privileged (covered parking, large waiting areas) but not highly valued (limited access to the principal), whereas Tembalilhe, Vooruit, and Sandalwood parents were constructed as less

privileged (no parking, benches to wait on at Tembalilhe) but valued (the open-door policy at the other two schools).

The construction of the teachers, indicated by the level of comfort in the staff rooms, the provision of parking facilities, tea-time rituals and the rigorous completion of attendance registers, placed the teachers on a second axis of highly-valued but highly-monitored at Ashford, Sandalwood and Vooruit, to less valued, as seen in a lack of facilities, but more independent, at Tembalilhe and Reliant, where autonomy seemed to be traded for privilege. The different uses of the staffrooms was also interesting: they ranged from being a largely social space at Ashford, Vooruit and Tembalilhe to being a working space at Sandalwood and Reliant.

The principals were also variously constructed on a continuum of being removed from the community, at Ashford, and Reliant, where they were seen by appointment only in a relatively inaccessible office, to being readily accessible to parents at Tembalilhe, Vooruit and Sandalwood. This had important implications for parent-school relations, which are a crucial factor in the early years of schooling (Whitaker and Gruenert, 2015).

Most importantly, children were constructed differently in the five different schools. These constructions varied from children needing high levels of protection (Ashford and Sandalwood) to children being more independent and part of the surrounding community (Tembalilhe; Reliant, Vooruit). The child was also constructed through the various activities offered at the school. Sometimes the child was developed as a ‘whole child’, in the sense that more than academic proficiency was developed, and music and sports were encouraged (Ashford, Vooruit). But at other schools, such as Sandalwood, Reliant, and Tembalilhe, the focus was on academic development only; it was assumed that the family provided pastoral care and additional activities. The least privileged school, Tembalilhe, offered little more than school knowledge because of a lack of facilities, and Reliant was in a similar position. Pastoral care of the children appeared strongest at Vooruit School.

The constructions of agents in each school was thus nuanced and created distinct cultures in individual schools. In four of the five example schools it was possible to identify these constructions as enduring connections to the divided historical field. The teachers in this study each worked with a set of norms determined by the school at which they taught. These

were not all purely negative or positive norms, but were simply different from one another, and this needs to be made explicit and evaluated in terms of perpetuating inequalities.

4.5.2 Organisations of time in the subfields

Time was managed similarly in four of the schools, Ashford, Vooruit, Reliant and Sandalwood, but very differently in Tembalihle, where it was more flexibly constructed. Precise time-management was thus associated with the three most privileged schools, as well as with the new, hybridised school. This was in line with the time-management found in first-world societies, particularly Western democracies (Taylor, 2005), and had certain benefits for curriculum delivery and the management of learning.

On the other hand, although more temporal flexibility could be interpreted negatively as leading to absenteeism and lack of time-on-task, it might also be seen positively, as allowing more autonomy for the teacher. However, research shows that there is a link between less rigorous time management and academic failure (Fleisch, 2008, p. 138; Wittenberg, 2005). This is shown in a comparative study of twenty South African Foundation Phase classes by Hoadley (2003). It is also shown in a South African secondary school study by Dixon and Dornbrack (2015). The corollary is seen in the time management of the high-performing South African schools identified by Christie and Potterton (2007), which was controlled and precise across the schools. In other words, with the fast-paced curriculum and large teacher-pupil ratios, attendance at Ashford, Vooruit, Sandalwood or Reliant, rather than at Tembalilhe, implied an academic advantage. The way of managing time in a school is often a deeply embedded historical practice, but Reliant, the ‘new’ school, had managed to implement effective time management with the help of the district structures, confirming that a shift is possible. (*PI/T3/4.11.2015)*

For the out-standing teachers in the better time-managed schools, the enactment of the curriculum was also easier to achieve. This was explicitly stated by Gabu, who had moved from a school similar to Tembalihle to a school with better time management that used the time-controlled GPLMS system of lesson plans. She said, ‘It gives you structure…It says on Monday what I must do, on Tuesday what I must do and you can see the results’ (*TI/T5/27.8.15).*

4.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE TRANSFORMING FIELD

Of the four qualities that Bourdieu attributes to the concept of field, three have been explained in the context of this study: the definition of a field, changes in a field and the existence of subfields in a field. The fourth quality, using an analysis of the field to determine who and what is privileged and how agents are positioned in the field, (Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 1977) has been alluded to throughout, but the threads will be drawn together in this section.

Mapping the field at a broad level showed the extent of the changes to it over the last 20 years, which go well beyond the gradual, evolutionary changes seen in any field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The field can be termed 'transformed' in a Bourdesian sense although it is still transform*ing* in a real sense.

This has had significant consequences for this group of teachers, who have had to adapt to teaching reading in a different language, to different children, using different resources, in larger or smaller classes, working with an unfamiliar curriculum. Even though each teacher experienced the changes differently, depending on their background, the impact of a restructured and reinvented education system on their teaching practices and reading programmes was significant. Yet, although the purpose of the transformation was to redress the inequalities of the past, some of the changes seem to have required the greatest adaptation from the very teachers who were historically part of the dominated sector. For example, the teachers in the study who had to change their language of instruction were the teachers who trained and worked in the DET and HOR. This could have the effect of reproducing their position as the least privileged teachers,

Mapping the microfields of the twelve individual schools in which they worked also showed a reproduction of aspects of the historical field. The differences between the schools were underpinned by different ideologies, invisible rules and infrastructures. In eleven of the twelve schools, but not in the hybridised school, this could be explicitly linked to the norms of the historical education systems, so that subfields based on these systems clearly persist in the transforming field (Bourdieu, 1977).

Bourdieu explains this phenomenon by singling out education as a field which reproduces itself more than other fields (Thompson, 2008; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). He believes that a reproduction of practices will naturally occur in any field unless it is explicitly replaced with a different set of practices that are either mandated, or evolve over time (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Thompson, 2008). In the observations conducted at these schools, it seemed that a new set of practices had not fully evolved despite the transformation, and embedded practices were reproduced. In this way aspects of the field had remained relatively stable.

Although policies had changed, a common, post-democratic school culture had not been created. The hybridisation of practice seen at Reliant might have been a precursor to a general shift that could play out in the coming years, moving schools away from the subfields. Bourdieu assures us that fields are not static and will evolve over time, so we know the situation is dynamic and impermanent. Nevertheless, an equalised educational field remains currently out of reach in South Africa's new democracy.

This mapping of the field could also be applied to the ongoing post-democratic attempts to 'fix' literacy levels through the literacy interventions described in Chapter 2. Many of these interventions employed practices associated with one type of school, the historically privileged schools for 'white' children. The historically least privileged types of school was generally labelled as requiring the 'treatment' (See Fleisch, 2008). Analysis of the schools in this study suggests that looking at practices across all the subfields would represent a less stereotypical approach. Different subfields might provide alternative and more effective models of good practice, in certain instances. An example is the accessibility of the school principal to parents, seen at Tembalilhe and Vooruit, which is a practice that seems particularly suited to parents who may be unused to the formality of making appointments. Alternatively, identifying which specific practices need to be strengthened in a particular type of school or subfield would ensure that interventions were more focused on needs. Aspects of school culture, such as the effective school time-management seen at Ashford, Sandalwood and Vooruit, could be implemented in schools such as Tembalilhe, in the same way that it was implemented at Reliant.

Finally, Bourdieu suggests that mapping a field should include an analysis of the power positions within it. In other words, hierarchies need to be identified, and there is usually a 'legitimate form of special authority in this field' (Thompson, 2008, p. 75). The legitimate

form of authority for these schools was the GDE, but despite this authority, it was evident that particular schools had symbolic capital which positioned them differently from other schools and which was recognised by parents when they chose schools for their children. This capital ranged from physical capital, in the form of extensive buildings and sports-fields, seen at Ashford, to economic capital, in the form of good resourcing and facilities, seen at Vooruit, to the linguistic capital of the teachers, seen at Sandalwood, and symbolic capital in the form of traditional cultural values and integration with the community, seen at Tembalilhe.

Based on discussions with the principals, it seemed as if the positioning of schools by parents remained largely based on the historical positioning of the schools. There appeared to be a parental preference for enrolling children at schools associated with the more historically privileged subfields. Tembalilhe, which had a lengthy association with the dominated subfield, had no waiting list, while the other schools, including the hybridised school, Reliant, were all over-subscribed and had waiting lists. This was despite Tembalilhe having changed to English as the LoLT, being a no-fees school and having the advantage of accessibility for local children. It remained the least attractive option for many parents because of its historical positioning and perceived lack of capital *(PIs/2015-2016)*.

The positioning of schools in the field, replicating the hierarchy of the apartheid era, has important implications for children in this city. For many parents, choosing a school from a more privileged subfield means choosing a school in a different area. Parents then incur more costs, such as transport costs, and higher school fees, and children have a longer travel-time, which could lead to a lack of participation in extra-mural activities, as well as fatigue. Yet having a child attend one of the more privileged schools seems to remain the aim, not only of parents, but of teachers. Pulane, a teacher who moved from a township school for 'black' children to teach in an ex-HOD school in an 'Indian' area, said,

> Those parents who cannot afford to send their children to (a) suburban school, they are going to lose out. It's sad, you as a township teacher, you are sitting down, you don't do your work, you send your children to a private school. What about these parents who cannot afford? (*TI/T4/2.8.15)?*

Pulane's perception was that teachers are less valued because of the subfield in which they operate, rather than because of their ability. She stereotyped the township teachers, and

perceived children who attend ex-DET schools as disadvantaged. This assumption was not without some foundation, as the results of two PIRLS reports link higher literacy levels with the historically privileged schools (Howie et al, 2007; 2012).

This implies that the teachers in this study who taught at schools associated with the ex-TED, ex-HOD and ex-HOR systems were positioned differently from the teacher who remained at an ex-DET school. The compromised pre-service training of these teachers within the historical DET system was less important than their current place of work in determining this positioning.

To conclude, the analysis of the field shows that this a transformed but a divided and essentially unequal field. However, despite the significant changes, and the differences in the schools in which they taught, these twelve teachers had managed to 'beat the odds' so that all the children in their classes consistently learnt to read at grade level, year after year (Cunningham and Allington, 2007).

The focus of the next chapter is to determine the relational alignment between the field and the habitus of these teachers, in order to gain a deeper understanding of their practice.

CHAPTER FIVE: HABITUS + FIELD - The teachers' responses to the transforming field

[(Habitus) (Capital) + Field = Practice]

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Working with Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990; Maton, 2014, p. 51) the previous chapter established the field in which the out-standing teachers operated. Chapter 5 describes the relational connection between the field and the habitus of the teachers.

As established in Chapter 2.1 and 2.1.1, Bourdieu sees the habitus as comprising a set of ingrained dispositions which produce ways of being and doing (Bourdieu, 1977, Albright and Luke, 2008). In this study, considering the dispositions of the teachers will help us to understand the teachers' response to, and enactment of, the transforming field in which they work (Bourdieu, 1990; 1985; 1981 in Ullmann, 2008).

Bourdieu describes the relationship of the habitus to the field as '[m]utually constitutive… (It is) how people learn to be who they are in their cultural fields' (Dixon and Dornbrack, 2015). He explains that the habitus is established as a result of an unconscious relationship between the agent and the different structures in the field(s) to which they are exposed (Grenfell, 2008; Maton, 2008; Gennrich, 2015).

Bourdieu also suggests that there will be group tendencies, particularly when a group of people are exposed to the same formative fields for any length of time. An example of this is class habitus, where people from particular socio-economic or socio-cultural fields share certain tastes, values and behaviours. However, as individuals, agents will interact in a number of different fields in the course of their lives, including familial, community, religious, political and work fields, each with its own rules, boundaries and rituals, which means that each person will have a habitus that is unique, despite these group tendencies. Depending on how faithfully the structures in the field have been reproduced in the individual, the habitus is more or less durable (Bourdieu, 1986; Moore, 2014, p. 14).

Fields are thus formative, but are also sites of struggle for the habitus. Agents position themselves in the field, and to some extent are defined by the fields in which they operate, and this creates an uneasy tension. In a field that has been transformed, the habitus may struggle to adapt to the new conditions. The extent of the struggle will depend on the durability of their habitus, or on how entrenched certain tendencies are. Thompson (2008, p. 14) explains:

> A field is always the site of struggle in which individuals seek to maintain or alter the distribution of the forms of capital specific to it. The individuals who participate in these struggles will have differing aims – some will seek to preserve the status quo, others to change it.

In the previous chapter I established that there had been sudden, significant and extensive changes to the field, so that it can be termed transformed in the Bourdesian sense. Importantly for this chapter, Bourdieu explains that in a transformed field, where the habitus has been unable to evolve slowly and generationally, three responses are possible: resistance to, correspondence with, or adaptation to the field. Resistance can lead to a mismatch between the habitus and the field, termed *hysteresis*, where the field and habitus are incompatible with one another at a particular time (Burawoy and Von Holdt, 2012). This will result in a time-lag, as the habitus needs more time to evolve and adapt to the new conditions. Where there is a correspondence between the habitus and the transformed field, embedded practices are reproduced, but in the changed context (Thompson, 2008; Maton, 2008). Where there is adaptation or innovation, practices will have been adjusted in order to operate successfully in the changed field. Through this adaptive process, the habitus itself can be 'reconstituted' or changed, as the new, innovative practices become part of, and are absorbed into the evolving habitus (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 180; Bourdieu, 1990).

To establish the durability of the habitus of this group, I considered the subfields which had been established, and separated the teachers into those who have had prolonged exposure to a particular subfield, and those who moved to work in different subfields. I argue that the majority of teachers with prolonged exposure to a subfield have retained the ideologies embedded in the subfield, while the majority of those who have moved to new subfield reveal a more flexible habitus. This will impact significantly on their practices.

I describe the relational connection between the habitus of teachers in these two groups, and the transforming field. It was evident that these teachers were operating effectively within the changed microfields of their schools, because they were nominated as out-standing teachers of reading by other agents in the field. Thus, adaptation to the transforming field seemed the most likely response of the group habitus. However, in their individual interviews, areas of resistance to the changed field were revealed, centering on three key areas: language, parents and curriculum issues. The teachers' resistance was underpinned by ideologies rooted in the past, showing how the teachers were bringing dispositions related to language, parents and the curriculum to the current field, through the durability of their habitus.

In this chapter, I describe the areas of resistance, explore why these aspects of the current field remained sites of struggle for the teachers in terms of adaptation, and describe the range of dispositions influencing the responses of the teachers. Through this analysis, certain group dispositions will became evident, which reveal the common traits among this group of out-standing teachers.

5.2 THE FORMATION OF THE TEACHING HABITUS

The teaching habitus of each of the teachers in this study was formed initially in one of the four historical education systems. This was a formative and prolonged exposure of at least sixteen years, and the values and norms they encountered would have been reinforced by the community in which they lived, because of the apartheid legislation that separated people's living areas according to race and language.

5.2.1 Teachers with prolonged exposure to one subfield

Eight of the twelve out-standing teachers currently taught, and have always taught, in a school aligned to the historical education system in which they were immersed as children and young teachers. They have had over thirty years of exposure to schools with a similar culture and climate. This meant an uninterrupted relationship to the particular norms and rules of one subfield.

The teachers to whom this applied are shown in Table 11. This correspondence between present and past means that aspects of school life such as school routines, the management of time and the day-to-day operations within the schools in which they have worked has remained constant for the duration of their teaching careers.

Table 11: Teachers with prolonged exposure to a subfield

Teacher	Sunette	Marian	Anelle	Violet	Brenda	Devi	Fatima	Kholo
Pre-1994 structures within which teachers trained and worked	TED	TED	HOR	HOR	HOR	HOD	HOD	DET
Apartheid racial designation	'white'		'coloured'			'Indian'		'black'
Schools in which they worked at the time of this study	Ex-TED school		Ex-HOR school			Ex-HOD school		Ex-DET school

The transformation of the field has impacted significantly on these teachers' classroom conditions, but, despite this, there had been some consistency in the microfield. An example of this was Marian, who was historically associated with TED schools for 'white' children. She had previously taught the TED curriculum to 'white' children in classes of 25-30. At the time of the study she taught larger classes of 40-45 'black' children, using the CAPS curriculum. However, the LoLT in the classroom had remained English, and the culture and climate of the type of school in which she worked was familiar, as were the resources she used to teach reading. As a result of this correspondence, it was not surprising that she said: 'You get stuck in a rut and you get stuck in the way you do things' (*TI/T12/7.9.15).*

Anelle, Violet and Brenda all taught in schools historically associated with the HOR system for 'coloured' children. For 25 years, they had taught classes of 35-40 local 'coloured' children through the medium of Afrikaans. They remained working in schools historically associated with the HOR, but they now taught mostly bussed-in 'black' children through the medium of English. For these teachers, the demographics, children's home language and geographical location of the children's homes had changed, but the culture, routines and time-management of the schools in which they worked was familiar.

They revealed a group tendency based on their shared experiences. When they were all together, during the introductory part of the interview process, they began talking about their teacher training at different HOR teacher training colleges, which were specifically for 'coloured' students during the apartheid era:

> **Anelle:** I went to Rand[16] College
>
> **Violet**: (I also went to) Rand College.

[16] Rand College of Education, for 'coloured' students

Brenda: I was in Durban[17], but we did what Rand was doing.

Anelle: I actually (have) still got my file from when I trained…

Violet: I don't know if you ladies can remember. We had a book at college. The red book and the …

Brenda (with excitement): I still have my red book …and my blue book! (*TI/T6,7,8/27.8.15).*

The extract reveals how, in apartheid South Africa, although they lived in different provinces, their HOR teacher-training had been very similar, illustrated by their use of a single set of textbooks. The extract also shows the teachers' prolonged use of resources from that time, even though conditions in the field had changed substantially, implying that aspects of their teaching habitus remained embedded in their pre-service learning. In Chapter 7 (7.4), links are made between current teaching practices, and the different types of teacher-training provided during the apartheid regime. This is also outlined in Chapter 2 (2.5.1).

In Bourdesian terms, I would argue that Marion, Brenda, Violet and Anelle had developed a durable teaching habitus, owing to the length of their exposure to a subfield. Bourdieu explains that this extended exposure would affect their response to the transformed field and that they would show an inclination to 'preserve the status quo' of the subfield with which they are familiar, to reproduce the practices used historically (Thompson, 2008).

5.2.2 Teachers who had moved to a new subfield

Four teachers have moved from one subfield to another in order to teach in a school that is associated with a different historical education system (See Table 12). All four teachers had initial exposure to the DET education system.

Table 12: Teachers who have moved to a new subfield

Teacher	**Gugu**	**Pulane**	**Lerato**	**Thandeka**
Pre-1994 structures within which teachers were schooled and then worked	DET	DET	DET	DET
Apartheid racial designation	'Black'	'Black'	'Black'	'Black'
School in which they worked at the time of the study	Ex-HOR school, previously for 'coloured' children	Ex HOD school, previously for 'Indian' children	Hybridised school	Ex-TED school, previously for 'white' children

[17] Durban is the capital of KwaZulu-Natal, a province of South Africa

Since they were working in schools which are not associated with the historical field, there had been a rupture between their past and present teaching contexts. On a practical level, this had required an extraordinary level of adaptation. In addition to accommodating the legislative changes of the transforming field, they had adapted to different schools, with different time use and management, different organisational structures and a different culture and climate. This is shown in Table 13 below:

Table 13: Summary of changes different teachers have experienced

List of changes	The eight teachers with prolonged exposure to one subfield	The four teachers who had moved to a new subfield
Provincial leadership change	Changed (8/8)	Changed (4/4)
Demographic changes in class population	Changed (8/8)	Changed (4/4)
Class size change	Same or bigger (8/8)	Smaller (4/4)
Language of Teaching and Learning	Mostly the same (7/8)	Changed (4/4)
Resourcing for literacy learning	Mostly the same (7/8)	Changed (4/4)
Curriculum	Changed (8/8)	Changed (4/4)
Prescribed instructional strategies	Mostly the same (7/8)	Changed (4/4)
Time use & management	Same (8/8)	Changed (4/4)
Leadership style in school	Same(8/8)	Changed (4/4)
Organisational structure of school	Same (8/8)	Changed (4/4)
Culture and climate of school	Same (8/8)	Changed (4/4)
School facilities	Same (8/8)	Changed (4/4)

In terms of Beeby's classifications (1960), they would be further along the scale towards *self-actualisation* because of their ability to compare teaching and management practices in two different types of schools. This could be construed as a form of cultural capital in a Bourdesian framework. Also in this framework, adaptation to a different subfield may indicate a more flexible habitus as these teachers have been able to respond to the changes by adapting their teaching practice to the new conditions. It may also indicate a reconstituted habitus if the values of the new subfield have been internalised (Bourdieu, 1985; 1990).

An example was Pulane, who had moved from a DET school to a school previously associated with the HOD system for 'Indian' children. Emerging from a background where

she had attended and taught in schools for 'black' Setswana-speaking children, she was now teaching in a classroom where the LoLT was English, and, although the children are all 'black' children, the school had a different climate and culture from the schools she had known before. A more flexible habitus was evident in her successful adaptation to the new subfield, seen in her nomination as an out-standing teacher. She talked about what the adaptation had meant for her:

> **Pulane**: It was an eye-opener (after) … all those years I was working (in DET schools).
> **Interviewer**: Do you teach in a similar way to the way you used to?
> **Pulane:** No, because we didn't have structure. We have to be on our toes here. Here we are working. *(pause)* That's why (some) teachers from the townships won't work here *(TI/T4/2.8.15).*

Pulane confirmed that the difference between the subfields was not insignificant, and also showed that she associated the new subfield with a particular set of values: hard work, stable routines and organisational and managerial structure. By commenting on this, she not only revealed a flexible habitus, but one that had been reconstituted and absorbed the norms and values of the new subfield. Her comment on the teachers who remained teaching in a less advantaged subfield might have been an attempt to position herself above the teachers she once worked with. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Another example was Thandeka, who chose to work in a school associated with the TED system for 'white' children. She did this much earlier than Pulane, soon after qualifying. She attributed her development as an out-standing teacher to her exposure to this school:

> **Interviewer:** What made you a good teacher?
> **Thandeka:** Listening to advice and also when somebody does something good in education …I want to know how they do that. I went to (name of school), I was (only) the fourth black teacher … in 1998. I found a HOD that was there to guide me. She held my hand, she guided me, she showed me… I improved my skills year by year *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

Her interview revealed her pride at being 'the fourth black teacher' at the school and, more importantly, that she had changed her practice because of the move, so that she 'improved… year by year.' As with Pulane, this showed a habitus with some flexibility, which was adaptable and had accepted the new norms (Bourdieu, 1985). Talking about English as the LoLT, she recounted what she told parents at the beginning of each year:

> You have brought your child to (this) school where they are going to be taught in English. As from now English has to be …..(pause), you have to talk it at home, everywhere your child should be. They must eat, drink and sleep English….
> (After reflection) Even at home, our home language is basically (spoken) among us (the family) but when we speak to our kids they don't even understand (laughs) *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

Thandeka's teaching habitus had been reconstituted to accept at least one norm of the ex-TED school, the idea that English could, and should, replace the home languages of the children. She showed this by explaining, with equanimity, how this had affected the children in her own family, who have lost their home language.

The pattern that became evident was that the teachers who had moved to a new subfield had often absorbed the rules and norms of that subfield, which indicated how the habitus had been reconstituted. This may be connected to a schools' positioning in the macrofield, described in Chapter 4. This group had all moved from a historically disadvantaged subfield to a more privileged subfield, and their absorption of the new values could be seen sociologically as part of the struggle of their habitus to reposition themselves in the macrofield, by adopting the values of a group which was once dominant. It also showed that reconstitution of the habitus through immersion in a new subfield was possible.

The teachers who had not moved to a new subfield had adapted to the broader changed conditions of the transformed field, but retained teaching practices aligned to the historical subfield, showing less adaptation and no signs of reconstitution.

5.3 HABITUS AND RESISTANCE TO THE TRANSFORMING FIELD

Even though the teachers could be divided into two separate groups, they all operated in the broader, partly transformed macrofield, and worked in changed teaching conditions. Although the level of change differed, as shown in earlier in this chapter, when the interview data was analysed thematically, three particular aspects of this change were identified as problematic by the majority of the teachers, regardless of subfield in which they were located or to which they had moved. This was interesting sociologically, as it revealed a disjuncture between the changed field and the teaching habitus, and showed that the transforming field remained a site of struggle for many of the teachers as they adapted to the new conditions and resisted others, based on the durability of their habitus, formed in the historical field. They were also strategizing to maintain their position as expert teachers of reading in the

transforming field (Thompson, 2008; Maton, 2014). These areas of resistance are identified and discussed below.

5.3.1 Language

The first concern raised by the majority of these teachers was a response to the changed language situation described in Chapter 4.2. This was not altogether surprising, given the ideologies around language that were embedded in the historical field. During the apartheid era, languages were constructed as 'stable, bounded entities, clearly differentiated from one another' (Makoe and McKinney 2015, p. 660). Makoni (1999) and Alexander (1989) explain how language was used to separate people geographically and culturally. This separation of languages and people was fundamental to the apartheid regime and was reinforced in the education sector.

This was an area of the field that was changed in many of the schools in Johannesburg after 1995 and affected the majority of teachers in this study (see Chapter 4.3). The interview transcripts revealed that ten of the twelve out-standing teachers were resistant to this changed language situation. The two exceptions were Marian, possibly because the language profile of the children in her school has not changed significantly, and Lerato, who had explicitly embraced the multicultural and multilingual profile of her class before the field changed (Botha, 2011). They also have dispositions formed by their individual histories which position them as English language experts in their subfields. The origins of this are discussed individually in Chapter 6 (Lerato) and Chapter 7 (Marian). For these two teachers, adaptation to this aspect of the transforming field had entailed less of a struggle.

The resistance to the changed language situation was nuanced, showing the teachers' different perspectives and histories, and thus problematising the situation differently. Importantly, the teachers' concerns were not articulated as resistance to the change of LoLT, but rather to the children's linguistic ability in the LoLT. The teachers in this study did not criticise the schools' decision[18] to change the LoLT, and many approved of and rationalised the change. For example, Kholo said, 'We have diversity…we *have* to teach in English'

[18] The decision to change to a new LoLT is made on a school-by-school basis rather than imposed nationally, giving the schools, if not the teachers, some agency in the change (DBE, 1997).

(*TI/T1/27.7.15).* In all cases the change was from an indigenous language to English, and this revealed an unconscious privileging of English by the group (Makoni, 1999; Mda, 2004).

Only one of the eight teachers articulated the change of language as a pedagogical problem rather than a problem with the children. Sunette had previously taught reading in Afrikaans, and when she began teaching reading in English she asked for help from the Head of Department at her new school saying, 'I am an Afrikaans meisie[19], luister[20], you have to help me' (*TI/T11/22.7.15).* It is interesting that she was the only teacher who mentioned asking for help, showing either that there was no source of support for the other teachers, or that they felt that they did not require help. Hartshorne (1999) explains that there was no structural assistance for this significant change, either before or after 1994, so teachers would have had to rely on others for this help.

The teachers' resistance to the language situation was focused on the lack of linguistic capital that they believed the current cohort of children brought to the classroom. Their perception was of a mismatch between the children's linguistic ability and the language requirements of the school and it was the children's language rather than the school's language policy that was problematised. This position aligns to research by Makoe (2007) and Makoe and McKinney (2014). Makoe and McKinney (2014, p. 669) found, in their case-study of two Johannesburg schools, that 'while the majority of the learners have wide linguistic repertoires, the regime at the schools constitutes them as monolingual and frequently as deficient monolinguals.' It is the children's proficiency in English, not their overall language competency, that the teachers felt was problematic. The 'problem' of the children's English underpinned what Thandeka said:

> I've noticed that they (the children) will think in their home language and then translate and sometimes it doesn't come out the way they wanted. That is why I encourage the parents that you need to start talking with them in English so that the mind of the child automatically changes (sic). We can say it is getting them through their whole schooling career because they are going to use English. Yes their home language is important but when you want your children to learn in a different language you have to encourage that *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

[19] Girl

[20] Listen

The extract reveals Thandeka's pragmatism about the necessity of English proficiency ('(I)t is getting them through their whole schooling career'). But Thandeka also said that the children needed to stop thinking in their home language, and that this was the parents' responsibility, because they had sent their child to that school. It was clearly seen as a familial rather than a school issue.

Sunette, who spoke Afrikaans as her primary language, said:

> I want them to **be** English. But then you would like mommy just to help a little bit with the English because like I say to them 'Miss can't take 42 of you home' (*TI/T11/22.7.15).*

Like Thandeka, she was placing some of responsibility for the children's language development on the parents, but her statement also had deeper implications. Her wish that the children should 'be English' implicitly revealed her attitude to the other languages spoken in her classroom, and her privileging of English.

The resistance to, and frustration with the mismatch of the LoLT with the children's proficiency in English was usually articulated in the context of the children's school progress. Sunette revealed this when explaining why one of her pupils, Emma, was repeating Grade 1. She said:

> She is reading, her spelling is tops, her maths is tops, she's blooming…she knows what's going on in class, she understands what you tell her….now she understands *because she's got the language* (*TI/T11/22.7.15).*

Sunette was justifying retaining the child in Grade 1 because of her lack of proficiency in English. She was linking school progress to language proficiency but was not discussing language development generally. She was referring specifically what she termed '*the* language', English, a position common to many South African teachers, according to Mda (2008). This position, aligning school success with English language competence, is also shown by Makoe (2007, p.55), who explains, 'The value attached to linguistic competence in English renders some learners successful and other unsuccessful at school.'

Another aspect of the 'language problem' was revealed by Fatima, who framed the language 'problem' in terms of the extra work it entailed. She said:

> When I first started teaching (it was with) predominantly 'Indian' children and so because they spoke English at home, they were far more ready to read English Books. Our children that we have now, English is sometimes the third, fourth or fifth language, they speak

> different languages at home so it takes *much more of an effort* to teach them to read as fluently as you would like *(TI/T6/27.8.15).*

Fatima implied that the earlier situation was the correct one and had normalised the position of teaching reading in a child's primary language, thus problematising the multilingual class.

For Kholo, the resistance to the changes in language policy was framed as the problem of a lack of homogeneity in the 'new' classes she taught. This was reflected in this exchange:

> **Kholo:** I think they should start with their mother-tongue before they go to English.
> **Interviewer:** The children in your class, are they all IsiZulu mother-tongue children?
> **Kholo:** No, that's the problem that we have. That's why we use English. We have diversity here (in our class).
> **Interviewer:** What languages do you have?
> **Kholo**: Tsonga, Zulu, even Sotho – it is mixed. Some other classes …have learners from Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique! It's mixed.
> **Interviewer:** What is hardest?
> **Kholo:** The foreigners, sometimes you find a learner from the Eastern Cape. They can't even hold a pencil…. *(TI/T1/27.7.15).*

Kholo was problematising the number of home languages in her classroom. This revealed a reversion to the historical, apartheid view of homogeneity being the norm, according to which cultures and languages were never 'mixed'. Further, when Kholo defined 'foreigners' as children from another South African province, she 'othered' or stigmatised those children ('They can't hold a pencil'), and revealed that the multilingual, diverse classroom was not her choice. In this criticism of the children, Kholo is unconsciously asserting her position in the field and so contributing to the norms of the changed field, showing how it remains a transforming field where new values, like multiculturalism, are still being negotiated.

The teachers who had resisted the new status quo regarding multilingualism revealed that their habitus had not been fully reconstituted, despite twenty years of democracy. Their habitus is so deeply entrenched and durable that they could not adjust to the shift in the field. They might need more time to evolve and adapt to the new language conditions (Burawoy and Von Holdt, 2012) but the lack of support from formal structures in the transforming field has not helped with this (lack of) reconstitution.

There was a distinct outlier in the case of Lerato. In a classroom observation, Lerato spoke of language and culture as if it were a form of symbolic capital that the new diversity of children had brought to her classroom. Lerato, said, in front of her Grade 1 class:

> Debbie, I have children from many different African countries in my class. I have children from Cameroon, Nigeria, Zimbabwe – all over. This child (child smiled broadly) comes all the way from the DRC[21] and he speaks four languages - he even speaks French! Say good-morning in French, Jean-Luc (*TI/T3/4.11.2015).*

Lerato had embraced the multicultural nature of her class in an inner city school, even though she taught in English. She did this by developing the prestige of other languages, a practice that positioned the children positively and made them proud of their linguistic ability. It also made Lerato stand out in this group of out-standing teachers. She exemplified true adaptation, in that her practices ensured that she operated successfully in the changed field (Bourdieu, 1985; 1990).

Despite the majority of this group problematising aspects of the changed language situation, albeit with nuanced differences, Lerato and the other teachers all show empathy with children learning to read in a new language. For example, Sunette said, 'I feel sad for the kids that (they) are not taught in their own language. Because if I grew up Afrikaans and I had to do English… It's a problem of understanding' (*TI/T11/22.7.15).* This was a common theme and revealed an aspect of the group teaching habitus; a dispositional awareness of the children's feelings and struggles.

Although the majority of teachers revealed a tendency to revert to the ideological norms of historical systems regarding language, there were signs of adaptation which might result in a future reconstitution of the group habitus. This was seen in the way some teachers described the pedagogies they used to accommodate the children learning English. For example, Violet said, 'We teach differently now. We have brought in our *picture word* method' (*TI/T6/27.8.15).* This was also shown in the personal pride some teachers displayed regarding the children's progress in learning English. Kholo said warmly: 'You can enjoy it when you hear them speak English. Oh, they enjoy English very much!' (*TI/T1/27.7.15).* Gabu commented: 'Even if they are from KZN[22], when you say "Good morning" one day they will

[21] Democratic Republic of Congo

[22] Presumably she believes children from KZN have deep IziZulu roots, rather than English proficiency.

come to you (and say) "Good morning" and they say it in the right way' *(TI/T5/27.8.15).* This enthusiasm could lead to further pedagogic adaptations to the changed conditions.

5.3.2 Parenting changes

The second key theme that emerged from the interviews was an issue with the parents of the children they taught. Ten of the twelve teachers described parents who had 'changed' and were different from parents in the past. The two outliers were again Lerato and Marian, neither of whom mentioned the parents in a negative way, but who also did not defined current parental practices. This silence is interesting as it could indicate the beginning of the evolution of the habitus to new understandings. Alternatively it could mean that school conditions had remained consistent (Marian), or that the two teachers had successfully negotiated dealing with the 'changed' parents because of their individual dispositions, and had thus normalised the situation.

Conversely, most of the teachers associated the current cohort of parents with negative traits. Sunette, who was schooled and trained in schools for 'white' children, described neglectful practices. She said:

> Mary's mummy, it's sad, works seven to seven. Mary stays with the older siblings but they are with boyfriends. She 'kan doen wat sy wil[23] - the page is torn, so what, nobody cares about me, or how I look, or my hair. …This one who came in now (another child), she was badly abused, for 6-8 weeks she went for treatment to the Teddy Bear clinic because her mother gave her a bad smack in the face. They only know the language of hitting. So when you tell the mother that the children is not coping, what do they do, they 'klap'[24]. One (child) said to me, 'Miss if I don't find my hat, my mother is going to take out the belt,' so they live in fear at home (*TI/T11/22.7.15).*

Sunette was othering the parents, and therefore the children, through her use of the third person ('they', 'the mother', 'one child') and through generalisations ('they only know the language of hitting'; 'they live in fear'). She constructed the parents as uncaring and abusive by moving from one incident ('her mother gave her a bad smack in the face') to a

[23] 'She does what she likes'.

[24] Hit

generalisation ('they only know the language of hitting'). Sunette found the neglect difficult to deal with and said:

> I just cannot handle it (neglect)… it hurts me that that's the life they have. I'm not saying they don't love their kids (*TI/T11/22.7.15).*

Despite her strong feelings of empathy with the children, there were racial undertones in her othering of the parents ('*their* kids'), which revealed the durability of her habitus in the overwhelmingly racial historical education systems in which she was immersed in the past. The way she spoke clearly distinguished these parents as different from the norm, as she understood it.

However, this was not a racialised issue overall. Kholo, in a township school, had a similar perception of the neglect shown by current parents:

> Maybe it's our community or what, these parents don't care for their children. They are too busy, especially those parents their learners are needing special attention (sic). When you call them they don't come to the school. Our parents then (in the past) used to come, but (now) parents are not cooperating. Few come to the school. On open days you call them to the school but they don't come. They have careers … and they are young. They are children. *(TI/T1/27.7.15).*

Sunette's othering had become Kholo's stereotyping ('maybe it's our community') but with very similar generalisations about the parents and similar reasons for their lack of care ('they are too busy', 'they have careers', 'they are young', 'they are children'). She constructed a binary of us/them, past/present parents, constructing them as good/bad, responsible/irresponsible.

This negatively framed comparison of past and present parents was also articulated by Thandeka, who taught in an inner-city school. She said:

> When I started teaching in this former model C[25] school we have seen parents that were proud, who were helping their kids, were there for their kids. Now we've seen a decline. We have to fight. Parents are getting younger and younger and now they are more career-orientated. There is a decline in support. Aftercare does its bit but it is not the same as supportive parents. I try to educate the parents to take the children to the library but few go.

[25] Model C was the word used for ex-TED run schools after 1994.

> They have careers and they are young. Only a handful of parents extend reading (*TI/T2/15.4.15).*

Unlike Sunette, the origin of Kholo and Thandeka's resistance was not based partly on changed race, but purely on changed behaviours and values, which might indicate a class disjuncture. In Chapter 2 and again in Chapter 4, two shifts in the demographics of urban schools after 1994 were identified. Initially this was a movement of 'black' children into 'white', 'Indian' and 'coloured' schools, with a second shift of middle-class children of all races away from particular schools, together with an influx of 'black' working-class children into these schools (Soudien, 2007). It is this second shift that the teachers might have been resisting. In Thandeka's context, in an ex-Model C school, the past parents she was talking about were black parents who were among the first to send their children to suburban schools for 'white' children. She constructed these past parents as 'proud' and more child-centred: parents 'who were there for their kids' as opposed to current parents.

Soudien's (2007) explanation for parental shifts and the perceptions of these teachers can be triangulated with statistics pertaining to Johannesburg and Gauteng. These show that a number of work opportunities have been created in the last twenty years in Gauteng, particularly for lower-income groups, leading to an influx of workers at this level to the city (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The youth of the parents, referred to by a number of teachers, might have been linked to the teenage pregnancy rates in Gauteng, which were the highest in the country (Department of Health, 2013/14).

The teachers' resistance showed that their habitus had not been reconstituted to align with the changed field and remained ideologically in the past, in an era when education had been largely restricted to the middle-classes, for many of the children in this country.

However, there was some empathy shown for this new cohort of working-class parents by some of the teachers. Brenda, whose ex-HOR school had originally drawn pupils from the surrounding middle-class area, said of a current pupil:

> Problem comes with economic situation. Both mom and dad have to work if it is a two-parent household or just mom at home and mom has to work. Angela in my class, Angela's mom gets home at seven pm. She works security at banks. Angela comes to school tired but mummy's not there to supervise with homework… It's like pulling a heavy load when you must do reading with the children (*T1/T6/27.8.2015).*

Brenda acknowledged that working at low-paid jobs with long hours made helping with homework difficult. This perception aligned with studies in South Africa (Pretorius and Ribbons, 2005; Porteus et al, 2003) and elsewhere that show that familial literacy practices in working-class families do not always support 'school literacy' (Barton, 2000; Heath, 1983). 'School literacy' may be associated with middle-class values.

Pulane explained some of the values of these 'new' parents which clash with the culture of the school:

> They (the parents) say 'The teacher gets paid, I have my own job'. They are less involved in their children's education when it comes to teaching and learning at home. I've noticed this through homework because we give homework out and nothing comes back. They say 'go and tell your teacher she gets paid, I have to do my washing. I don't have time' *(TI/T4/2.8.15).*

The implication is that she, like Thandeka, preferred the grateful and compliant middle-class, or more docile working-class parents they associated with the past. They resisted the current parents, whom they perceived as having an attitude of entitlement and who did not help their children with homework.

The teachers who had moved from previously disadvantaged subfields to more privileged subfields, like Thandeka and Pulane, seemed to find it particularly hard to understand why some parents had not taken advantage of the transformed field and changed their parenting practices accordingly. It was possible that these teachers 'see that children from the dominant section of a community are better equipped to succeed in education' and want to 'help children from the dominated groups to succeed' (Hasan 1999). They might have felt that the parents were not contributing to this success.

As with the resistance to language conditions, the teachers who showed resistance to the new cohort of parents linked this resistance to their concern for the children they taught. They were convinced of the impact of parental involvement on the children's progress at school, and particularly on the process of learning to read. Thandeka said, 'It is difficult to teach grade 1's to read if you don't have the support of the parents' (T*I/T2/15.4.15).* Sunette concurs, 'It really doesn't help if they don't practice reading at home' (*TI/T11/22.7.15).* Devi, from an ex-HOD school, summed this up:

> Some children… they are slow (to learn to read) not because of their intellectual ability, it's because there is no support at home. Those who get it (support) do brilliantly. You can see the difference (*T1/T5/27.8.2015).*

There was an underlying assumption on the part of these ten teachers that all parents could and should make the necessary time, and should acquire the skills, to help their children learn to read. It was an assumption that had become normalised, particularly in the historically privileged subfields, where daily reading homework was traditionally very common (Christie 1991; Davenport 1991). The teachers who had moved to these subfields, such as Pulane and Thandeka, but who had not grown up with these practices, seemed to have adapted to the norms and values of the new subfields in which they worked and felt equally strongly about the necessity of reading homework.

Significantly, Kholo, the only teacher who had remained in the dominated subfield, did not talk about a lack of reading homework supervision as problematic, perhaps because this was still not a common practice in her school. She was more concerned about parents not coming to the school when summoned. She said: '(These parents) are too busy. …Especially those parents where learners are needing special attention. When you call them they don't come to the school' (*TI/T1/27.7.15).* There was evidently a tradition of summoning the parents of children who needed 'special attention', to the school, which the current cohort of parents did not understand or chose to ignore, and Kholo believed this put the children's progress at risk. Homework was not problematised because it was not a common practice in her subfield, but other behaviours were.

In Bourdieusian terms, all of these teachers saw parental involvement in the school, in one way or another, as a form of symbolic capital that children might or might not bring to the classroom, and all felt that it was critical for school progress and reading development. Ten of the teachers felt that many of the children they taught did not have this capital. If the teachers believed this to be true, it meant that their practices unintentionally marginalised those particular children. These out-standing teachers persisted with pedagogies that assumed co-operative parents, perhaps hoping to change familial practices rather than attempting to develop alternative pedagogies or other ways of operating. This was not an unfounded hope, as shown in Stein and Slonimsky's case study of Dineo (2004), where Dineo's unemployed, working-class parents, living in a Johannesburg township, work intensively with their young

child each night in order to ensure her reading success. However, for the majority of these children, hoping for changed familial practices around reading might not be realistic.

It might be the teachers who needed to change their practice. Similarly to the resistance to the changed language conditions, the resistance to the 'new' parents might be a temporary mismatch between field and habitus which will be resolved through adaptation, either by the parents, or by the teachers, in the coming years.

5.3.3 Curriculum changes

The third major area of the transforming field that many of these teachers felt was problematic was the new curriculum. As explained in Chapter Two, these teachers had all experienced at least four different curricula in their teaching careers. This is shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Curriculum changes experienced by the teachers

Teacher	Sunette	Marian	Anelle	Violet	Brenda	Devi	Fatima	Gabu	Pulane	Lerato	Thandi	Kholo
Pre-1994 education structures	TED	TED	HOR	HOR	HOR	HOD	HOD	DET	DET	DET	DET	DET
Pre-1994 curricula	TED curriculum		HOR curriculum			HOD curriculum		DET curriculum				
Post-1994 curricula	Curriculum 2005 (DBE, 1997)											
	National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DBE, 2008)											
	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011)											

Resistance to the current curriculum, CAPS, (DBE, 2011) was articulated by ten of the twelve teachers, and was centred on the pacing that implementation of the curriculum requires.

For two teachers, Sunette and Marian, who had had prolonged exposure to the subfield linked to the education of 'white 'children, the response to CAPS was one of concurrence. Before 1994, they had worked with curricula which were fast-paced, rigid, and linked to day-by-day schemes of work. They had few complaints about the current curriculum and were thus outliers. Marian said, 'I trained with CAPS and I was going to be one of the facilitators' (*TI/T12/7.9.15).* This revealed something of Marian's teaching habitus, but also something about the nature of the curriculum, and her training. It was significant that the two teachers who were trained in the most privileged historical sector showed the smoothest adaptation to the current curriculum, thus reproducing this privilege.

Resistance to the curriculum was most strongly articulated by Kholo, teaching in an ex-DET, township school from the historically dominated subfield. Pedagogically, there was a disjuncture between this curriculum and the way she taught reading in the past. She explained the method she had used, 'You had to drill the child to know the vowel sounds … and then you introduced the consonants one by one…and then you teach the words' (*TI/T1/27.7.15).* Kholo learnt this method from older teachers, and had experienced the same sequence of learning when she was at school. She found the method effective, and in line with her own beliefs and experience, so it was understandable that she resisted the new curriculum, which represents a disjuncture with her habitus.

However, Kholo's concern was not only with pedagogy, but also with the pacing. She said:

> CAPS is there and you just have to teach. It tells you when to assess and when you don't have to. …It is very painful for our learners because it is running very fast. You teach, you assess, even though they have not understood the concept you need to assess. I think it is not fair to learners because you just push the learners. Those that are behind, they fall behind, and they don't understand. We just stick to the lesson plan. On this day you do this and on that day you do that, but it is going too fast because we don't have the same learners, we have the average and slow learners. And when you stick to these lesson plans you leave those ones behind (*TI/T1/27.7.15).*

Kholo's critique was underpinned by her durable habitus, leading to her articulation of what she perceived to be a mismatch between the current curriculum and the 'new' mixed abilities in her class. She was using the words 'the same learners' in the sense that the learners were not all at the *same level*, and had problematised the natural diversity of ability in her class, classifying the learners as either 'average' or 'slow'. This revealed her attitude to

differentiation; that all the children had to be taught in lock-step; that everyone needed to learn one concept before the class could move on to another (*TI/T1/27.7.15)*. For Kholo, fast-paced sequences of lessons, which could leave slower learners behind, were seen as unkind, which is why Kholo said of the pacing, 'It is very painful for our learners'.

Ironically, this content-filled curriculum was developed precisely with the aim of ensuring that all South African children had similar levels of educational input so that less advantaged children were *not* left behind in the broader educational field (Chisholm, 2005). However Kholo clearly has an egalitarian view of differentiation which was at odds with the curriculum. Her attitude was not unusual in a global context, and could be compared to the approach to differentiation shown by a sample of Grade 1 French teachers in a study by Raveaud (2005). Their view of fairness was ideologically aligned to values underpinning the French revolution. This approach was juxtaposed with the views of a group of British teachers, for whom individuality was paramount, and differentiation was enacted at different levels in their classrooms. It is this latter view which seems to be implicit in the current South African curriculum.

In the structured environment of a school associated with the HOR for 'coloured' children, Violet also resisted the time implications of the CAPS curriculum, but did not link this to changed levels of ability. She said:

> Time, time, time. Before, you would dramatize a section of the reader. No longer. It is so much, especially at the beginning of the year with everything they must do in the book (*The DBE government-supplied workbook*). They must write in that book. It is more about the quantity in the books than the teaching. We steal time from Life Skills. But what else can we do? Children have to read (*TI/T6/27.8.15).*

Her colleague, Brenda, agreed, saying, 'I think you have to kind of work around the pace of the curriculum which we have now… there was a stage when we would even use our breaks for teaching' (*TI/T7/27.8.15).*

Resistance to the curriculum cut across the two groups of teachers, those with prolonged exposure to subfields and those who had changed to new subfields, but there were different levels of resistance. Pulane, Lerato, Gabu and Thandeka, the four teachers with a similar historical background to Kholo, who had moved to schools associated with more privileged subfields, showed more adaptation than Kholo. Gabu said, 'You learn to work around the

pace of the curriculum' (*T1/T5/27.8.2015).* This could be ascribed to their current schools, with more systematic time-management, where individualistic differentiation was historically entrenched, as in the British model described above (Raveaud, 2005).

Some teachers found the GPLMS literacy intervention helpful when implementing CAPS. Pulane said she had adapted to the CAPS curriculum because of the sequenced lesson plans provided by the GPLMS. She explained, 'The GPLMS tells us exactly what to do each day' (*T1/T4/2.8.2015).* Fatima, in a school associated with the HOD for 'Indian' children but which has a multicultural staff, felt that the GPLMS had had an equalising effect on the teachers in the school, helping them to implement the new curriculum similarly. She said:

> I love how it's structured, how it's detailed, especially for those (*teachers*) who don't have the experience coming into teaching …..and (*especially with*) the wide variation with classrooms – certain teachers doing one thing and the other teachers doing another thing (*T1/T10/3.8.2015).*

Working in a school associated with the HOR for 'coloured' children, Violet also appreciated the guidance the GPLMS had provided in terms of pacing, but after four years of following scripted lesson plans, she was looking forward to making some innovations to the programme. She commented, 'Next year we are going to adapt some of the lessons and bring in some of what we have learnt' (*T1/T6/27.8.2015).* It was interesting that Violet and Fatima, who had not emerged from the least privileged subfield and could not be described as 'disadvantaged,' found the GPLMS helpful, because the GPLMS was not aimed at teachers from these subfields, but at teachers from the least privileged sector, such as Kholo (Fleisch, 2016).

Resistance to the curriculum, centred on pacing, could be seen on a cline from Kholo, the teacher in the least privileged subfield, to Marian, in the most privileged subfield, who had been trained as a CAPS facilitator *(T1/T12/7.9.15).* This was significant as it could be seen as an example of the reproduction of historical privilege. It was also interesting that, amongst these teachers, resistance to the curriculum was not articulated as a disposition of defiance, but rather as a tendency that once again put the interests of the child first. This was shown in Kholo's comment that the curriculum was not meeting the needs of the children she taught. The group disposition of empathy for the children was seen in the teachers' concerns.

The concept of resistance as a time-lag for the habitus remained relevant because, at the time of the study, the CAPS curriculum had only been in place for three years (DBE, 2011). There is every reason to believe that these teachers would adapt to the pacing over time, despite the durability of their habitus. Alternatively, the national curriculum could be adjusted in some way, which is feasible, since it has been changed or replaced relatively frequently since 1995.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have focused on the field-habitus relationship, I attempted to describe the relational connection between the habitus of these teachers to the field, mapped in Chapter 4 as a transforming field, but one in which subfields are evident, each with enduring historical influences. Aligning this to the research questions, this chapter gives insight into the teaching practices of these out-standing teachers, particularly as a response to the different socio-cultural and socio-historic contexts in which they live and work. It also develops an understanding of how these practices evolved in response to the field.

In Chapter 2 (2.4.1) where a 'balanced' approach to reading was discussed, Wren (2003. p. 1) observed that, 'Most (reading teachers) would describe their teaching as "balanced",' but that the balance can veer towards one side or the other. The out-standing teachers are enacting what they consider to be 'balanced' reading programmes, informed by the curriculum and their habitus, which had been formed in different historical systems. Their interpretations of a balanced programme differed significantly because of this, and this is explored in more depth in Chapter 7.

The teachers could be divided into two distinct groups, those who had moved to different subfields and those who had not. The teachers who had moved revealed a more flexible habitus, shown in their stronger adaptive response to the changes they had experienced, to reveal how a habitus can be reconstituted by exposure to new conditions. The teachers who had remained in a single subfield showed more durability, so that aspects of the *status quo* were maintained despite some adaptation to the legislative changes of the transforming field. This revealed a reproduction of practice and of privilege, because the teachers who needed to make the most significant changes, to both a different subfield and to the transforming field, were those who had emerged from the historically least privileged education systems.

However, the study also showed that with the majority of teachers, regardless of the group, there remained some misalignment between the habitus and the field, suggesting that the

transforming field remained a site of struggle for these teachers' habitus as they tried to adapt to the new conditions (Thompson, 2008). It was a power struggle to maintain their position as effective reading teachers in changed conditions. The struggle was shown by their resistance to the new language conditions, the 'new' parents and to the current curriculum. The resistance was nuanced, influenced by the context in which each teacher operated and by the teachers' disparate dispositions. For example, the language situation was problematic for Sunette, because the children were not 'English'; for Violet, because it meant more work; and for Kholo, because her classroom was no longer homogenous. In this way, the teachers revealed strong roots in the historical systems which prevented their complete adaptation to the changed field.

In this struggle, there are two outliers: Lerato, who had a set of dispositions and practices that were a little different to those of the other participating teachers, for example, in the way she embraced the changed language profiles of the children in her class, did not comment on the 'new' parents, and voluntarily uses aspects of the GPLMS in order to implement the curriculum faithfully. Her habitus showed a concurrence with the changes to the field. The other outlier was Marion, who had experienced few changes in her classroom, so was required to make fewer adaptations. The current parents and the primary languages spoken by the children remained consistent with the middle-class, English-speaking cohort of children she had taught in the past and the structure of CAPS was similar to the rigid curricula with which Marion had worked in the past.

What the study revealed was that the habitus of most of these teachers' remained, to some extent, entrenched in an earlier era, and that there was a time-lag between the habitus and the transforming field in which they operated. This is not surprising given that these are mature teachers who have been using a particular set of strategies for many years and seen hundreds of children learn to read under their guidance. Changing their practice would involve admitting to themselves that they may not have been doing the best for the children, which would damage their perceptions of themselves as teachers. This can be weighed against their need for compliance with the new legislated demands and changed teaching conditions.

Another consideration when discussing the durability of the habitus of these teachers is the lack of structural support which might have enabled them to adapt more fully to the changes. The lack of language support, pedagogical help or ideological re-alignment, through

scaffolding or re-education, meant that adaptations had been made in an ad hoc manner, teacher by teacher and school by school. The lack of support aligns with one of the binding constraints explained by Spaull (2015) as the reason why legislated changes, such as the implementation of the CAPS curriculum, did not have the anticipated impact on reading levels. With these out-standing teachers, their adaptation to the transforming field revealed their agency and the extent of their individual tenacity, to 'beat the odds' in a context which was complex and largely unsupported.

A Bourdesian analysis of the habitus-field alignment in this study reveals that in one sense the habitus of many of the teachers has prevailed, despite the mandated changes in the transforming field. The teachers have retained many of their perceptions and practices because of the durability of their habitus, and this underpins their resistance to aspects of the changed field. Because the teachers, as agents, are an integral part of the field, this suggests a re-examination of the mapping of the field, as it is evident that aspects of the field have remained relatively stable, for example, attitudes to language, curriculum and parents. While the official and legislative policies have changed the field significantly, these do not fully define the field. However, there is no doubt that important aspects of the field have changed, and are changing, as the country moves towards the goal of equalised education, not least of which is the changed school demographics. The definition suggested in Chapter 4, that this is a *transforming*, rather than a fully transformed field therefore holds true.

The immediate risk of the low habitus-field alignment and the reproduction of aspects of the historical field is that children who are not proficient in English, whose parents have literacy practices that are different from those of their school, and who are unable to keep up with the pacing required by the current curriculum, might remain disadvantaged because their teachers are resistant to the new conditions in the field. With this group of out-standing teachers, this risk was mitigated by a common disposition found in the group habitus, of child-centredness, caring, and empathy with the children. This was shown in their pedagogical adaptations and their delight when they explained the children's progress. It was a disposition illustrated by Violet when she explained her main objective for each teaching day. She said, 'I try to make each day a nice each day for the children' (*TI/T6/27.8.15).*

CHAPTER SIX: CAPITAL + HABITUS + FIELD -The attributes that make these teachers stand out

[(Habitus) (Capital) + Field = Practice]

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Bourdieu's theory of practice, **'[(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice'** (Bourdieu, 1986; Maton, 2008, p.51), capital is grouped with habitus. This is because Bourdieu sees capital as a part of the habitus, acquired in the same way as the habitus is formed, through exposure to different structures in the field, together with individual agency. However 'capital' is distinct from habitus in that it refers to those particular attributes, or forms of distinction, which position the agent favourably in the field.

Bourdieu's notion of capital builds on the Marxist (1867) idea of capital as monetary wealth. Bourdieu describes capital as the economic, social, symbolic or cultural forms of wealth, knowledge, taste or accomplishment that bring value to the agent's practice in the field (Bourdieu, 2006; Albright and Luke, 2008; Moore, 2008). Chapter 2 (2.1) explains Bourdieu's concept of capital, showing how Bourdieu distinguishes between the different forms capital can take (Bourdieu, 2006). This study deals principally with *cultural capital*, which Bourdieu believes can be manifested through *embodiment*, in the mind and body of the agent, through *objectification*, seen in the objects that the agent creates, uses and values, and through *institutionalisation*, in the form of qualifications, or awards (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 26). These teachers will show the *embodiment* of capital through many of their daily reading teaching practices, *objectification* in the effective reading programmes they have created and the reading resources they value, and *institutionalisation* in any educational degrees or awards they have received or though being recognised as mentors at their schools.

The acquisition of this capital is important in the study, to determine why these teachers stand out. Bourdieu explains that although capital brings distinction to an individual within a particular field, it may be acquired through interactions in many fields, such as in families or communities, and through individual agency. This contrasts with a Marxist perspective, where the class context would be the definitive field. Bourdieu particularly emphasises the

importance of the primary field, the family, in the acquisition of capital, but explains that other structures and contexts may be equally formative (Bourdieu, 2006).

Also significantly for this study, Bourdieu only considers it capital when the attribute is valued by other agents in the field. In other words, if it not recognised or valued by others, it is not capital, even if it could be considered a teaching strength in the literature. In this study there is evidence that some teachers have abilities which are not recognised in their subfield but which strengthen their practice.

Linked to this, what counts as capital in one field or subfield may not be recognised in another. In any field, only specific forms of capital are recognised (Bourdieu, 2006). This is shown in a study of the different forms of reading capital observed in two Puerto Rican families living in the United States (Compton-Lilly, 2007), where the difference between what is recognised as capital at school, at home, and in the community, is signficantly different. In this study it is evident that some of the teachers' capital is recognised in the transforming field but would not have been recognised in the historical field, and that different forms of capital are recognised in the different subfields. Thus, although all the participants have been selected because of their perceived capital, their capital varies somewhat, and may not be transposable to another subfield.

Importantly, Bourdieu believes that, although having particular forms of capital will bring distinction to the agent in the field, it will only be recognised in proportion to the prestige of the field or subfield itself (Bourdieu, 2006). This is significant in a historically hierarchically-stratified field. Particular forms of capital may be recognised because of the historical prestige associated with a particular subfield. This is seen in the continued positioning of teachers and schools according to the subfields in which they worked and work, or the education systems in which they were trained.

This group of teachers all possessed capital that caused them to stand out as reading teachers in their own school contexts, which distinguished them from the other teachers in their school, and which was recognised by other agents in the microfield. The capital was usually aligned to their effective practice. In this chapter, I describe some of the forms of capital that positioned the teachers as out-standing, investigate how it was manifested and recognised, and attempt to understand how this capital was acquired.

In the identification of what represents capital for these teachers, I use the comments of the principals, as well as the teachers' own perceptions of their strengths and practices. To contextualise the discussion, I have drawn on studies of effective reading teachers in the literature (Cunningham and Allington, 2007), and on broad studies of teachers in the South African context (Taylor, 2013; Schollar and Assoc., 2012).

In the first part of the chapter, I explore forms of teacher capital common to the whole group, determining which forms of capital were revealed in the practices of the majority of the teachers. In the second part of the chapter, I focus on four teachers. I provide a nuanced description of the some of the forms of capital these individual teachers manifested. With one teacher I identify some of the strengths and abilities she revealed, which are not recognised in the subfield, and so cannot be counted as capital although they impact positively on her teaching.

In the selection of these four teachers, I reverted to the two groups of teachers identified in Chapter 5. Two teachers were chosen from among the teachers who had taught consistently in one subfield, and the other two were chosen from the teachers who had trained in one subfield and then moved to teach in a different subfield. The reasoning behind this choice was to reveal the extent of the influence of prolonged exposure to a particular subfield on the acquisition of capital, to provide insights into the transposability of capital where teachers had moved from one subfield to another (Thompson, 2008), and to investigate the new capital that immersion in two subfields might produce.

6.2 COMMON FORMS OF CAPITAL

Particular forms of capital were identified that are common to the whole group and distinguish this group as out-standing in the field. These forms of capital align directly to the group habitus and show the habitus-capital relationship as they were often the result of common dispositions.

The first form of capital that was evident in all twelve teachers underpinned the selection of the teachers, which was described in Chapter 3. This was their extraordinary ability to consistently organise, administer and manage the teaching and learning of reading in their early-grade classrooms so that the children they taught learnt to read, year after year. This was cultural capital, embodied in their daily practice as 'practising' reading teachers (Pearson and Hoffman, 2011) and was the principle reason why they 'beat the odds' (Cunningham and

Allington, 2007) in a country where 78% of children are unable to read for meaning (Howie et al, 2017). In Chapter 7, the way in which different teachers teach reading is discussed in depth, using three case studies which reveal individual instructional strategies. In some of the cases this shows a thoughtful, deep understanding of the reading process, and in others, a simple, practical, but successful, application of the directives in the curriculum.

The ability to deliver an effective reading programme was particularly significant when compared to Schollar's report for the GPLMS intervention (Schollar and Assoc., 2012), which found that 82% of teachers in Gauteng had little knowledge of the curriculum, did minimal planning and were unable to say approximately how many teaching weeks there were in a year or a term. Similar deficits were described by Taylor (2013), who found poor planning and lack of common literacy benchmarks. Conversely, the delivery of a systematic reading programme is an identified feature of the effective teachers described by Cunningham and Allington (2007).

The manifestation of this capital in this group was seen in the embodied knowledge and behaviours described by the teachers themselves. For example, by explaining the precise number of books children read each term (Marian), the phonic sounds covered in a term and a year (Anelle, Violet), and the progress they would see at particular times during the year (Sunette), the teachers revealed their clear sense of progression and the overall goals which underpinned their successful reading programmes.

An example of this was revealed in this conversation between Fatima, who teaches Grade 3, and Pulane, who teaches Grade 1. It took place as part of the interview process, when the two teachers met before their individual interviews and informally discussed their reading programmes with me:

> **Fatima**: Every child in Grade 3 has 12 readers.
> **Pulane**: For us (in grade 1) its four readers per term. Each day we do 10 minutes of reading. Three groups to read.
> **Interviewer:** Phonics, grade 1, do you do the names of the letters, or the sounds?
> **Pulane**: Sounds only in grade 1.
> **Interviewer**: And then the long vowel sounds?
> **Pulane:** Yes it's (in) grade 2.
> **Interviewer:** And Grade 3?
> **Fatima:** Then we do the silent letters and more complex sounds. We show that when you say

the letter alone it is said in one way, but when you say it in a word it changes the whole sound.

Interviewer: Is that hard to teach?

Fatima: They get it easily because of the build-up. Like from Grade R they are teaching them the single sounds, they do a few sounds a day so that by Grade 1 they already know the 26 letters of the alphabet and there they learn the sounds and which words starts with that sound. Then in Grade 2, they learn more and when they come to Grade 3 they know all the sounds.

Pulane: We are doing the blends now. And it's easy for them, they've mastered the single sounds so it's easy for them to do these blends now.

Fatima: Because at grade 3 level they must have a sight word vocabulary of at least 500 words.

Pulane: This year the grade 1 I don't see anything they are battling with, especially when it comes to phonics.

Fatima: They get it easily because of the build-up (of skills) (*TI/T0/3.8.15; TI/T4/3.8.15).*

Without access to their lesson plans or the curriculum documents, Pulane and Fatima revealed that they had internalised the targets and benchmarks they worked with. This constituted embodied, cultural capital in the field of early reading and distinguished them from the South African teachers observed in the work of Schollar and Assoc. (2013) and Taylor (2013).

The second form of cultural capital evident amongst all twelve teachers was their linguistic capital. All the teachers in the study were proficient in the 'legitimated' language, English (Mda, 2004), which was the LoLT of their schools. This enabled them to successfully communicate in, and teach children to read in, English. It distinguished them in the macrofield, which was shown in a study of South African teachers, revealing that primary school teachers had English language skills equivalent to Grade 6 home-language English speakers (Jet, 2004). The acquisition of this capital was significant in the context of this group because eight of the twelve teachers (Sunette, Kholo, Lerato, Thandeka, Gabu, Pulane, Anelle, Violet) did not have English as their primary language and were not trained to teach reading in this language, but rather in Afrikaans, IsiZulu, Sesotho or Xitsonga, respectively.

The teachers' acquisition of this capital was interesting, because South African teachers' English language development has not been a priority in the transforming field (Hartshorne, 1999). The participating teachers had acquired this capital through their own agency. This

was often facilitated through their interactions in other fields, or because of a move to a different subfield. Lerato said she had acquired English proficiency in the workplace, when she left teaching for some years to work in the commercial fields of banking and publishing *(TI/T3/4.11.15).* Sunette and Thandeka had developed proficiency in English when they moved to teach in schools with English as the LoLT, and sought mentors amongst the English-speaking staff *(TI/T11/3.06.15; TI/T2/15.04.15).* With all the teachers who taught in a new language, the attainment of this linguistic capital showed a disposition towards life-long learning, as well as individual agency to learn the language.

However, within the group of twelve teachers, English language levels did vary considerably, and this was revealed in the transcripts of the interviews. Thus, although all the teachers could teach reading in English within the microfield of their schools, their individual level of proficiency might not have allowed transference to another subfield. Linguistic capital in the form of proficiency in English can determine a teachers' transposability to other subfields, particularly to schools which are historically associated with an English LoLT, such as Ashford School. The varying levels of English, even amongst this group of out-standing teachers, was a direct legacy of the apartheid era.

The third form of capital, which was common to all twelve teachers, was the cultural capital of having had lengthy experience in the field. As experienced reading teachers, they had residual, embodied knowledge of the way reading skills develop in young children, as well as the institutional capital of being senior members of staff. This set them apart from many of the younger teachers in their schools and positioned them as experts. The effect of their long experience of teaching reading in the early grades, and of managing young children, cannot be underestimated. Even though much of this experience was in the historical field, in different subfields and different contexts, there were aspects of the successful teaching of reading that remained common across languages and contexts. These included factors such as motivating the children to want to learn to read, providing opportunities for meaningful practice and developing reading skills systematically. This capital was recognised in the microfield and played out in the leadership roles many of the teachers had assumed at their schools. For example, Sunette, Kholo and Violet had been appointed Heads of Grade; Megan, Anelle, Thandeka and Fatima were Heads of Foundation Phase, and many teachers mentioned the way they had assisted younger staff members who ask for help (TI/T1-12/15). Megan says,

> I have two brand new teachers in my grade 1 group, one of them being N. I say to her that 'you must plan your lessons still.' I am at the point that I pick something up and I know exactly what I want to do but it takes a long time to get there. Don't follow my steps, you have be planned, be prepared, you've got to know exactly what to expect. I know what I want from my children at the end of every lesson now *(P1/T13/7.9.15).*

The fourth form of symbolic capital that was observed in the group was a careful use of time, linked to duty. This disposition was an integral part of the group habitus, but distinguished the teachers from many of their peers. Sunette and Lerato both said they arrived at school between five and six o'clock each morning to prepare for the day, and Sunette was often the last teacher to leave the school in the evening, even though the school was situated in a less-than-safe inner-city area *(TI/T11/22.7.15).* In each case, this was commented upon by their respective principals. For example, Kholo's principal commented that she was 'never absent', and that this distinguished her from many of her colleagues *(PI/P1/23.7.15).* This groups' use of time triangulated with the sense of urgency with which these teachers spoke about curriculum delivery, the children's progress, and the completion of the reading programme in their classrooms. Brenda said, 'Time, time, time ….we can't complete everything in reading so we take time from life skills or work through breaks. Because they **must** learn to read' *(TI/T7/27.8.15).*

In the macrofield, the lack of this form of capital amongst teachers is shown in the Schollar (2012) and Taylor (2013) reports. Schollar and Assoc. (2012) describe finding high levels of absenteeism, low levels of punctuality and unsystematic supervision of time on task in the majority of Gauteng classrooms that were observed. This triangulates with Taylor's (2013) findings regarding lack of time-management. Effective time-management is identified as a further marker of exemplary early-grade teachers by Cunningham and Allington (2007, p. 3). They believe effective teachers at this level are teachers in whose classrooms 'Every minute was used well'. They also identify these highly effective teachers as 'excellent classroom managers' (Cunningham and Allington, 2007, p. 3). It is also a tendency foregrounded by Dixon and Dornbrack (2015) as one of the distinguishing features of a higher functioning school in a study they conducted in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.

It is worth noting that at least two of the four forms of capital identified are also attributes identified by Cunningham and Allington (2007) amongst highly effective reading teachers in the United States.

6.3 INDIVIDUAL EXAMPLES OF CAPITAL

In the in-depth analysis of the four selected teachers, other forms of capital emerged, which were often specific to the teachers, and were embedded in their individual habitus. Sometimes this capital was not directly associated with the teaching of early reading, such as the ability to create an inclusive classroom (Sunette), but nevertheless impacted on their teaching practice and distinguished them as out-standing teachers in their schools. The acquisition of this capital was aligned to their exposure to the subfields of the current and historical field; to their formative, familial field, and to other fields, reflecting their individual journeys through life. However, it is their exposure to the subfields, and the subsequent level of durability of the habitus, which frames this discussion.

6.3.1 Sunette: An example of prolonged exposure to a single subfield

Sunette worked in an inner city school and has been associated with one subfield for her entire career (see Table 13).

Table 15: Sunette: Biographical details

Schooling	TED schools for 'white' Afrikaans-speaking children.
Teacher-training	TED Teacher Training College in Johannesburg for 'white' Afrikaans students. Specialisation in teaching the early grades and preschool training
Experience	TED 'normal' primary schools, a remedial school, and a bilingual (English and Afrikaans) pre-school attached to an orphanage.
Current position	Inner city, transformed school that is historically aligned to the TED. Currently head of Grade 1.

Sunette had attended and been trained in the privileged Afrikaans institutions of the apartheid era. She began teaching in an Afrikaans-medium government school, but then moved to teach in two 'special' schools, first an Afrikaans-medium 'remedial' school for children with mental and physical barriers to learning, and then to a bilingual pre-school attached to a large orphanage in Johannesburg. She later moved to the inner city school where she currently taught, which had English as the LoLT. Although emerging from a privileged background, these schools were not typically privileged schools and showed her early concern for

marginalised children *(TI/T11/22.7.15)*. Nevertheless, her exposure to one subfield in the current and historical field had ensured a well-formed and durable habitus.

The first form of capital that positioned Sunette as an effective reading teacher in her school was her linguistic capital. Sunette was proficient in English and this was considered capital by both the parents and the principal in a school where the majority of children, and many of the teachers, including Sunette, did not have English as a primary language *(PI/T11/3.6.15).* Her acquisition of this capital was an example of personal agency. When she first moved to this school, the school staff was predominantly 'white', and the majority of the teachers had English as their primary language. Sunette said that the HOD described English as a 'horrible, difficult, technical subject' to learn, but had worked systematically with Sunette to help her acquire new language skills *(TI/T11/22.7.15)*. The resulting linguistic capital, acquired informally, distinguished her amongst a staff which had become multicultural and multilingual.

Because of her experience of language acquisition, Sunette had developed a metalinguistic awareness which affected her reading pedagogy and distinguished her in the context of the school. She taught language and reading skills simultaneously, with an awareness of the difficulties associated with learning a new, and orthographically irregular, language. When she said 'Black vernac [vernacular] and Afrikaans vernac [vernacular] is exactly the same – a, e, i, o, u' *(TI/T11/22.7.15)*, she was referring to the one-to-one correspondence in orthographically consistent languages such as Afrikaans and various African languages, compared to English (Goswami, 2013). This awareness impacted directly on her teaching practice.

Examples were seen in lesson observations. In a lesson to reinforce the /m/-m phoneme-grapheme correspondence, Sunette said, while showing a sandwich she had made, 'We are learning about Munchy Mike, munch, munch, munch. He likes Marmite, munch, munch, munch. He likes munching very much' *(SO/T11/9.3.2015).* Sunette used different /m/ words in full sentences, performed gestures and used props to explain the meaning of the words, repeated the words a number of times, and wrote the targeted letter and word (m - munch) on the board. She was teaching English phonics, vocabulary and sentence structure simultaneously, and using multi-modal methods aimed at learners who were not proficient in English.

She also used carefully-structured instructions and questions in her lesson, for example, 'Books on tables. These books (holds one up) on your table. Put your books on your tables' *(SO/T11/9.3.2015)*. Later in the lesson, she said, 'Let's read together "Kathy goes to the park." Where is a park? Who has been there? What do you do in a park? Who went to a park in the book I read yesterday?'*(SO/T11/9.3.2015).* Teaching the new word ('park'), she used the word repeatedly in meaningful language constructions ('Where is a park? 'Who has been there?' 'What do you do in a park?') while reinforcing the reading word and previous learning, all practices associated with teaching children in a new language.

Sunette extended her language/reading programme by seizing language teaching opportunities throughout the day, as shown in this comment: 'Like Emma for instance, came from Limpopo in December, she was only taught in vernac [vernacular]. Basic English, she would say, "I want toilet". "Emma, that's not the way we say it. May I go to the toilet?' *(SO/T11/9.3.2015).* The extract reveals her opportunistic teaching of English, although it also shows her perception that languages are standardised, shown by her insistence on correct usage, which was the historical view of language promoted during the apartheid era (Makoe, 2007; Makoe and McKinney, 2014). This aligned with the durability of her habitus, formed in that era, despite her agency in developing new linguistic and pedagogical capital.

The second form of capital that distinguished Sunette from her peers was an awareness of the physical and emotional barriers that affect the process of learning to read:

> You pick up that the eyes are weak, that the ears are blocked. I had one little girl, I think she is now in grade 5 or 6, 95% not hearing… and Marieta[26] she came and tested the ears, took her to an ENT guy, opened the ears, got grommets, in a month, two months she could read. And then the same with the ones who need specs. One of my potentials, she has a bladder problem… now she's a little better, she's on treatment – I got one of the teachers who speak Venda to speak to this mother, because mommy can't speak English. I gave her the name of a doctor who would sort it *(SO/T11/9.3.2015).*

This diagnostic ability originated from her experience in a 'special' school, where she was trained to diagnose and deal with various barriers to learning. In this school she also established contacts with appropriate specialists, such as 'Marieta'. This was an interesting

[26] An audiologist

example of social capital, using social connections, and is the only example of this type in this study. This social capital was combined with her embodied, cultural capital, to position her as a teacher who 'can diagnose problems' and 'knows what to do' when a child failed to learn to read. She was often consulted by other teachers because of this expertise (PI/T11/3.6.15).

The third form of capital Sunette revealed is embodied, cultural, capital and was evident in her ability, and need, to create an inclusive classroom. She was very firm about the children not othering or excluding others and so created a safe space where children were not isolated or stigmatised *(TI/T11/22.7.15).* Sunette explained how this awareness of othering developed in her own formative years. In the middle to upper-middle-class Afrikaans primary school she attended, her parents stood out because they were working-class:

> I come out of a snobbish school…if you are not so academic clever and you are not in that clique group is very easy to be isolated. I wouldn't say I was a slow learner, (but)… one of the teachers told my mother, "She'll be lucky if she comes to grade 3". …I had this teacher, she would bang your head on that board,… There were horrible people in those schools. It was very easy to be isolated. ... It's sad and then you realise, how am I going to make it easier for these kids because I battled (*T1/T11/9.3.2015).*

Her early othering was part of her habitus, but had become cultural capital in this field, as young children learn best in a socially inclusive classroom. This capital was recognised by the principal, who said she put 'difficult cases' in Sunette's class *(PI/T11/3.6.2015).* Sunette has since accepted a child with Down syndrome into her classroom and the district officials find this commendable, and possibly unique in government schools in Johannesburg at that time. This was an example of the alignment between her habitus, formed in one field, leading to capital in a different field.

A fourth form of capital was Sunette's ability to communicate with parents. This caused her to stand out in her school, as it was usually Sunette who explained to parents that their children needed to be retained in Grade 1 when this was necessary *(PI/T11/3.6.15).* Moving in and out of character, the extract below shows this extraordinary ability. She explained how she told parents that there were often different reading abilities in the class, and why there might be a developmental lag:

> I say to my mummies, just remember when I had my baby in July, you had your baby in January, your baby is seven months ahead of mine. If you look at all the development (in the

> first seven months), emotionally, physically, by seven months some kids can already crawl, sit up ...and maybe say mama and hold the bottle, but I'm sitting with a brand new baby. Then they both come to school in January *(TI/T11/9.3.2015).*

Sunette's communicative ability was part of her habitus, which thrived on social contact, but in this context it was a form of social capital as it strengthened the parent-teacher relationship, which is crucial in the early stages of learning to read (Hill, 2008).

Finally, Sunette had administrative and organisational skills, which positioned her differently from the other teachers in terms of her management of the reading programme. Because of this, she had been placed in a leadership role as the Grade 1 head *(PI/T11/3.6.2015).* Sunette explained how she had developed a system to record which graded reading books each child had read, and what reading level they had attained. This system was used by all the teachers, throughout the Foundation Phase *(TI/T11/9.3.2015).* This organisational capital was associated with the structures in which she was trained and the subfield in which she had continued to work.

With Sunette, some of the forms of social and cultural capital described were acquired in the formative familial fields, including her recognition of 'othered' children, and her communication skills. However, her acquisition of English, her administrative excellence and her ability to diagnose and address physical and emotional barriers to learning were acquired through her exposure to structures in the historical field, and current subfield, to which she had a prolonged exposure, and both of which are considered to be privileged (P*I/T11/9.3.2015).*

6.3.2 Kholo: An example of prolonged exposure of a single subfield

Kholo had also been exposed to a single subfield, which would suggest a similarly durable habitus with capital aligned to this subfield (see Table 16).

Table 16: Kholo: Biographical details

Schooling	DET schools for 'black', IsiZulu-speaking children in Soweto.
Teacher-training	DET teacher training college for 'black', students in Soweto. Specialisation in teaching economics at high school level.
Experience	DET schools for 'black' children (IsiZulu and IsiXhosa LoLT).
Current position	Township, transformed school but historically aligned to the DET. Currently acting HOD.

Kholo attended the same primary school at which she now teaches, and her parents lived in one of the small houses surrounding the school. She went to the local teacher-training college in order to become a high-school teacher. Being accepted for high school teacher training was more prestigious than training to be a junior school teacher at that time, and required better marks. However, once qualified, Kholo elected to teach in a primary school which showed personal agency. She explained that she chose to work with young children because she enjoys interacting with children of this age *(TI/T1/27.7.15)*. Because of this, in her first post, as a Grade 3 teacher, she had to be trained to teach reading in situ *(TI/T1/27.7.15)*:

> Fortunately there were good teachers there. I could not even write on the chalkboard. They showed me when I had problems…and taught me how to teach reading. Fortunately I was very motivated by their style of teaching and I've been teaching since then (at this level) *(TI/T1/27.7.15).*

Kholo's decision to work with young children, despite her qualification, showed a dispositional tendency towards working with this age-group. This is a form of capital in the field of early reading. Her extraordinary rapport with the children was commented on, with admiration, by her principal *(TI/T11/9.3.2015)* who pointed out her warm, informal interactions with the children *(SO/T11/9.3.2015).* Kholo acknowledged the satisfaction this brings: 'When you come in the morning, you see them running to you and taking your bag, "Teacher! Teacher!" You see they are very happy to see you' (*TI/T1/27.7.15).*

The relationship she had with young children was also shown in her biographical comment:

> I was redeployed (to a) Xhosa school. *Because I like children* I had to go and ask 'How do you say this in Xhosa?' Even the learners used to teach me. 'We don't say (it) like that we say …' But I told them I was very good in teaching them (*TI/T1/27.7.15).*

This reveals how Kholo's affinity for young children had led to some disruption in the traditional, hierarchal teacher-pupil relationship but was recognised as cultural capital in the field. The origin of this capital is unclear, but it would not have been acquired in the structures of the socio-historic field, where more formal relations between teachers and children were usually observed.

The second kind of capital that Kholo had acquired, which caused her to stand out, was her local knowledge. This was clearly capital, in that it was recognised by the principal and patents, but it only has value in one specific context. It had been acquired through her long association with a particular geographical area. An example of this capital is Kholo's explanation of the nuanced shifts that had taken place in the community, and the socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions in which the children lived. For example, she explained that many of the children were being brought up by grandparents, that some lived in an informal settlement nearby, and that some were bussed to the school in taxis *(TI/T1/27.7.15).* Kholo described the implications of each situation and used this knowledge to connect to, and manage, the children in her class. It is significant that in her advice to young teachers, she said: 'They (new teachers) need to love these children…and accommodate them. They (The children) do have problems. They (the teachers) need to be patient' (TI/T1/27.7.15). Kholo was acutely aware of the problems individual children were bringing to school in this socio-cultural context and this knowledge made her a better teacher, according to the principal, because she was able to attend to individual needs *(P1/P1/27.7.15).*

It is interesting this was valued in her context, because, in the broader educational field in South Africa, it is often undervalued. Although local knowledge is considered capital in the literature (Hill, 2008) it is not highlighted in Taylor's (2013) study of Foundation Stage teachers. Another example is the GDE 2016 admissions policy which does not specify geographical proximity as a criterion for admission to a school. Children are allocated to schools centrally, on a first-come-first-served basis, a policy which mitigates against the type of capital Kholo has acquired (GDE, 2015).

This is linked to a *strength* that Kholo had acquired, which is not recognised as capital in her school or in the subfield; she has linguistic knowledge in the form of proficiency in more than one African language. Kholo was able to teach reading in two African languages as well as in

English (*T1/T2/15.4.2015)* but because these are not the 'legitimated' language of the school, this was not recognised in the subfield. This is despite the African languages being the primary languages of many of the children. This is not an uncommon situation in South Africa currently (Makoe, 2007; Makoe and McKinney, 2014). According to the literature, her knowledge of African languages makes Kholo a better reading teacher, capable of code-switching at will (Compton-Lilly, 2013). However it is proficiency in English that is highly valued by the parents at this school (Mda, 2004). The principal explained that parental pressure was the reason why the school had changed to English as the LoLT after 1994 *(PI/TI/23.7.2015).*

An interesting disposition, identified as a strength by Kholo, but not recognised in the subfield in which she taught, was her love of reading**.** Kholo explained that a love of reading was not common in her community or among the teachers in the school in which she worked, but that this underpinned the passion she felt for developing the children's reading skills *(TI/T1/27.7.15).* She said:

> I like reading more than anything. I wish all my learners could read. ….You yourself you need to be a reader, you should concentrate on reading, you should encourage these little ones to read …Reading is most important in our children and in us as people *(TI/T1/27.7.15).*

Because it was not recognised, it could not be considered cultural capital in the subfield in which she worked, although it is considered capital in the broader field of early reading. However, it established Kholo's personal purpose for teaching children to read, and underpinned her commitment to the reading programme. The other teacher who mentioned a love of reading was Marion, working in a more privileged socio-economic context. Despite living and teaching in entirely different socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts, in different geographical areas of Johannesburg, this common trait seemed particularly relevant to them both in their shared determination to teach children to read, and to enjoy reading, and revealed a clear practice-habitus alignment in their cases.

Kholo's capital, including her ability to deliver a systematic and effective reading programme, was acquired through a mixture of personal agency, and her exposure to formative familial and community fields. Her unrecognised attributes, her linguistic ability in African languages, and her love of reading, was similarly acquired and must link to dispositional tendencies. What is evident with Kholo is that neither the structures of the

historically disadvantaged subfield in which she worked for so many years, nor the structures of the transforming field, have helped her to acquire the capital that makes her out-standing. This is an example of how inequalities of the past are reproduced.

6.3.3 Lerato: An example of exposure to different subfields

Lerato was trained in the DET system of education but worked in a subfield that I have referred to as 'hybridised' because it did not fit into any one of the four subfields associated with apartheid-era education systems. Her biographical details are shown in Table 15. Lerato was one of the outliers identified in the analysis of the field-habitus relationship described in Chapter 5, because, unlike the other teachers, many aspects of her practice and attitudes seemed to show concurrence with the aspects of transformed field that other teachers in the group found problematic.

Table 17: Lerato: biographical details

Schooling	DET schools for ,'black', XiTsonga-speaking children in Soweto and Limpopo.
Teacher-training	DET teacher training college for 'black', XiTsonga-speaking, students in Limpopo.
Experience	DET school for 'black', XiTsonga-speaking children in Soweto. Some years in banking and publishing in Johannesburg.
Current position	Subfield B/D: Inner City, re-opened, transformed school. Currently head of grade 1.

As a child, Lerato lived in an outlying area of Soweto designated for Xitsonga-speaking people. Lerato's parents were educated, middle-class professionals, but were forced to live in that area because of apartheid laws of that time. Lerato went to a primary school in Soweto, the same school at which she taught for 25 years, but went to Limpopo Province for her high school and teacher training. At school she excelled both academically and at sport, and represented the Transvaal[27] in tennis within the DET structure for 'black' children. This

[27] Province in apartheid South African, which included what is now Gauteng

entailed some travel at an early age, which broadened her horizons and created a lifelong interest in travel, and in her own and other cultures *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).*

The interest in and celebration of her own and other cultures, which developed from her exposure to familial and formative fields, was a form of symbolic capital. In her previous teaching post at a Xitsonga-medium school in Soweto, Lerato welcomed the emerging diversity in her classroom in the late 1990s, which gave her the opportunity to learn IsiZulu and Sesotho *(PI/T3/4.11.2015).*

This was particularly valuable in the school in which she currently taught, which was a multicultural school with children from different socio-cultural backgrounds. The school was described in Chapter 4 as Reliant School. Lerato commented enthusiastically, in the children's hearing, on the range of countries and languages represented in her classroom, saying, 'I have children from *so* many African countries in my class' *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* She also wore traditional Tsonga dress on special occasions, and had instituted 'celebration days' where the children brought cultural objects or food to class. In a lesson observation it was evident that she had learnt a few words in some of the fourteen primary languages spoken in her class, and she was careful to value each child's individual backgrounds, shown in the respectful way she communicated with them *(LO/T3/4.11.2015).*

The principal believed Lerato's celebration of diversity made her stand out at the school and said the parents particularly appreciated this affirmation of their different cultures (*PI/T3/4.11.2015).* For example, the parents of the only 'white' child in the school insisted on their child being in her class, as did many of the other parents, from different parts of Africa *(PI/T3/4.11.2015).* This might be because of the safe space she created in her classroom, where children from a variety of different backgrounds were welcomed (*PI/T3/4.11.2015).* It is poignant that this capital distinguishes her, rather than makes her the norm, as a commitment to multiculturalism is written into the South African Constitution. However, the reality is that xenophobia is not unknown, and flares up, in violent incidents across the city at different times (News 24, 2014). In this context, it was interesting that her capital was acquired in the formative field, and not through any re-training provided by the formal structures in the transforming field *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).*

Another form of capital Lerato had acquired is her extraordinary proficiency in English. She had a long history of teaching reading in English. This constituted linguistic capital in the

field of early reading in this school, in which English was the LoLT. She attributed this proficiency to some years working outside of the teaching profession in the commercial sector, where she communicated only in English *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* In her subsequent 25 years teaching in a Sowetan school, this capital was also recognised, and she taught reading in English at the request of the parents, although this was done subversively, without the knowledge of the district officials. She also taught the children to read in their primary language, Xitsonga, but only once the children could read and write in English. The prestige of Xitsonga was maintained through cultural activities, for example, in Lerato's traditional dress, which on special occasions (Botha, 2007). This was unusual, as traditional dress in urban contexts is often considered an indication of a lack of sophistication. Lerato showed an unusual ability to teach in the 'legitimated' language without diminishing the prestige of her own or other languages.

In addition to the English proficiency, Lerato had acquired pedagogical capital aligned to literacy, the use of which distinguished her as a reading teacher in the current field. Her pedagogies were constructed around storybooks, Big Books and sets of group readers, using instructional strategies such as shared reading, story reading, story-telling and group reading. She used these methodologies extensively *before* they were prescribed in the CAPS national curriculum and her in-depth knowledge of these strategies positioned her as an expert in her school as there has been little support for the introduction of these methodologies in the transforming field *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* The acquisition of this capital was through her interactions with various NGOs outside of the official structures in the historical field and current field, and is an example of her extraordinary commitment to life-long learning *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* This capital was recognised by a literacy NGO, who made a video of her reading teaching. It was also recognised by officials in the provincial structures, who had selected her as 'Teacher of the Year' one year. These are both forms of institutionalised capital.

Lerato's capital was acquired through personal agency and through exposure to fields which introduced her to a wider world of different cultures in an era in which this was unusual. She learnt her progressive teaching practices through pro-active interactions with NGOs, publishers and a progressive teacher union which offered teacher up-skilling. She explained how, in the 1990s, she trawled through the schoolbooks of her grandchild, who attended a school historically associated with the HOD, a more privileged subfield, in order to learn how

teachers in this subfield organised their reading curriculum. In this way, she gained the knowledge that she was deprived of because of the segregated historic field.

The cost of having this capital and being distinctive in the township school in which she worked was that she was 'othered' by particular teachers at that school. Her classroom was moved to the far side of the school at her request and, at one time, her life was threatened due to non-participation in a teachers' strike *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* She eventually applied for early retirement, and began working again as a contract teacher at Reliant School *(TI/T3/4.11.2015).* There it became evident that her rich capital was transposable, as she stood out in this school as a reading teacher in the same way that she had in the Sowetan school *(PI/T3/4.11.2015).*

Lerato's capital, of exceptional proficiency in English, sensitivity to, and promotion of multicultural and multilingual values, and energetic pedagogic innovations, had made her distinctive in two different schools. This was embodied, cultural capital, and, much like Kholo's, it was not acquired in formal structures in the historical field but from formative, familial practices *(PI/T3/4.11.2015).* Her cultural capital had also been the result of her interactions in the wider community at a time when this was unusual. Lerato's capital has enabled her to move beyond reproductions of the historical field, and re-enactments of the past, and is underpinned by an adaptive and flexible habitus.

6.3.4 Thandeka: An example of a teacher exposed to different subfields

Thandeka was another teacher who was familiar with two different subfields (See Table 18). Her biographical details are shown in Table 18.

Table 18: Thandeka: biographical details

Schooling	DET schools for 'black', IsiZulu -speaking children in Soweto.
Teacher-training	DET teacher training college for 'black' students in Soweto; post-qualification: teaching diploma at Wits School of Education.

Experience	DET school for 'black', IsiZulu speaking children and then TED, Model-C type schools in the Johannesburg northern suburbs and in the inner city.
Current position	Subfield B: Township school, English LoLT.

Thandeka grew up in Soweto, in a middle-class family. She had ambitious professional parents and as a child she witnessed their efforts to upgrade their own qualifications. Her mother, a nurse, obtained a further qualification through evening classes and her father, who worked in a bank, studied at night. Because her parents worked, Thandeka and her four sisters were looked after by their grandmother, who, although illiterate, instilled a love of learning in all four children. Thandeka explained:

> She (*my grandmother*) was the one who was at home, and she would tell us that when she started learning how to write her name her father said, 'That is enough you don't need to go to school'. …So we had a grandmother who always said, 'Education is better than anything,' so like most of us at home *(my brothers and sisters)* …all of us have a profession. She was a person who loved education passionately *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

Part of Thandeka's capital, embedded in her habitus, was her attitude towards lifelong learning and this extract reveals that this was acquired in the familial field. This was embodied cultural capital that led to institutionalised capital in the form of further qualifications. Thandeka began studying again soon after completing her initial training as teacher, while working in a township school. She studied in a part-time capacity at the Wits School of Education (WSOE), where she mixed with teachers from different socio-cultural contexts and learnt new skills, particularly how to teach reading in English rather than IsiZulu (TI/T2/15.4.15). She said,

> We were doing the breaking up of words and how to help children when English was their second language, not their mother tongue, and it helped me lot. We had to push reading to the kids *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

This new learning allowed her to move into the type of school associated with the more privileged TED educational system, where the LoLT was English. She did this immediately after the de-segregation of schools began in Johannesburg in the 1990s *(TI/T2/15.4.2015).* When she moved to the inner-city school where she remained for over ten years, the

demographics at the schools were changing but the staff and management remained predominantly 'white' *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

Within that structure, Thandeka learnt new skills. Her institutionalised capital led to her employment in the more privileged subfield, and it was her exposure at this school which led to her acquisition of additional capital. She had, in effect, a seven-year apprenticeship, in which Thandeka was constantly developing language and teaching skills and was inducted into the culture of another subfield:

> I found a HOD that was there to guide me. She … showed me that when …children write something, make sure you mark it the same day…It was difficult for me. I was taught in my home language and then I had to go and teach in another language. I might be taught in varsity in English but in teaching (in English)… you need someone to always guide you and help you…I learnt a lot from the HOD…She did 'book control' once a week; she would give you report back one on one (sic); and then it was easy for me. I would say "Í am planning to teach this but how do I deal with this?' She would say, "Try this method." … I… improved my skill year by year *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

The principal, who has led the school for 25 years, describes Thandeka as one of the hardest-working teachers she had encountered in her career; one who has worked her way up from a teacher, to Head of Grade, and then to the Head of Foundation Phase, over seven years to reach her current position (*PI/T2/7.4.2015).* The principal commented on her linguistic, organisational and pedagogical skills, which distinguished her from the other teachers *(PI/T2/7.4.2015).*

More recently, Thandeka informed me telephonically that she has left this school and transferred back to a school in a township (Pers Com, February, 2016). There, it seemed her institutional and acquired capital caused her to stand out once again. She explained that she has taken an informal leadership role at the school, with the other teachers turning to her for advice and guidance. When probed, she said that the other teachers particularly wanted to know about her classroom management, her curriculum management and her organisational skills regarding the teaching of reading (Pers Com, February, 2016). This conversation revealed how the institutionalised and cultural capital she had acquired was transposable. Thandeka said that she had come full circle and was pleased to be 'giving back' to her original community.

Transposability of capital was common to both Thandeka and Lerato, who have been positioned as outstanding teachers of reading in two very different subfields. This transposability could not be shown with Sunette and Kholo because of their enduring connection to one teaching context. Thandeka and Lerato both represent disruptions in the patterns of privilege that are often reproduced in the educational field. In both cases, this was strongly underpinned by their personal agency in acquiring the new forms of capital, rather than by the official structures to which they were exposed historically, or to the structures of the transforming field.

6.3.5 Understanding the pattern

Looking in depth at these four teachers makes it possible to identify some of the forms of capital which made them distinctive as reading teachers in their schools, and it was evident that this capital varied considerably. The capital the four had acquired was largely cultural capital and it was embodied in their everyday teaching practice. It was recognised within the particular context of one school, although, in the cases of Lerato and Thandeka, it was seen to be transposable.

In the same way that the forms of capital of these four teachers were disparate but suited to the context in which they worked, so was the acquisition of much of their capital. It was often acquired through familial or individual experiences. However, for Sunette and Thandeka, some capital was acquired through exposure to structures in the more privileged subfield. Sunette's prolonged exposure to this subfield and durable habitus had led to much of her recognised capital. Thandeka's seven-year apprenticeship in the privileged subfield showed an adaptive and flexible habitus and had also led to the acquisition of recognised capital. Exposure to the least privileged subfields seemed to add little to the capital of Lerato, Kholo or Thandeka.

6.4 IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In the in-depth analysis of four teachers, some of the capital and attributes revealed are not immediately or only associated with the teaching of early reading, such as the ability to create an inclusive classroom (Sunette), a personal love of reading and books (Kholo), embracing multiculturalism (Lerato) or being a life-long learner (Thandeka), but they nevertheless

impacted on individual teacher's practice and distinguished them as reading teachers. It can be assumed that each of the other eight teachers, with their individual habitus, had acquired forms of capital specific to themselves, which made them distinctive in the socio-cultural, socio-economic and linguistic contexts in which they worked.

However the four common forms of capital, that all the teachers in this group had acquired, revealed the broader traits, knowledge and skills that distinguish these teachers in the South African macrofield. Some of these, such as a knowledge of children's reading development, the organisational skills that enable them to implement a reading programme systematically and their use of time, were also traits associated with effective early reading teachers in other countries (Cunningham and Allington, 2007). These traits also align to aspects of the 'professional' teacher capital identified in the Hargreaves & Fullan (2010) study. The actual intructional practices the out-standing teachers use, that form part of their capital, are discussed in Chapter 7 (7.1). It is possible that some of their practices might not reflect what currently counts as good practice, or reflect the Four Roles Model (Freebody & Luke, 1990) which was selected as an appropirate model for the current education field in South Africa (see Chapter 2 (2.4)). Nevertheless their practices are considered capital in the microfields in which they work.

In the acquisition of capital, the alignment between the teachers' capital and their exposure to different fields and subfields is shown in this chapter. It is evident that capital was easier to acquire through exposure to the subfields associated with the historically more privileged systems, shown with Sunette and Thandeka. Having prolonged exposure to teaching contexts which are well resourced, and to the expertise evident in these privileged contexts, means that these teachers had access to capital which teachers in less privileged contexts would not have had. This exposure has enabled them to accumulate additional stores of capital for themselves. This aligns with the type of capital seen in the Reay & Lucey (2000) study, which showed that the choices available to children who had been born into more priviledged families gave them distinct advantages in negotiating the London school system.

There is less evidence of capital being obtained from the least privileged subfield. The knowledge and capital that teachers such as Gabu, Pulane, Thandeka and Lerato, brought from the historically dominated field, such as proficiency in an African language, was not recognised in their current schools, although in a different context, where bilingualism and multilingualism are valued, this might not be the case (Compton-Lilly, 2013).

The close alignment of the historically most privileged field with the transforming field, which is shown throughout this study, for example, in the current curriculum, means that the capital recognised in the current field is often the capital that was recognised in the privileged sector of the historical field. In addition, and what is more problematic, was that there is little evidence of these teachers gaining significant institutional capital through any formal up-skilling programmes implemented by the post-1994 structures, as if the historical situation had not disadvantaged them in any way. This has implications for the continued reproduction of the privileges of the past. It seems that pody-1994, exposure to a more privileged subfield, or to literacy interventions, remains the principle way in which new capital is acquired in the transforming field.

That capital is acquired in familial fields or through personal agency is evident. Two teachers, Lerato and Thandeka, linked their tendencies towards lifelong learning to their families. The formative field worked somewhat negatively for Sunette, who had been 'othered' as a child, but it had become capital in the current field. The implication is that the familial field and personal agency should not be underestimated in the formation of an out-standing teacher. This would align with Bourdieu's belief that individual agency is as important as formal structures where the formation of the habitus, and of capital, is concerned (Bourdieu, 1975). It is interesting that this capital does not seem aligned to social class in this group, as at least two teachers, Sunette and Pulane, revealed working-class backgrounds, while others, such as Thandeka, Marian and Lerato are clearly middle class.

Capital acquired through exposure to different contexts and fields, such as Lerato's exposure to the commercial field or Sunette's exposure to a 'remedial' school, suggest that wide experience across contexts, as well as exposure to different subfields, is a way to acquire capital. This has an implication for teacher training and work experience and reveals once again how the typical, very narrow exposure of teachers during the apartheid era was less than productive.

The form of capital identified consisted mainly of cultural capital. Economic capital was not evident as a distinctive attribute, and social capital was only seen in Surette's connections to experts in particular fields, and in her communication skills. This cultural capital was largely *embodied* capital, seen in the skills, knowledge, practices and dispositions that underpinned the teachers' practice, enacted daily in the classroom. Institutional capital was seen in relation to Thandeka, who was the only one in this group who had attained further qualifications, and

in Lerato's recognition as an expert reading teacher by a literacy NGO, and by district officials within the provincial structures. Objectified capital was seen in the reading programmes themselves, and in the reading resources the teachers valued, used and made. This is shown in Chapter 7, in relation to the reading resources constructed by Violet and Brenda, and those chosen and used by Marian.

Linking back to Chapter 5 (Habitus) it should be pointed out that although it is evident that exposure to the most privileged historical education systems automatically helped teachers to acquire capital that remains valued, this capital has not always resulted in unproblematic practice in the changed field. As shown, the 'new' parents and curriculum, together with the different linguistic needs of the 'different' children, were identified as problematic by the majority of this group of teachers. These changed conditions present a set of challenges that even the best trained teachers, with the richest capital, has not yet resolved.

Linking back to both Chapters 4 (Field) and 5 (Habitus) and examining the relational qualities between field, habitus and capital shown in this context, it is evident that the capital recognised in the microfields in which these teachers work helps to structure not only their own, but also the group habitus of effective reading teachers at this time. Their identified capital makes visible the attributes and practices that are valued in the transforming field, and thus contributes to the ongoing structuring of the transforming field.

In the following chapter the discussion of the field-habitus-capital alignment will be extended as the practices of these teachers is considered.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PRACTICE = CAPITAL + HABITUS + FIELD - The multifaceted reading programmes of the out-standing teachers

[(Habitus) (Capital) + Field = Practice]

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bourdesian equation used throughout this study explains that practice emerges as a product of the interaction of the habitus and the field. The habitus, and the different forms of capital the teachers have acquired, as well as the transforming educational field, have structured their day-to-day teaching practice in a way that is logical considering each teacher's context. In this chapter I describe the teachers' practices, and analyse their practice in Bourdesian terms, to show how it is embedded in the structures of the historical and current field, and relationally aligned to the dispositions and capital that form their teaching habitus. Building on the previous chapters, the analysis begins with the premise of a transforming educational field, evolving teacher habitus, and recognition of different forms of capital, which will lead to teaching practices that are also evolving as the changes in the field are negotiated, contested or resisted. The transforming field is thus being re-structured as it moves slowly from a stratified hierarchy towards a more equalized system with more equitable resources and opportunities. The teaching practices revealed here, which are a consequence of this stasis and flux, will evolve, so that what is captured here is essentially a moment in time, even as it could be considered a logical consequence of the state of the current field and habitus of these teachers.

Bourdieu's concept of *dox*a is relevant to the discussion which follows. Bourdieu explains *doxa,* in modern society, as unquestioned shared, beliefs, which are enacted unconsciously (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Deer, 2008). The practices described here provide examples of *doxa,* particularly when the teachers follow a particular approach without conscious choice, thus perpetuating the status quo. Bourdieu also says that where different, but legitimate, practices are discussed or compared, a *field of opinion* may emerge. He uses the term *heterodoxy* to describe this situation and contrasts this with *orthodoxy* which is where

the arbitrariness of *doxa* is enacted, but with the awareness that this, in itself, is a choice. The change from *doxa* to *heterodox*y, or alternatively to *orthodoxy*, is often precipitated by a crisis which causes people to begin questioning embedded understandings, such as a political or economic upheaval (Bourdieu 1990; Deer, 2008, p.123). I would argue that the transformation of the field of education in this country was such an upheaval, and that, for most of these teachers, this has led to an awareness of choices in teaching practices, although the depth of the knowledge underpinning their choices may be limited.

In this chapter, the practices of all twelve teachers are described, using the data from the teacher interviews. The thematic content analysis was used to determine the specifics of their reading programmes, including the instructional strategies and resources, and the reasons behind these choices. In this, I accepted the teachers' own description of their practice, their rationales, and their perceptions of the practices they enacted. I then analyse the descriptions in terms of what they reveal about the teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding the teaching of reading. I link this to the subfields in which they operate, and to the common forms of capital I have identified, and traits or tendencies seen in the group habitus.

Based on this analysis, I discuss congruence of practice across the whole group. These commonalties provide the basis for a broad, hypothetical construction of a 'practising' teacher of early reading in a functioning Johannesburg government school (Pearson and Hoffman, 2011 p.1). This is also placed in a global context, in order to identify similarities with other studies of 'exceptional' early-grade reading teachers, particularly in the United States (Cunningham and Allington, 2007). The differences between the teachers' practices are then discussed.

The discussion is followed by an in-depth analysis of the practices of four teachers. In the selection of these teachers, I drew only from the group of teachers who had remained teaching in one of the subfields identified in Chapter 4, as I believed their practice would best reveal any embedded values derived from the stratified historical field. I discuss teachers operating in three subfields. The first, Marian, was from the most privileged subfield, and the second, Kholo, was from the least privileged subfield. Two other teachers, Brenda and Violet, worked together in one school, which was associated with a subfield midway along the continuum of privilege, aligned to the historical HOR system for 'coloured' children. The selection thus cuts across both rungs of the bimodal model (Fleisch, 2008).

Making explicit the practices which position particular agents in a field is an important part of equalising a field. This is summed up by Walton (1983, p. 61) as follows: 'Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) suggested implicit models of teaching were among the practices used to keep outsiders excluded from valued knowledge.' Walton was referring to the distance between home and school literacies in the Northern Territories of Australia, and the implicit school literacy that is enacted in schools and which is not available to many Aboriginal children. It could equally be applied to the implicit practices of teachers of early literacy in South Africa. Practice in the more privileged subfields remain hidden, to some extent, from those teachers who were historically disadvantaged and have not been exposed to different subfield. This perpetuates the privilege of the teachers who have had access to particular pedagogical and linguistic knowledge and skills.

7.2 READING DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

In order to discuss the more specialised areas of teaching early reading, reading development frameworks are used in this chapter, within the overarching Bourdesian framework. These developmental frameworks were described in detail in the literature review (Chapter 2) (Rummelhart, 1977; Scarborough, 2001; Wren, 2001; Gough and Tunmer, 1986; Cunningham and Allington, 2007; Gregory, 2000; Elley, 1989; Meek, 1982). In aligning this body of literature with the practices of the teachers, it was helpful to distinguish between their descriptions of their reading programmes and their descriptions of the instructional strategies or pedagogies they used.

Regarding the reading programmes, within the binary debates around whole-language (Goodman, 1986) and skills-based approaches (Adams, 1990; Vaille, Lysaght, and Verenikina, 2000), Wren (2003) believes that most teachers and curriculum designers today have settled on a balanced approach. Broadly, a balanced approach conceptualises reading as neither strictly a 'top-down' nor a 'bottom-up' process, but as an interactive process, based on the idea that readers simultaneously use both higher-level linguistic processing and lower-level decoding (Wren, 2003). However, the emphasis can veer towards one side or the other and still be regarded as balanced.

The teachers in this study all enact a balanced approach, but their descriptions showed a clear privileging of skills-based literacy learning and the application of a 'bottom up' approach.

However, the teachers did show some understanding of linguistic processing and its complimentary set of meaning-making skills. This was seen in Chapter 5, in the teachers' discourse around the critical role of language development when learning to read.

Regarding instructional strategies, the two main approaches mentioned above are often associated with two distinct sets of strategies. This is the pedagogical distinction between a transmission and a constructivist approach to learning to read (Vaille et al, 2000; Harris, Turnbill, Fitzsimmons, and Mckenzie , 2001; Morrow, Tracey, Woo, and Pressley, 1999). The first is associated with direct, explicit teaching, using structured material designed specifically for learning to read, and the second with collaborative, problem-solving activities, using authentic children's literature (Morrow et al, 1999; Vaille et al, 2000; Harris et al, 2001). The teachers in this study all privileged a more transmission-orientated, explicit approach to teaching and learning, rather than a constructivist, problem-solving approach.

I use the composite reading model developed by Freebody and Luke (1990) as an evaluation instrument against which the reading programmes and instructional strategies of this group of teachers are measured. In their model, Freebody and Luke (1990) attempt to move away from the binary of the 'reading wars' and extend earlier models of reading, such as those of Rummelhart (1977), Gregory (2000) and Gough and Tunmer (1986). They relate each of the four roles to a 'family of reading practices' saying, 'Each is necessary for literacy. … [I]n and of themselves none of the four families of practice is sufficient for literacy citizens/subjects' (Freebody and Luke, 1990, p. 7). The model is underpinned by a sociocultural view of reading, and incorporates aspects of critical literacy and genre theory (Janks 2009; Derewianka; 1991) which the earlier models lacked. The Four Roles model is also used to understand how the teachers' reading programmes might be further developed. It provides insights into what the teachers are foregrounding and what is being left out in the wider context of teaching children to read.

All twelve out-standing teachers follow the CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011) and two concerns, discussed in Chapter 2, need to be foregrounded. The first is the tension between the detail and the prescription in the curriculum. There is not enough detail to enable a novice reading teacher to enact the curriculum as prescribed. This privileges teachers with some knowledge of the discourse around the teaching of English reading and phonics.

The second concern is that the curriculum is organised, not around content, but around particular instructional strategies, most of which are associated with a constructivist, whole-language approach to teaching reading (DBE, 2011). These are often associated with the use of 'authentic' children's books and less prescriptive content (Goodman 1986; Holdaway, 1979; Fountas and Pinell, 2010). The assumption here is of a school that has a rich supply of authentic resources and teachers who are au fait with methodologies that have only became widely known in South Africa in the last ten years. The literacy curriculum is organised around these methodologies, despite the contents of the curriculum being firmly embedded in a more skills-based approach, which includes an explicit, synthetic phonics programme (DBE, 2011; Scarborough, 2001; Wren, 2001).

The curriculum is thus in itself an implicit interpretation of the balanced approach, but one which Wren would call, 'mixing some Phonics with Whole Language' (Wren, 2003 p.3) and carries the confusion Wren identifies. A final point is that, in this curriculum, the two main skill sets, decoding and comprehension, are developed entirely separately, with little explicit help given regarding the alignment of the two (DBE, 2011).

The curriculum is an integral part of the macrofield in which these teachers work but the organisation and structure may privilege the small group of teachers who were trained in the dominant teacher training colleges of the TED, HOR and HOD systems, and particularly those teachers trained to teach reading in English. It also privileges teachers who work in schools with the resources to implement pedagogical aspects of the curriculum, and schools which have efficient time-management structures that support the delivery of a fast-paced and content-rich curriculum.

7.3 COMPARING AND CONTRASTING THE READING PROGRAMMES DESCRIBED BY THE TEACHERS

Working within the CAPS curriculum, each of the twelve teachers has a reading programme which reflects their own interpretation of the curriculum. Before discussing three individual reading programmes in depth, patterns of commonalities and contrasts across all twelve teachers are discussed. Although reference will be made to all twelve teachers, most of the examples in this segment are drawn from the eight teachers whose programmes are not analysed in depth.

The common practices described by these twelve reading teachers, who worked in functional schools in Johannesburg, are significant, as the teachers work in different socio-economic and socio-cultural contexts in different subfields. This reveals a habitus-capital-field alignment at the level of the macrofield of the broader educational environment. Working in a transforming field and enacting features of the group habitus, using common forms of capital, some aspects of these teachers' practice aligns. This suggests a set of minimum standards that may identify the practices of an out-standing teacher in a government school in Johannesburg.

7.3.1 Commonalities

First, it is evident from the interviews that the teachers believed that reading is best learnt in a systematic programme. This aligns with the data presented in Chapter 6, which reveals that the ability to organise, administer and manage the systematic teaching and learning of reading is a form of capital that distinguishes these teachers in the microfields in which they work. The implementation of a systematic programme is underpinned by a particular view of the learning-to-read process and of the purpose of reading, suggesting that learning to read entails the acquisition of a cumulative set of skills, which equip children for a school career. Brenda summed up the purpose of her reading programme: 'They learn to read, and then in Grade 4, they begin to read to learn' *(TI/T7/27.8.15).*

The type of literacy these teachers were systematically developing is described by Barton and Hamilton (2000) as school-based literacy, as opposed to other literacies which might be situated in the community. In other words, for these teachers, reading was not developed or learnt in a social context, for a variety of purposes, but principally so that the children would succeed at school. None of the teachers referred to practices that are associated with less structured, whole-language based programmes or socio-cultural practices (Goodman 1986; Camborne, 1995; Harris et al, 2001). Their view of reading was more aligned to cognitive theorists such as Wren (2001), Gough and Tunmer (1986), Scarborough (2001) and Adams (1990). Specific examples can be seen in the case studies, but an orientation towards systematic skills development is evident in this statement by Fatima:

> From Grade R they are teaching them the single sounds …so that by the time they go to Grade 1 they already know the 26 letters of the alphabet. There they learn the (single) sounds and which word starts with that sound… Grade 2, it's like the double e (diphthongs and

> digraphs) so by the time they come to Grade 3 they know (all the) sounds (and common sight words). Because at Grade 3 level they must have sight word vocab of at least 500 words … In Grade 1 now we are doing the blends. And it's easy for them, (because) they've mastered the single sounds *(TI/T10/3.8.15).*

Seeing the teaching of reading as part of a tightly-controlled, systematic programme has emerged from the historical field, where the purpose of education, until 1994, was functional, school-based and utilitarian (Bunting, 2004). Historically, reading was taught in a highly structured way, albeit differently in the different education systems of the apartheid era. The innovations in reading instruction associated with the whole-language movement did not gain momentum in South Africa during this time, because this country was isolated intellectually from the rest of the world (Du Plessis, 2003).

New ideologies were first reflected in the first post-democratic, OBE-based curriculum (DBE, 1997), but the take-up was low among teachers and some researchers feel this curriculum had a destabilizing effect on many schools, particularly the schools emerging from the least privileged sector of the historical field, because the ideologies were foreign and required specialised knowledge and skills (Chisolm, 2004; Hugo, 2013). This may be one of the reasons why some teachers, observed by Taylor (2013) nationally, and Schollar and Associates (2012) in Gauteng, seemed to have abandoned any systematic planning altogether, and showed little evidence of implementing a structured reading programme. However, a structured programme was re-introduced with the current CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011) and interpreted by the GPLMS literacy intervention (GDE, 2013). This curriculum is a good fit with the planning, organisational and management skills that are part of the habitus and capital common to the group *(TI, T1-12).*

The second commonality concerns the actual structure of the reading programmes described by the teachers. Their programmes align with a balanced approach**,** as defined by Wren (2003). Within this approach, the teachers all described their reading programmes in terms of two distinct strands, a 'phonics' and a 'reading' strand. The phonics strand comprised a discrete but systematic phonics programme and the reading strand entailed reading from word-controlled graded readers. The learning of sight words was sometimes linked to the 'phonics' strand and sometimes to the 'reading' strand.

This separation of learning to read into two separate strands is aligned to, but not identical with, the dual skills-set models of reading described in the literature. In Wren's 'A-frame' (2001), Scarborough's 'Rope' (2001), and Gough's 'Simple View of Reading' (1986), decoding and language comprehension are identified as the two crucial strands in a reading programme. In the programmes described by these teachers, decoding, including word recognition and phonics, was taught explicitly and was often part of their phonics strand. Elements of the language comprehension and linguistic processing were taught implicitly in their reading strand.

Two examples, showing the slightly different weighting of the balanced approach individual teachers use, were shown in connection with Thandeka and Sunette. Thandeka, who has taught both Grade 1 and Grade 3, showed the most thoughtful example of developing language comprehension through her reading strand:

> We do prediction when we do the Big Books …. And they will all come up with different answers but at the end you find a common answer and then you start turning to the next page. …With prediction they are getting excited (sic), they want to know, they want to show you that they can understand it and (it) helps them to critically think of what is coming next. …By the time they get to intermediate phase then they can be able to describe more on what is happening. …Most of the children don't want to think. … When they have to change their readers, you don't have to ask children to read (aloud), especially when you know they can write. You just take the book and you say 'Tell me about this book- what is happening in this book? So that you can see (if)… this child (is) comprehending and understanding the story *(TI/T2/15.4.15).*

Thandeka was aware of developing the children's linguistic processing skills, but nevertheless had a strong phonics strand, which involved weekly spelling words to be learnt and tested.

Sunette revealed that language comprehension in her reading lessons was almost incidental to her reading programme, which consists principally of the systematic development of sight words and phonics. Hers is the more common bias shown in this group.

> In the beginning of the year I do Big Books. I read out of the Big Books because they are nice and they match with the themes we do. Let's have a look at the one about the family, the

> books will start with 'I am Vusi' and then next one will say 'I see granny', 'I see mommy' so its sight words and its incidental reading that is taking place *(TI/T11/22.7.2015).*
>
> In the first week they do about three or four (sight) words like 'I' 'me' 'my' 'are'. I (also) … do the phonics, first teach them their sounds, in between (teaching the) sight words that I am going to need…. so that if you have done your phonics you have done all your sounds, the basic sounds that they need you can start decoding by doing the /at/ sound so by the end of the first term they can write about 15 sentences. 'I see the cat'- and if they know the words 'I' and they know the word 'see' and the word 'the', they can already make a sentence if they know those words, 'bat, cat, fat, mat, sat, rat, pat..'. There's eleven weeks. I try not to do more than two sounds a week *(TI/T11/22.7.2015).*

In terms of the categories of the Four Roles of the Reader framework, it is principally the first role, that of code-breaker, that is being systematically developed in the classrooms of the majority of these out-standing teachers. The second role, that of meaning-maker, is taught, but incidentally. The third and fourth roles, that of text user and text analyst, were not alluded to by these teachers. This suggests that aspects of Freebody and Luke's model are not being addressed and that although they are learning to read, the children in these classrooms are not being fully prepared to be users of texts in the future (Freebody and Luke, 1990). The implication is that the teaching programmes in this group may be considered out-standing in a local context, but may not be considered innovative in international terms.

The practice described by these teachers of privileging bottom-up decoding practices can be linked to the historic-linguistic field. Historically, only a small percentage of children in Johannesburg were taught to read in English, with the majority being taught in African languages and Afrikaans. This is significant because these languages are phonically regular (Du Plessis, 2003; Katz, 2013). The eight teachers in this study who had not learnt to teach reading in English would only have experienced bottom-up methods of learning to read because this aligns with the learning of literacy in local African languages, which are agglutinating languages, and with Afrikaans, both of which have regular orthographies and one-to-one correspondences of letters to sounds. They also have very regular letter-word patterns, for example, in many African languages, the CVCV[28] pattern (Katz, 2013). An

[28] Consonant-vowel-consonant-vowel

alternative to this method of teaching reading would not have been part of the pedagogic imagination of these eight teachers.

For Marian, Fatima, Devi and Brenda, the teachers trained to teach reading in English, there were also probable pedagogic gaps. This was because South Africa was isolated from the trends of the whole language movement in the 70s and 80s due to isolationist apartheid policies. The idea of using authentic children's literature, Big Books or other resources associated with the whole language movement would have been beyond their pedagogic imaginations until recently (Du Plessis, 2003; READ, 1999-2007). The exception was Lerato, who had been exposed to these trends through her participation in the *Learning for Living* literacy intervention from 1999 (READ, 2005).

The influence of the historical educational field on the habitus and on practice is inevitable. Bourdieu explains that practice in the education field is reproduced more strongly than in other fields, and the continued foregrounding of phonics by this group of teachers illustrates this.

The third belief these out-standing teachers shared was that reading needed to be 'taught', rather than 'facilitated' or 'developed', which contrasts with the idea of reading being learnt naturally, in a social context, in the way in which a primary language is learnt (Goodman 1986; Barton and Hamilton, 1998). Violet articulated this view when she talked about an earlier curriculum, Curriculum 2005 (DBE, 1997).

> OBE has caused major problems. It has brought about being lax, to be honest. The misconception! They told us you no longer teach, you just **facilitate**, to **facilitat**e little ones! *(TI/T7/27.8.2015).*

Brenda, her colleague added to this emphasis: 'You have to **teach** reading' *(TI/T8/27.8.2015).* To 'teach' reading, rather than let it develop naturally, traditional pedagogies seem appropriate. A disjuncture is thus evident in the current field, as the newer instructional strategies, embedded in the CAPS curriculum, are associated with whole-language, interactive approaches to developing reading skills (Goodman, 1986, Cambourne, 1995 Harris et al, 2001; Fountas and Pinell, 2010; Holdaway, 1979). It is interesting that this group of teachers, being compliant, followed the CAPS curriculum, but enacted the new methodologies differently from the form in which they were originally conceptualised. Many of the teachers explained adapted forms of group guided reading and shared reading, in

versions of these instructional strategies that sometimes seemed like reproductions of historical pedagogies with a veneer of new terminology. Pulane, talking about using flashcards, said,

> Every day we are doing 'shared reading' and we do all those flashcards with them so that it is easy for them start to read because all those words that they've read from the flashcards are there *(TI/T4/3.8.15).*

This is not the conventional view of shared reading, which is reading an enlarged text to and then with children (Holdaway, 1979); instead, it describes the choral reading of isolated words in a transmission-like, word recognition activity.

Similarly, Lerato, although exposed to the newer instructional strategies since her participation in the *Learning for Living* intervention, was observed using a form of guided group reading which entailed each group, sequentially, reading a book aloud to the class *(LO/T3/12.10.15).* Marian and Sunette used the term 'guided group reading' to describe an organisational tool that allows them to listen to individual children reading aloud one by one *(TI/T12/7.9.15; SO/T11/23.3.15).* Violet and Brenda used the same term to describe the traditional differentiated group work that they had been taught to use in the historical field, when they were part of the HOR system of education *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* It is interesting that only one teacher, Violet, had actually seen the enactment of the newer methodologies prescribed by CAPS during a short period of teaching in the United Kingdom, but said she has reverted to traditional strategies because they 'work better' and because she was '…alarmed at how they follow (teach) reading (in the UK)' *(TI/T6/27.8.2015).*

This reveals the durability of the habitus of the teachers, and is an example of *heterodoxy* by Violet, who had chosen to retain familiar practices despite exposure to different instructional strategies. With the other teachers, it was unclear if they had a deep understanding of the methodologies, and, like Violet, had made a conscious choice to reject/adapt them, or were reproducing the historical field with new terminology. However, in the absence of structural support, and often without the adequate provision of new materials for the teachers, I would suggest it is the latter. This is an example of practices prescribed by structures in education which are a mismatch with the teaching habitus of many of the teachers. This resistance was also shown in their response to aspects of the transforming field in Chapter 4. Whole-language-based teaching methodologies require teacher training and rich resourcing. The

traditional, explicit, instructional strategies, based on principles of transmission rather than constructivism, are more familiar and achievable in the South African context.

This discussion also leads back to Chapter 2 (2.4.1) where a 'balanced' approach to reading was discussed and to Wren's (2003. p. 1) comment that, 'Most (reading teachers) would describe their teaching as "balanced". In that chapter, the different conceptualisations of 'balance' that are found in the work of various educationalists such as Rummelhart (1977), Goodman (1986), Scarborough (2001) and Freebody & Luke (1990) were referred to, underpinned by the understanding that their positions were informed by their deep epistemological and theoretical understandings of the reading process. As stated in earlier chapters, although the cohort of out-standing teachers were enacting what they considered to be 'balanced' programmes', as prescribed by the curriculum, this may be underpinned by a relatively simple, practice-based idea about 'balance' and of reading development in general. Examples of this can be seen in Pulane's idea of the nature of shared reading, and the interpretations of guided reading within the group. In other words, their interpretation of 'balanced' may not be the interpretation recognised in the broader field of early literacy development world-wide.

The fourth commonality of practice is around the use of resources. The quantity and variety of resources varied from school to school, but the majority of these teachers said that they used two main reading resources: graded readers and flashcards. For example, in answer to the question, 'What one resource could you not do without? Thandeka said, 'I think guided readers are more important' *(TI/T2/15.2.2015),* while Pulane said,

> We can't do without the readers, that why the department has sent us a few readers but we made copies for each and every learner. We also have to do flashcards…those flashcards are the exact same words from the readers *(TI/T4/3.8.2015).*

This is interesting because, historically, using graded readers and flashcards was common in schools associated with the more privileged education systems, but were not used at all in the dominated systems. This practice thus represented a new rather than a traditional practice for the four teachers who were trained in the DET system. Thandeka confirmed this: 'I didn't have guided readers. I didn't have any book to take home to read' *(TI/T2/15.2.2015).* This is an illustration of the adaptability of the teachers who had moved to different subfields and changed their practice, and an indication of their more flexible habitus.

In global terms, graded readers (sometimes called basal readers) and flashcards would be considered traditional resources, as they are associated with reading programmes of the 1950s, 60s and 70s in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, after which they were often replaced with authentic children's literature, albeit carefully levelled (Fountas and Pinnell, 1999; 2010). Authentic children's literature is not used by any of the teachers in this study as a 'learning to read' resource. Two classrooms contained small collections of books, and four of the more privileged schools had school libraries, but significantly, the teachers did not list these as resources for their reading programmes and described them in the reading-for-enjoyment category. This would distinguish these twelve government school classrooms from the high-fee-paying private schools in Johannesburg, or schools in first-world countries, where classroom collections of published children's literature would be commonplace and an important part of reading development (Cunningham and Allington, 2007; Azevedo, 2015).

It is interesting that group readers were considered crucial, considering significant differences in the use of this resource amongst these teachers. The multiple reading schemes found in Marian's, Sunette's, Thandeka's or Devi's more privileged schools, provided a variety of books, themes and topics that were a richer resource for learning to read than the single reading scheme used by Kholo, who worked in the least privileged subfield. An example of the former was Sunette, whose school was in a subfield associated with the historically privileged TED education system. She used multiple reading schemes in her classroom, including the *Ginn* and *New Way* reading series. She explained:

> You get a level that says Easy Start set A and then you've got your B set then (at each level) you've got a Core set, a Platform set and Parallel set. And then you go on to the other levels (*TI/T11/9.3.2015).*

Sunette had levelled all the books and labelled them by colour. She had fourteen different colour-levels, with at least thirty titles at each level, and twenty copies of each book in her stockroom *(TI/T11/9.3.2015).* Kholo had only twelve graded readers for the year, with six copies of each. Although she said she relied on them for teaching reading, the graded readers were not a personal or a school choice, but were part of the resourcing supplied by the GPLMS in 2013. *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

For one teacher unused to using graded readers, having the GPLMS books was seen as an advantage. Pulane, trained in the dominated education system, said that when she moved to a school in a more privileged subfield, she initially found the large selection of graded readers confusing. She said, 'I was glad to get the GPLMS books because then I knew how to use them and which book to use next' *(TI/T4/3.8.2015).* Pulane found the smaller selection more manageable. However, this contradicts strong research which shows that a wider range of readers is more beneficial for young readers in terms of reading progress (Elley, 1992; Fountas and Pinnell, 1999). Perhaps using a wider range of readers will become easier as Pulane adapts to the new resources, and as her habitus evolves and adjusts to the new subfield.

It is significant that it was the teachers from the historically less privileged subfields who had had to make the most adjustments and re-train their habitus regarding reading resources. Among the whole group though, the use of particular, traditional, resources was the norm.

The fifth commonality amongst these teachers was that they all followed a synthetic phonics programme. This is prescribed by CAPS, and it was a good fit for those teachers, showing an instance of correspondence between the current curriculum and the skills of the teachers. It was the type of phonics programme that was used historically in all four education systems, in all eleven official South African languages (Du Plessis, 2003). Compared to the debates in Europe and the United States over embedded, implicit and explicit phonics, and within this, the sub-debate between analytic phonics and synthetic phonics (Burns, 2006; Hill, 2008), in South Africa, synthetic phonics is a synonym for 'phonics' and is the historically embedded approach to learning phonics. A synthetic programme is described by the all the teachers. They are working from the sounds to words, and not from word to sound. Sunette said:

> You first teach the kids the ABC…the sound of the letter. I like teaching Letterland style. Focus first on your consonants and then slowly bring in a vowel. Start with A for Annie Apple and then E, and then I ,O, U. …As soon as they know their sounds, they can sound out words, b-r-a-t… *(TI/T11/22.7.2015).*

However, even though they were all delivering an explicit, systematic, synthetic phonics programme, these teachers each did this a little differently, using different sequences of learning. Many of the teachers said they believed the sequences they used were the most logical and the only 'correct' sequence. For example, Kholo preferred the sequence of

teaching vowels first, and discursively resisted the sequence suggested in CAPS (TI/T1/23.7.2015). This could be linked back to the way phonics is usually taught in African languages (Katz, 2013). Sunette taught the sounds in alphabetical order, using the published Letterland phonics programme *(TI/T10/22.7.2015*), and Marian, Violet and Brenda have developed their own sequences, justified in terms of promoting the ability to build CVC words as soon as possible (Marian) or to ensure there is no confusion between letters (separating the b and d for example), as described by Violet and Brenda *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015;TI2/7.9.2015).* The different sequences were specific, not to subfields, but to individual teachers, or to the published phonics programmes they preferred, and were a part of their practice, embedded in the habitus. For all the teachers, this was heterodoxic practice, as they were aware of other sequences.

In the enactment of a synthetic phonics programme, the GPLMS lesson-plans were crucial for the teachers trained in the less-privileged subfields, such as Kholo or Pulane, as they had a limited knowledge of English phonics and had no access to published phonic programmes before the GPLMS. Pulane said, 'We are using the GPLMS programme so it is very, very structured. It is working very well' *(TI/T4/3.8.2015).*

The sixth commonality between the teachers related to literacy routines**.** In articles by Cunningham and Allington (2007) and by Morrow et al (1999) describing the practices of exemplary first grade teachers in the United States, clear routines are described where children work in various groupings, doing different reading-writing activities. These are often self-regulated and includes a choice of reading material, from a range of authentic children's literature. Like their counterparts overseas, the teachers in this study all described a structured, weekly routine. However, their routines were more closely aligned to conventional *teaching periods*. In each period, which varied from fifteen to thirty minutes, one aspect of literacy was taught and there was little choice involved for the children. For example, describing the fifteen minutes allocated to the teaching of phonics each day, Pulane said:

> On Monday we give them the ten words. We get them to write it ten times each. …Then on Tuesday we discuss the words, we mind map them, we draw pictures. On Wednesday we construct sentences with them …That's how come (sic), when it comes to Friday, almost everyone is getting all of the words right (in the spelling test) *(TI/T4/3.8.2015).*

This routine is in line with the detailed time allocations prescribed in CAPS (DBE, 2011). CAPS specifies the number of minutes to be spent on each aspect of language and literacy, each day and each week.

In nine of these classrooms, the weekly routines were based on the GPLMS routines. The teachers who were not part of the GPLMS, Marian, Sunette and Thandeka, used school-specific routines that were very similar to the GPLMS. The use of routines contrasts with one of the findings of Schollar and Associates (2012), who showed that a weekly literacy routine was not common in Gauteng classrooms prior to the GPLMS. However, it is an aspect of practice described by teachers across all four subfields in this study, and is somewhat aligned to the acute awareness of time, identified as a form of capital, that distinguished these teachers from many of their peers. Cunningham and Allington (2007, p. 14) explain that the use of routines means 'every minute of time was well used', in the classrooms of effective teachers in the United States. In this group of out-standing teachers, the use of routines is not only a good fit with the curriculum and their disposition of time-awareness, but a reflection of good organisation, which is another form of capital all twelve teachers manifest.

Within this group of teachers, student groupings in the literacy routines differed. For some teachers groupings were limited mainly to whole-class, or two-group activities (a teacher-group and the rest-of-the class group). This is explained by Fatima:

> What we do is, whatever the activity for the day, for example, sentences, the whole class starts the activity, then after a few minutes, once they have settled into it, then you will select your (reading) group for the day, and you will call them out to the carpet while the others continue with their work *(TI/T10/3.8.2015).*

This type of grouping was logical in classrooms with double the number of children and a fraction of the resources of those found in the classrooms described by Cunningham and Allington (2007). For some teachers, however, small, same-ability groups underpinned their literacy routine, shown particularly by Violet, Brenda and Anelle *(TI, T6,7,8).*

Aligned to literacy routines is the seventh commonality, that of thorough planning and preparation. Marian said, 'You have to be planned, be prepared … I know what I want from my children at the end of every lesson now (after years of experience)' *(TI/T12/7.9.2015).* The need for planning, that is, envisaging what the outcome of a lesson needs to be, and

preparation, that is, preparing for individual lessons in terms of resources and pedagogies, is articulated by all the teachers and seems to go beyond the planning used by other teachers at their schools, and well beyond the situation described by Schollar and Associates (2012) in their survey of Gauteng teachers, who appeared unsure of even the number of weeks in the term. At a micro-level, Violet and Brenda can work through the night to prepare for lessons and get up at four o clock before important school days, even though they are both experienced teachers, something their head of department called (with admiration) 'abnormal' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015; PI/T5/22.7.2015).* Kholo explained her weekly preparation:

> We do it on Friday, we take our lesson plan and go home – on Monday I am going to do this... When I come I do have my flashcards. I just don't write them when they are sitting there in the morning, I have them in the morning *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

Kholo's comment implied that in her school, other teachers may do the opposite – plan on Monday for the week and make flashcards when the children are sitting in class. Among all the teachers, despite extensive experience at this grade level, thorough preparation is part of their practice and part of their habitus. It demonstrates a group disposition of diligence and organisation, but also of caring and being invested in the progress of the children. Both these traits were identified as part of the group habitus in Chapter 5.

Good classroom management is the eighth commonality embedded in the practices described by these teachers. The necessity for good management is articulated by some of the teachers (Pulane, Devi) *(TI/T5/3.8.15; TI/T5/27.8.15)* and was observed anecdotally in interactions between the teachers and children (Anelle, Kholo, Violet) *(SO/T8,T1,T6).* Two teachers (Marian, Thandeka) were described by their principals as being exceptional managers *(PI/T12/23.6.15; PI/T2/7.4.2015).* Good classroom management was also observed during classroom visits, for example in Lerato's read-aloud lesson *(SO/T3/12.10.2015)* and Sunette's phonics lesson *(SO/T11/16.3.2015).*

Cunningham and Allington (2007) say of their effective US teachers, 'Most importantly, they were excellent classroom managers' (Cunningham and Allington, 2007 p. 6). Morrow et al (1999, p. 466) explain that in their study of first-grade teachers, 'Rules, routines and a respectful atmosphere (were) created by the teachers.' In this group, good management was seen in group tendencies such as their authoritative calmness, their ability to manage young

children and their ability to engender respect by insisting on certain basic rules of interaction. This could be considered a dispositional rather than a field-related issue, possibly linked to their lengthy experience in the field, but also embedded in the group habitus. It underpinned their ability to deliver their literacy programmes.

7.3.2 Differences between practices

Despite these commonalities and a group habitus, the teachers revealed nuanced differences in their practices. This is unsurprising given their disparate socio-cultural and socio-historic backgrounds and the positioning of their schools in the field, based on their historic links. Whereas the commonalities show a relational connection to the broader macrofield, the differences represented adaptations to the microfield of the school and the subfield with which it was associated.

The differences are interesting because of the nature of the macrofield. The teachers worked in the context of a prescriptive curriculum, which they claimed to follow rigorously, and some length of time, twenty years, had passed since the separate apartheid education departments were unified into a common structure. However, the years of separation between the systems, and the under-funding of particular systems during the apartheid era, had had a long-lasting effect. Many of the differences in practice could be traced to the enduring impact of the historical field.

First, concerning the implementation of the CAPS curriculum, wide interpretation of the curriculum was evident. The teachers working in subfields which were aligned historically to the more privileged TED, HOR or HOD educational systems drew on the capital they had acquired in the historical system to construct their own nuanced reading programmes, while remaining within the parameters of the CAPS curriculum. For example, Violet and Brenda explained how they used methods of differentiated group instruction similar to those used in the historical HOR system, but within the framework of the GPLMS lesson-plans *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015)* Marian and Sunette described how they contrive to listen to individual children reading daily *(TI/T11/22.7.2015; T12/7.9.2015)*, but still managed to comply with the pacing of CAPS.

The teachers who were exposed historically to the least privileged system, that of the DET, described practices which did not represent any adaptation to, or enhancement of the CAPS

curriculum. Kholo, for example, followed the GPLMS plans precisely, despite discursive resistance to the pacing, in order to implement CAPS *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* Pulane and Gabu, who had moved out of the dominated subfield and now taught in subfields that were historically more privileged, also followed the GPLMS lesson-plans faithfully, but with less discursive resistance. This may be because they had developed a deeper understanding of the pacing through immersion in the more time-orientated subfield *(TI/T4/3.8.2015; TI/T5/27.8.2015).*

There was a correlation between teachers in the more privileged subfields and their adherence to the pacing required by the curriculum. In subfields where time was managed efficiently, which was seen in the schools at which Marian, Sunette, and Thandeka taught, the teachers said they moved well ahead of the curriculum requirements *(TI/T11/22.7.2015; TI/T12/7.9.2015).* Kholo, in a school with more flexible time management, said she struggled to keep up with the pacing of CAPS *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* The other eight teachers were neither ahead nor behind with the curriculum. The enactment of the curriculum by a particular teacher was thus linked to their positioning in the historical field and also in the school and subfield in which they currently worked. This showed the influence of field on both habitus and practice. The overall teacher compliance demanded in the historical field, which might remain embedded in the habitus of this group, might also explain the way these teachers had adapted to most of the CAPS directives and pacing, albeit in different ways.

The second difference between the teachers' practice was underpinned by their content knowledge. The content knowledge needed for teaching reading effectively is contested (Phelps and Schilling, 2004) but is often aligned with knowledge of the two reading strands outlined by Wren (2001) and Scarborough (2001). Word analysis/decoding knowledge (strand 1), as well as knowledge of how texts work/comprehension strategies/language proficiency (strand 2) are usually identified as essential to teachers of reading and are markers for effective reading teaching (Phelps and Schilling, 2004). In the interviews with the teachers, it was evident that some teachers had more knowledge in these two areas than others, although gaps were identified across all twelve teachers.

There was a correlation between the content knowledge the teachers had acquired and the scope of the choices they were able to make in constructing their reading programmes. For example, Marian had designed her own phonics programme and chosen a specific series of

graded readers, suited to the children she teaches *(TI/T12/7.9.2015).* Violet and Brenda had changed the sequence of their phonics programme, and their initial sight words choices moved away from the GPLMS *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015)* to include the children's names. This contrasted with Kholo, who used the GPLMS lesson-plans and did not have the option of adapting the lessons, because of the training she had been given in the least-privileged historical system. *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* If teacher knowledge is a form of symbolic capital, in this country, with its past inequalities, teachers trained in the historical DET system are especially disadvantaged. The teachers in this study who were in this position appeared to have gained new capital in three ways: through teaching in a different subfield (Thandeka, Pulane, Gabu); through following the lesson-plans provided by the GPLMS (Pulane, Gabu, Kholo); and through individual endeavour and research, often associated with NGOs[29] (Lerato) *(TI/T2/14.4; T4/3.8; T5/27.8; T3/4.11/2015).*

The third difference between the practices of these teachers related to the amount of supervised reading done by the children in their classes. Marian and Sunette said they listened to each child read every day *(TI/T11/22.7.2015; TI/T12/7.9.2015).* Violet and Brenda said they tried to listen to the children read every day, often taking time from other subjects, but usually only managed to listen to all the children every second day, although they did make use of paired buddy-reading *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Kholo said she listened to each child once a week and implied that this was more than she did prior to implementation of the GPLMS *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* Extrapolated to the other teachers, it seemed that children in schools associated with the historically most privileged subfield did significantly more one-to-one reading in class than those in the other three subfields, where the children read to the teacher every second or third day, or sometimes once a week, in their reading groups. The ability to plan for, and manage this important part of reading instruction could be considered embodied capital that is associated with teachers trained in the more privileged subfields.

There were also very different homework expectation**s.** The children in schools in the subfields associated with the more privileged TED and HOD systems had more supervised reading hours because they took a graded reader home daily. Pulane, who worked in a subfield associated with the HOD, explained:

[29] Non-governmental organisations

> (They take a book home) every day. In my class it is 'Go home and read, your parents must sign on the page. If you don't understand you must tell me.' I see a lot of improvement. The child *has* to read every day. If a book is not signed, I know the child is not reading *(TI/T4/3.8.2015).*

However, the children in the other two subfields associated historically with the HOR and DET, only took home checklists of the phonic/spelling words that they needed to learn, which amounts to sight-word memorisation. This was important because the amount of reading, particularly the reading of connected text in a meaningful context, significantly affects reading development, according to the literature. Research shows that the more children read, the more proficient they will become as readers (Smith, 1988; Elley, 1989; Meek 1982; Wren 2003). However more reading practice implies there are sufficient texts to read, and the better resourcing found in the two most privileged subfields was significant. Pulane, quoted above, explained,

> We can choose from the stockroom what we want and then what we do is we swap it around when we are done (with particular books) and the kids are bored with those *(TI/T4/3.8.2015).*

When asked about resources, Thandeka, who also worked in a school associated with the most privileged subfield, confirmed: 'We are fortunate, anything we ask for we get' *(TI/T2/15.4.2015).* These schools had often had a large number of graded readers before 1994, and parental rather than provincial funding was used to ensure that this supply was replenished. One of the fundamental conditions that enabled schools to implement a reading homework programme was having enough books at the correct level for all the children to take home. Having sufficient resources allowed teachers to operate differently as reading teachers. Sunette provided an example of this:

> So then if Emma (hypothetical child) could achieve those books she's fine let's move her on to the next level, that's red. If I see she battles and she's wobbling a little bit then I go back and we read three of four books in the previous section *(TI/T11/9.3.2015).*

In addition to multiple sets of graded readers, many of the more privileged schools also had school libraries, and this is another source of material that the children use in order to practice their reading.

However, even the amount of reading and number of texts in government schools would be considered inadequate in some contexts in Johannesburg. In a study of reading in a high-fee-paying private school in Johannesburg (Azevedo, 2015), it was revealed that on any one day, a child will have three books in their school bag: a graded reading book, a 'fun' reading book and a library book. The children are expected to read independently for at least thirty minutes a day during school hours and for another thirty minutes at home. Similar patterns of access to authentic books and ring-fenced independent reading time are seen in the studies by Cunningham and Allington (2007) and Morrow et al (1999). Conversely, the opposite was seen in a local study of reading in high-poverty schools in South Africa. In the study, conducted in Mpumalanga, a province adjacent to Gauteng but with a lower GDP[30], Pretorius and Mampuru (2007) equate the lack of reading materials in many South African schools to 'playing football without a ball' (p 38) and conclude that without an adequate supply of books to ensure reading practice, reading proficiency is unlikely.

In Bourdesian terms, children in government schools in Johannesburg do not all have access to the same objectified capital in the form of resources and books, and do not have the same amount of supervised reading, either at school with a well-trained teacher, or at home. This represents an area of the current field which remains unequal and only partly transformed, and affects the practice of the teachers significantly.

The fourth area of difference between the practices of this group of teachers was the level of parental support they required. Although it was revealed in Chapter 4 that the majority of teachers saw a lack of parental involvement in the school as a problem in the transforming field, expectations varied significantly within the group regarding reading homework. In many schools, it appeared that parents played a pivotal role in their children's reading development. For example, in Marian's class, in the one of the more privileged subfields, parents were expected to listen to their children's reading each day, and sign to indicate that this had been done. Only one set of parents in Marian's class of over 35 children was unable or unwilling to comply (TI/T12/7.9.2015). Even teachers who had moved to these subfields, and were new to this homework practice, articulated this expectation of daily reading at home. Thandeka said:

[30] Gross Domestic Product or total goods and services produced

> If parents come, and you workshop them and they listen to you, their kids do well at school… they follow what you are saying (about) how they must help their kids. …They start and you won't have a problem with the child anymore because you won't fight about homework not being done, reading not being done. (Because) at school sometimes you get frustrated. The same child every day: homework incomplete, homework not done, reading packs not signed (TI/T2/15.4.2015).

Reading homework was also an expectation, but not a reality for Sunette, who worked in an inner-city school in the same subfield. She confirmed that '60% of the parents do homework, 40% don't' *(TI/T10/22.7.2015).*

However, with the teachers working in schools associated historically with the HOR and DET, the role of the parent was different. They were expected to revise the checklists of words with their children each week. Much of the initial memorisation of the words took place in the classroom, through drills, games and the use of flashcards *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Kholo, Violet, Brenda and Anelle all followed this practice, and saw their own role as pivotal. This was in contrast to Marian, Sunette and Thandeka who saw it as the children's responsibility to learn their spelling/phonic words, helped by their parents. This difference could explain, to some extent, the faster or slower pacing of the phonic and reading programmes described *(TI/T11/22.7.2015; TI/T12/7.9.2015).*

With home reading, which is the norm for Marion, Thandeka, Devi, Fatima and Pulane, teachers working in the subfields associated with historical privilege, it seemed that the parents, to some extent, determined their children's reading progress and how quickly they are able to move to a new level in the reading scheme. The downside of this was that the children who lacked parental homework support were more susceptible to the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986 in Wren, 2001), which explains how children with the fewest reading skills may fall exponentially further and further behind the others. The possibility of a widening gap in these classrooms contrasted with the position of the teachers in the two least privileged subfields, Kholo, Violet, Brenda, Anelle and Gabu, who all attempted to keep the children in their classes at the same reading level.

This was underpinned by different approaches to differentiation. Some of the teachers seemed to have normalised having a wide range of reading levels in their classroom, while others saw uniformity as the norm. Marian, who worked in the most privileged school, had

the most differentiated reading programme, with some children having read sixteen books by the end of Term 1 and others having read no books at all. The average was twelve books for the first term. Marian explained how she matched the books to the children, so that they were always reading in their 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky, 1962). Concerning phonics, the children had a workbook which they completed at home, at their own pace, to reinforce and extend the teaching and learning done in class. Both these activities had led to efficient curriculum coverage but also to a wide difference in reading levels *(TI/T11/22.7.2015; TI/T12/7.9.2015)*. Teachers at the schools historically associated with the HOD, namely Pulane, Fatima and Devi, say they use the additional resources in the schools, such as library books and graded reading series, as extension readers in addition to the GPLMS readers, thus implementing a less structured form of differentiation.

The teachers moving at the rate of the GPLMS lesson-plans, who only used four to five reading books a term, were also the teachers who ensured that all the children in the class could read each of the books before moving on to a new one (Kholo, Violet, Brenda, Anelle and Gabu) By using the same group readers for all the ability groups, both the top- and lower-level readers were reading books that were unaligned to their ability. This did not mean that differentiation was not taking place. Violet and Brenda explained that they did differentiated work in the group guided reading periods, using extension activities like sentence-building for their top groups and simple word-recognition activities for their lowest group. They thus focused on differentiated reading/writing tasks rather than differently levelled texts *(TI/T11/22.7.2015; TI/T12/7.9.2015).* Kholo, in the least privileged subfield, gave undifferentiated work to the class and to the group, but recognised that this was 'unfair' and 'painful' to the children *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

The different ideologies underpinning different practices around differentiation were embedded in the teaching habitus of these teachers and seemed to be closely aligned to the different historical systems. Basically, the teachers in the more dominated subfields believed it was unfair to move some children forward when others had not grasped a concept, while the teachers in more privileged subfields saw each child, or group of children, on specialised paths of progression. This ideological difference is reflected in literature around reading differentiation and seen in the practices of different countries, where sometimes the focus is on the individual and sometimes on the whole group (Raveaud, 2005).

7.4 IN DEPTH DISCUSSION OF THREE READING PROGRAMMES

To understand both the commonalities and differences between the practices of these teachers at a deeper level, the reading programmes of four teachers, representing three subfields, are examined in some depth. This makes explicit, and provides concrete examples of, particular teaching practices and reveals the origins of practices, which is the result of relational connections between the current field, the historical field, the habitus and different forms of capital that individual teachers have acquired. Each of these teachers' reading programmes and instructional strategies is described in depth, and then analysed in these terms.

7.4.1 Marian's reading programme

Table 19: Marian: biographical details

Schooling	TED system: Schools for white, English-speaking children
Teacher-training	TED system: Johannesburg College of Education
Experience	TED/Subfield A: Primary Schools in Johannesburg
Current position	Blairwood Primary School 

7.4.1.1 The reading programme

Marian represented the most privileged teacher in this study in terms of symbolic capital, as shown in Table 17. Marian had experienced the best teacher training and was teaching in a school with the smallest classes, best resources and highest fees. Although this was a transformed school in terms of racial profiles, the socio-economic profile of the parents was higher than that at the other schools, and the children's language skills showed the advantages associated with attendance at specialised pre-schools in the area, which focus on the development of proficient English language skills *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

Marian outlined her reading programme in the interview:

> In the beginning of the year we start off with basic sight words…we use the sight words according to the books that we have….The first word is *look. Hear* and *help* are the two other words that we go with, and then *and, is, in, can*. As soon as the children can read five or six sight words they get a book to read. I feel they need to have a book because that's what they are reading for …. what's the point in reading lists and lists and lists of words?
>
> We usually reach about 20 – 25 books with top readers after the first term. This number will be repeated each term *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

This extract summed up Marian's reading programme, which was planned around sets of graded readers. These determined the first sight words learnt, the sequence of word-learning and the progression of reading development that each child experienced. The graded readers were an organisational tool, and Marian systematically took each child through between 1 and 75 different books over the course of the year. Marian's initial focus on sight words was significant. Marian explained that these sight words were 'reading-book' words rather than generic, high-frequency words, such as those in the Dolsch List (Dolsch, 1948), and children were provided with their first reading book when Marian was sure they were able to recognise all the individual words in the book. She considered books crucial to reading development *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

Harris et al (2001), applying the work of Freebody and Luke (1990), list the learning of sight words as a code-breaking activity, but Marilyn Adams (2011) sees whole-word learning as the precursor to whole language learning and associates it with meaning-making (Adams, 2011; Wren 2001). In Marian's classroom, both outcomes were evident. When the children memorised the lists of reading words before reading the text, they were rote-learning the sight words as a code-breaking activity. However, when the words were read in meaningful text in their reading books, recognising words became part of the 'psycholinguistic guesswork' readers use when making meaning (Goodman, 1986). Learning the words by sight before reading the book develops automaticity or oral reading fluency, which is associated with the role of meaning-making, because the words are not laboriously sounded out (Scarborough, 2001). Marian was thus showing an interpretation of the balanced approach (Wren, 2001) *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

It is significant that Marian did not use only one graded reading scheme in her reading programme, but combines levelled books from various schemes. Many of these sets of graded readers had been selected by her. The levelling and the selection of reading schemes, entailed critical choices and a high level of teacher knowledge. This is shown here:

> I find the British ones (reading schemes) much more suitable, some of the South African ones are really not good, the word order is wrong and the punctuation is sometimes bizarre… I prefer the Oxford range but some of the words … you have to explain *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

The care she took in selecting the series, attempting to meet the children's needs, was a reflection of Marian's disposition and her training, and her immersion in the socio-cultural context of the school.

Aside from the graded reading programme, Marian taught a separate phonics programme from the beginning of the year. She summed up the content of her phonics programme:

> In the first term, we focus on the alphabet… in the last term we start with blends and diagraphs. In Term 2 and 3 we drum the cvc[31] words… *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

This was clearly a synthetic approach to phonics, where words are built by children after initial grapheme-phoneme recognition is in place (Scarborough, 2001). However, by introducing phonically decodable, CVC words in Term 2, Marian was teaching children the purpose of learning phonics, which is as a decoding skill. Wren (2001) calls this 'cipher knowledge' and believes it is essential if phonic knowledge is to be applied to reading and not learnt as an end in itself. Marian explains her phonics programme further:

> The time constraint for CAPS means not introducing every letter with a story (as in *Letterland*), … so when we do the initial sounds I include the *THRASS* concept – **a** can make an /*a*/ sound or an /*ay/* sound or another sound - aeroplane, it is an /*eh/* sound - a lot of the friezes have an *aeroplane* - … I introduce as many different sounds as possible (around each letter) but (with a) the core sound that they must know is /*a/ (TI/T12/7.9.15).*

Marian revealed her knowledge of different published phonics programmes in English, such as Letterland[32] and THRASS[33], and her phoneme/grapheme knowledge, which had enabled her to make justified choices regarding the phonics element of her reading programme. The

[31] Consonant-Vowel-Consonant words, e.g. cat

[32] A published synthetic phonics programme widely used in Johannesburg schools

[33] A published synthetic and analytic programme used in some Johannesburg schools

knowledge and expertise underpinning these choices represents cultural capital both in the field of early reading and in the transforming field, where the teaching of phonics is foregrounded. The capital would enable a teacher to select specific resources, and use methods drawn from different phonics programmes in order to make her teaching more effective. It would also position her in relation to teachers new to teaching phonics in English and without a wide experience of phonics materials.

Marian did not have a discrete comprehension instruction programme, such as QAR[34] (Raphael, 2004), but she did have a vocabulary development plan, which is seminal, not only to reading development, but to language development and semantic reasoning, according to the literature (National Reading Panel, 2000; Scarborough, 2001; Wren 2001; Wolf, 2011). Marian said,

> I have a huge word board that I put up for them. I downloaded for them. It has a word and picture – about 150 words that I put up for them. And they have their own personal dictionaries (*TI/T12/7.9.15).*

That Marian downloaded this list showed not only her access to technology, but her understanding of the importance of vocabulary development for English language learners in her class (Nation, 2006).

Although these aspects of her programme developed language comprehension implicitly, Marian said she only focused on comprehension while listening to individual children read each day, as 'Some children just parrot what their parents have taught them' (TI/T12/7.9.15). This was far less systematic than her phonics programme, and Marian explained that she saw the teaching of comprehension as important only *after* decoding skills had been learnt and automaticity established.

Overall, Marian's reading programme could be called 'balanced', in that both code-breaking/decoding and meaning-making/language comprehension activities take place daily, although it was only the decoding skills that were taught explicitly, in the form of the phonics programme and the memorisation of sight words for reading (Freebody and Luke, 1990; Scarborough, 2001, Wren, 2001). Using graded reading books from the beginning stages of reading promotes the meaning-making/comprehension strand implicitly. However, the practice of using reading schemes meant that her programme was not consistent with

[34] Question-Answer-Response

practices in a whole-language classroom, where authentic books would have been used (Goodman, 1986). Authentic books were used in Marian's classroom, but only incidentally, in Term 1, when Marian read aloud to the children or shared a Big Book each day *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

7.4.1.2 Instructional strategies

Marian's instructional strategies were the traditional ones for this subfield. With the learning of sight words and phonics, Marian said she used 'board work, drills, and … games', and the one resource she could not do without were flashcards, which was a surprising choice, given her level of technological sophistication *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

To develop the children's reading skills, Marian said she listened to each child read on a daily basis. This is a practice that requires high levels of resourcing and considerable organisational skills, particularly in the larger classes of the transforming field. Marion explained that she had to begin listening to children early in the morning in order to get through all the children in her class. This daily reading was reinforced after school hours, through a demanding homework regime in which children were expected to read to a caregiver daily, as well as to complete activities from their a phonics workbook *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

Instructional strategies associated with a whole language approach were only incidental to the reading programme. Marian said, 'Every afternoon in the first term, is story time. I have my own stash of (authentic) books which take up a whole shelf in my store room' (*TI/T12/7.9.15).* Marian was not using the books to develop student's reading skills, as conceptualised by Goodman (1986) and Elley (1989) but to 'develop a love of reading' *(TI/T12/7.9.15).* Interestingly, this reading aloud practice did not continue beyond Term 1. Similarly, shared reading, which is specified by CAPS, was only done incidentally. Marian said 'It depends on the lesson' *(TI/T12/7.9.15).* She did not list shared reading as an important instructional strategy, or Big Books as an important resource.

Guided group reading, another instructional strategy aligned to whole language methods and specified by CAPS, was used as an organisational tool only, to manage the one-to-one reading Marian did daily with each child. She said,

> Once I've introduced the lesson, I bring them up group by group, I have six groups in my class. (Then) I read with each child in the group every single day – we start early in the morning' *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

Marian said she has tried, but chosen not to use group guided reading for reading instruction because 'Children can slip through the cracks' *(TI/T12/7.9.15).* However, she did allow other teachers to use it in her capacity as HOD[35], saying 'as long as everyone is reading every day, I'm happy' *(TI/T12/7.9.15).* This was another example of her applying her teacher knowledge to adapt the curriculum to suit her practices, and a further example of heterodoxy.

7.4.1.3 Marian's teaching practice

The role of the parent/caregiver was crucial in Marian's programme and revealed a construction of the parent which was familiar to teachers working in this subfield. Marian could not listen to the children read more than a few lines of text each day and so relied on the parents to ensure that children were doing sustained reading *(TI/T12/7.9.15).* Marian has adapted to the new cohort of parents by developing and publishing a carefully written set of guidelines for Grade 1 parents. The booklet explained expectations regarding homework to parents who might be unfamiliar with this practice. *(TI/T12/7.9.15).*

The content of Marian's reading programme consisted of instruction around two discrete strands, reading and phonics. Historically, this was commonly practised in more privileged government schools in Johannesburg, and was associated with schools who fell within the TED system. These schools commonly enjoyed rich resources, small classes and high-quality teacher training (Bunting, 2004). Regarding instructional strategies, although there were aspects of her programme that included constructivist methodologies such as reading aloud and shared reading, Marian's main vehicle for teaching reading was her explicit, whole-class instructional strategies, using flashcards and the board, combined with one-to-one reading with each child, every day. Marian would have experienced this way of learning to read herself, seen examples of it during her teacher training, and begun teaching reading in this way as a novice teacher. She had experienced few ruptures with the historical field because of this reproduction and because of the unchanged class structure of the parents, the familiarity of the contents of the curriculum, and the use of familiar resources. Nevertheless her practice revealed *heterodoxa*, rather than *doxa,* which is shown the through her articulation of the choices she had made.

[35] Head of Department (of the Foundation Phase)

Marian's programme showed good results, according to the principal, who explained that the children in Marian's class read well above grade level, and this was why Marian had been identified as an exceptional teacher *(PI/T12/23.6.15).* Although much of the capital Marian had acquired was attributable to the privileged historical system, her organisational skills, effective time-management and a critical awareness of the progress of each child underpinned her practice. This was shown in her minute-by-minute management of time in the classroom, which was needed in order to hear every child read to her every day. Similar personal qualities are highlighted by Cunningham and Allington (2007, p.3) as attributes of highly effective teachers in first-grade classrooms in the United States. They say 'Every minute of time in the highest achieving classrooms was used well.'

In terms of the Bourdesian equation, Marian's practice was clearly the product of lengthy exposure to particular structures in the historical field, and a durable habitus which reproduced the practices in a changed context.

Thinking hypothetically, Marian's practice might not be easily transferrable to a different subfield. A school with fewer resources, larger classes, lower English language levels and uncooperative parents, together with her own lack of local knowledge, would mean her practices would need to be significantly adjusted in a different socio-cultural context. Her practice was dependent on particular resources, children and parents, but remained outstanding in that context, compared with her peers.

7.4.2 Kholo's reading programme

Kholo's biographical details are shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Kholo: biographical details

Schooling	DET system: Schools for IsiZulu-speaking children
Teacher-training	DET system; Soweto Teacher Training College
Experience	DET Primary Schools in Soweto (IsiZulu and IsiXhosa)
Current position	Tembalihle Primary School, Soweto, associated historically with the DET

	

7.4.2.1 The reading programme

Kholo said she initially saw a 'reading' programme and a 'phonics' programme as synonyms *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* This comment reflected an imprint of the historical field from which Kholo had emerged and in which she taught for many years, as it was the way reading was taught in African languages in the historical field (Katz, 2013). Kholo's reading programme was an enactment of the GPLMS programme and included a detailed phonics programme and a separate guided reading programme. Twelve guided reading books were provided by the GPLMS together with weekly lists of spelling words. These were a mix of phonically regular words, sight words and theme words. Kholo taught the words to the class in class time, and they were learnt for homework. Language proficiency and vocabulary were developed separately, through oral discussion posters, which were also provided by the GPLMS (GPLMS, 2013).

By following the GPLMS, Kholo was following a predetermined interpretation of a balanced literacy programme. This represented a rupture with the way Kholo had taught reading in the past, when she taught it in IsiZulu. Kholo said she followed the GPLMS programme rigorously, without adjusting the content in any way *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* However, she complained about the amount of content in the programme, which she found difficult to keep up with. She framed this in a child-centred way, saying that the programme was 'very painful for the learners because it is running too fast' *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

Traditionally, Kholo would have taught one letter-sound a week, beginning with the vowels and then moving on to teach words and sentences (Fleisch, 2008). The increased pacing in the GPLMS, which requires the teaching of two separate letter-sounds each week, as well as the completion of related phonic activities, was problematic. Kholo was unable to make

informed choices about the content of the programme in order to save time. Understandably, she did not reveal the same depth of content knowledge as Marian did. This was seen when she said, 'Teaching reading is just the same, it's just the language which is different but it is the same method' *(TI/T1/27.7.2015.)* This suggested that Kholo might not fully understand the way in which English orthography differs from that of the African languages. She went on to describe an aspect of the GPLMS English phonics programme, saying, 'It is difficult to remove them (the children), from certain English vowel sounds because in grade R they say A */ay/* but when they come to us in grade 1 we must introduce a /ah/' (TI/T1/27.7.2015). Kholo showed she that she understood that in English, unlike African languages, each letter has a name and a sound, but she was assuming the regularity of African languages applies to English vowel sounds. A more experienced English phonics teacher would have known this. In a study related to an aspect of the GPLMS, the RCUP[36] shows that aspects of English phonics remain problematic for many children (Fleisch, Pather and Motilal, 2017). The study suggests that teachers find the English vowel sounds difficult to teach, and may instead use vowel sounds associated with their primary language, so that a word like *bad* is sounded as *bed* (Fleisch, Motilal and Pather, 2016; Katz, 2013). In other words, using the GPLMS lesson-plans provides a phonics programme but does not necessarily develop teachers' content knowledge regarding phonics or reading.

The GPLMS was responsible for providing a resource that Kholo said was essential to her reading programme: the lists of weekly spelling words. She said:

> The GPLMS is good because it does have resources, and they do give us 'vocab papers' (spelling lists) and the learners read them at home for their parents' *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

It is interesting that she considered it 'good' that she had lists of pre-selected words, and that she considered the word-list, rather than texts, an essential resource. This again revealed the influence of the historical field, where lists of words, rather than books, were commonly used to teach reading. Kholo called the spelling lists 'vocab papers', showing that she was aware that as English language learners, the children needed to make meaning as they learnt to read and spell the words.

In an aspect of her programme that contrasted with practices in the historical field, Kholo was implementing the GPLMS graded group reading programme. Historically, the DET education

[36] Reading Catch-up Programme, a short-term intervention at Grade 4 level which was part of the GPLMS.

system was the least privileged system, and there was of a lack of resources in DET schools (READ reports, 1980-1990). This was exacerbated by a scarcity of learning-to-read materials in African languages (Katz, 2013). Because of this, the use of graded readers, or any books other than a single class reader, represented a new practice. Kholo's principle complaint about this aspect of the GPLMS was, 'We don't have enough books' *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* Here she was referring to the number of copies of each title that were supplied, rather than the number of titles provided. This is significant when contrasted with Marian's access to over 75 titles.

Kholo, who had not experienced either a book-based reading programme or group guided reading before the GPLMS, was not in a position to see the value of more titles, only of more copies, so that more children could read at any one time, possibly even the whole class. Overall, Kholo showed remarkable adaptive tendencies by implementing a reading programme so different from the one she would have implemented in the historical field. Her adaptability constituted symbolic capital in that she was able to demonstrate that she could effectively implement the new curriculum in the changed field, in a new language. This is despite the legacy of the past which had left her without the content knowledge to make informed choices regarding the programme, and with a discursive resistance to some of the new practices she implemented but which she may not have fully understood. She had received little structural support for implementing this content-rich curriculum, in what is, in effect, her third language and relied on her own determination.

7.4.2.2 Instructional strategies

A slightly different focus, and more agency was seen in Kholo's instructional strategies when compared to Marian. Unlike Marian, Kholo used the whole language, constructivist methodologies prescribed in the CAPS curriculum. This represented a significant adaptation to her former practice. She used group guided reading daily, and said this was her main instructional strategy for teaching reading. However she added that she used it as a default methodology, preferring what she called 'independent methods' although it was not clear exactly what she meant by this *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* She said:

> There are too many (children) for that (independent method) that's why I resort to group method. I think group is better than class reading because the others will not read… I'm doing this group (reading) because when there are many (children) you cannot finish GPLMS work so it is better if I use group guided reading *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

Kholo revealed her interpretation of group guided reading procedures when she said, 'When I say "Read", I start from this one to that one' *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* By describing how she listened 'this one to that one', Kholo revealed that each child in the group reads aloud in turn. It implied that she saw her role as listening to, and correcting, the children's oral reading. The opportunities for silent reading and discussion originally associated with this method of teaching (Fountas and Pinell, 1999), which can develop text-user and text-analyst practices, was not used (Freebody and Luke, 2001). The GPLMS *teacher notes* offer a simplified interpretation of the methodology, focusing on developing oral reading fluency (GPLMS, 2013) and this is what she implemented. However, listening to the children weekly was a further adaptation from her former practice, as it was more than she had done historically *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

Kholo used a form of shared reading in her classroom. In doing this, she moved away from the GPLMS model and towards the CAPS methodologies taught to her by an NGO service-provider who had also provided the Big Books she used. She said,

> We have Big Books for story telling…Even those that cannot read because they read pictures they enjoy reading Big Books even though they can't read the words *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

By saying 'story-telling', she revealed her own interpretation of shared reading. Shared reading was originally associated with the use of Big Books, described by Holdaway (1979), as a way of developing both decoding and meaning-making skills rather than storytelling. Kholo had moved away from both the GPLMS and historical practices with this, showing some agency.

This agency may be aligned to her literary habitus. Kholo revealed that she loved books and read prolifically *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* Her love of reading was identified as a form of embodied capital in Chapter 6. This must have been transmitted to the children, as she said they loved the Big Books *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* She explained that, through repeated exposure to the Big Book stories, the children learnt to recite the books, which she rightly considered a positive outcome for emergent readers. The children also learnt to enjoy stories, which was one of her aims in using the books *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

In describing the instructional strategies she used for phonics lessons, Kholo repeated the instructions and steps in the GPLMS lesson-plans almost verbatim, even using the same terminology as the teachers' manual:

> First of all we should write the sound then we put it in the chalkboard. You asked them first what sound is this. Some will know that this is a which words do you know with the sound /**a**/ They will come up with the words themselves even though they can't write the words and I also write the words on the board and I also make those flashcards. *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

She was following the words in the lesson plan precisely, without adaptation, and transmitting the knowledge in the traditional way, using flashcards (GPLMS, 2013).

7.4.2.3 Kholo's teaching practice

Kholo was delivering a reading programme which was aligned to the current field rather than the historical field, although vestiges of past practices were evident, particularly in her discursive resistance to aspects of the curriculum. She taught children to read very differently from the way she said she did in the past *(TI/T1/27.7.2015),* and showed more adaptive tendencies than Marian.

To a large extent, her reading programme did not represent a critical choice on her part because it was imposed on teachers in GPLMS target schools by the GDE[37], and, because she lacked experience with regard to the teaching reading in English, she was unable to adapt it in any way. Nevertheless, she delivered the GPLMS successfully, using a range of pedagogies, including shared reading, and the children made good progress in reading *(PI/T1/27.7.2015).*

Although she showed remarkable adaptation to the transforming field, there was evidence that some aspects of her habitus had been slower to 'catch up' with her practice, which Bourdieu would call a 'time-lag'. Vestiges of the historical field were shown in her discursive resistance to aspects of the lesson-plans, by keeping the whole class at the same level, and through unquestioningly accepting the word lists and number of titles provided. This, and her lack of capital regarding content knowledge, meant the reading programme she delivered was not enhanced or adapted in any way.

The historical field from which she had emerged provided little institutional capital for her to draw on, and she relied entirely on the GPLMS intervention and her own dispositions in creating her teaching practices. This intervention was provided to 800 schools, with varying levels of uptake, and the ability and motivation to follow the GPLMS lesson-plans faithfully was not always the norm (GPLMS, 2013). However, Kholo said her enactment of the

[37] Gauteng Department of Education

prescribed lesson-plans was thorough and consistent *(TI/T1/27.7.2015)*. To do this, aspects of her habitus, such as her organisational ability and good time-management were important, and in this there was a convergence with Marian. These are also attributes of the effective teachers described by Cunningham and Allington (2007).

Interestingly, Kholo has the unacknowledged and possibly under-valued capital of a strong literary habitus. She explained,

> I wish all my learners could read. I enjoy to see these little ones reading but eish. …You yourself need to be a reader, you should concentrate on reading, you should encourage these little ones to read. …There is a concept that teachers (here) are lazy, they don't want to read…so if you put the money inside the Bible or whatever you will find that money still intact because we are lazy to read. But…reading is most important in our children and in us as people *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).*

This was revealed as capital in Chapter 6 but was particularly significant in the socio-cultural context in which she operated. A literary habitus is recognised as capital by researchers with a socio-cultural view of reading (Cambourne, 1995) and where school literacy practices represent the only literacy practices children will encounter (Pretorius and Mampuru, 2007), the importance of Kholo's literary practices cannot be underestimated.

In Kholo's programme, the status quo had only been minimally preserved. Yet her teaching practice reflected Bourdieu's theory of practice. Rather than being the result of the historical field and an enduring habitus, as with Marian, Kholo's practice was the result of the relational connection between the current field and her more flexible habitus. Developing a new, functional practice without the benefit of thorough in-service re-training or undergoing an apprenticeship in one of the more privileged subfields showed her personal agency.

Although Kholo is seen as an outstanding teacher in this school and subfield, as with Marian, she would need more input, particularly in terms of content knowledge and linguistic knowledge, to stand out in a more privileged subfield where English had traditionally been the LoLT. Despite the significant changes she had adapted to in the transforming field, she remained positioned at a low rung in the broader educational field because of her historical association with the least privileged, DET, system, and the positioning of the township school in which she worked.

7.4.3 Brenda and Violet's reading programmes

Brenda and Violet's biographical details are shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Brenda and Violet: biographical details

Schooling	HOR system: Schools for 'coloured', Afrikaans-speaking children
Teacher-training	HOR system: Rand teacher training college; and Natal teacher training college
Experience	HOR Schools in Johannesburg, Durban, London (UK)
Current position	Hoogland in Johannesburg, associated historically with the HOD 

7.4.3.1 The Reading Programme

Violet and Brenda both taught Grade 1 classes at a school historically associated with the HOR education system for 'coloured' children. Between them, they had over 50 years of experience, mostly in this subfield, and taught as a team, developing new lessons together *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Their joint interview and their joint programme is discussed, referring to both teachers almost as one. In this, they represent a socio-historic field and subfield where co-operation and working together are explicitly promoted. Their close working relationship is very different from the isolated teachers' in the 'hybridised' school *(TI/T3/4.11.15).*

Like Kholo, Violet and Brenda followed the GPLMS reading programme, but very differently, principally because the content of the intervention, and of CAPS, was implemented critically, using innovations and adaptations where the programme did not align with their beliefs or with the perceived needs of their current learners.

With phonics, Violet and Brenda discursively followed the GPLMS phonics programme, and did not critique its overall structure. However they had changed the sequence of learning significantly, in line with their own experience *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Their justification for this change revealed their thorough knowledge of teaching English phonics. Violet said:

> The department should take care with the prescribing of the different sounds to be taught in (that) order because sometimes you find the **e** and the **i** so close to each other and you want them apart so the child can master the **e** before the **i**. … We did send a complaint in, and I see that they tried to change the GPLMS *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

They revealed that they had the phonic knowledge and agency to adapt a programme to suit the children's needs. Brenda said, 'Sometimes there is a 'loophole' … and then I just change it. If I think I want to do m and n and it says s and m, then I change it' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* They had done this with the previous curricula, as Brenda explains:

> Just after 1994, (with the new curriculum) what was the first sound the children had to do? It was **p**! That was the first sound of the year! I thought it was ridiculous! We just changed it! *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

Their autonomy suggests deep content knowledge of phonics and more agency than Kholo showed, and both can be linked to a higher quality of pre-service teacher-training in the historic field.

Like Marian, in phonics they moved from individual sounds to sounding out words, thus applying phonics to reading and developing the skills of word segmentation and blending. This was crucial to the way they 'taught' rather than 'facilitated' reading *(TI/T1/27.7.2015).* Significantly, this is not an emphasis that is explicit in the GPLMS lesson-plans or in CAPS. Violet explained this critical step:

> The children are quite chuffed that they can sound out the word. That is hardest in Grade 1 when you are blending (sounds together). But eventually they get to it *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

The teacher knowledge they exhibited was clearly learnt through prolonged exposure to a historic field and subfield associated with high levels of practical teacher knowledge and skill, and a certain level of bilingualism. Although Violet had learnt to teach phonics in Afrikaans, Brenda had learnt to do this in English, but both said they felt able to teach phonics in either language *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

Apart from the phonics adjustments, they had also changed the GPLMS spelling programme described in Kholo's reading programme. They worked initially with the children's names rather than with the generic high-frequency words suggested by the GPLMS. Violet explained:

> They trace their names, so some of us put it (the names) on their tables, and like with me, I (also) put it in the book so they take it out and they trace it *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

This showed direct transference from the historical system in which they worked, where following a Reading-Readiness programme with Grade 1 children was the norm. The Readiness programme had always begun with the children's names (GPLMS, 2013). These teachers used this practice because it was good fit with their experience and habitus.

With both phonics and sight words, Violet and Brenda were particularly aware of the language challenges the children faced in the transforming field, and they used what they termed 'a new method' to do this, one which was not part of the GPLMS *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Brenda described the method:

> We have brought in the 'picture word' method. For the new words the child is given, we add a picture on the list so that the word is something visual as well. …The first three books, we made charts with pictures (*TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

They had adapted and enhanced the GPLMS word-lists to better suit the learners they taught by using pictures, and adding different words, from group readers. They also made word charts for their classrooms, which is not suggested in the *GPLMS notes* but which is ideal for English language learners (GPLMS, 2013).

Violet and Brenda used the 20 graded readers[38] provided by the GPMS for daily group guided reading, and this formed the second major strand in their reading programme. The graded readers were similar to those provided for Kholo, and like Kholo's graded readers, they were their sole reading resource, as this school previously had Afrikaans as a LoLT and no graded readers in English. However, Violet and Brenda did make use of the short reading passages in the government-provided workbooks for additional reading in their programme *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

To occupy the rest of the class as they did the group guided reading, Violet and Brenda said they went beyond the single activity suggested in the GPLMS, which is a routine, written, phonics-based activity. Instead, they used a range of levelled activities based on home-made resources. They made their own worksheets and interactive materials for word-building, and,

[38] Different sets of graded readers were supplied to different schools, and the set supplied to this school contained 20 rather than 12 titles.

in addition, they each had a very small classroom library. Their materials showed innovation, for example:

> We've got boxes…The DBE book, every now and again you'll find a page with words and sentences, and we put it in the boxes. They sit down and they take out those out (of) those boxes and … they build sentences *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

The innovation and frugality they showed in using pages from the workbooks were learnt in the historical system. The HOR was the least privileged of the three dominant systems and there was a tradition of teachers making their own resources *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015*. This took Brenda and Violet considerable time and hard work. They explained that they often phoned each other as they prepared materials and planned for their lessons late into the night *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* This revealed their dispositional tendency towards good management of resources, good organisation, and a real commitment to the children's learning, apart from their work ethic.

In yet another innovation, the two teachers said they had moved away from the broad themes prescribed in the GPLMS and organised their literacy work around themes taken from the government workbooks, which align with Life Skills topics. They felt this was a more logical way of developing the vocabulary these English language learners needed in that subject *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* This is confirmed by literature on vocabulary acquisition (Nation, 1990).

7.4.3.2 Instructional strategies

The instructional strategies these teachers described seemed to be embedded in the historic field. For the group guided reading sessions, they described moving beyond listening and correcting the children's oral reading, as outlined in the GPLMS, but their methods did not reflect the classic guided group reading session described by Fountas and Pinnell (1999). They described the group sessions they conducted as differentiated mini-lessons. In this, Violet and Brenda were reverting to a practice they had been familiar with in the historical field, in which differentiated group teaching was normal practice. Violet says:

> We do ability groups …. There's a range. You get children that read very well, they fly though and you get other that are struggling. In my class I have five groups in reading so it's very different. But your groups change all the time. A child might go faster than another *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

Although this revealed their awareness and accommodation of different reading abilities, they kept the whole class working on one of the graded reading books at any one time, rather than matching books to the different ability groups. However, the teachers also described using differentiated word-games, matching activities and word-building activities during this time *(TI/T6, T7/27.8.2015).* Describing how they delivered their reading programme, Violet said, significantly, 'It's not just about reading. You have to **teach** reading' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* She was referring to the 'teaching' that she did in group guided reading session to ensure that the children were able to 'master' the graded reading book *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

Violet explained that the instructional strategies she used were a choice for her, as she had taught for a brief time in the United Kingdom and had used different methodologies. She said:

> I was shocked with the UK (United Kingdom). I was alarmed at how they do reading. The child gets a new book every day and they haven't mastered the book. That's why they have such a high illiteracy rate *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

Violet's comment about 'illiteracy' was interesting in the South African context, perhaps demonstrating the silos which were developed during the apartheid era, leaving teachers like Violet unaware of the real situation regarding literacy levels in the country as a whole. But the extract also revealed that Violet saw no value in a less structured approach to reading development, which was how she saw the programme in the United Kingdom. She explained that group work was her core instructional strategy saying, '*We* do group reading. We do *ability* groups' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* It is interesting that she used the words 'group' and not the CAPS term, 'group guided reading' because the two terms have different implications. 'Group work', the words she used, describes more accurately the methodology with which she is more familiar.

Her embedded position on group teaching, rather than individual work, was also revealed in the following extract:

> I one time encountered one of the teachers that called children up one by one to the table and I thought that takes so much from your time and the same thing applies when you do group reading, you are flashing, testing, same time and each child has a chance to read while the others are following *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

The reading group was seen as an opportunity to teach differentiated sight words ('flashing'), assessing ('testing') and having some time for oral or independent reading ('each child has a chance to read'). This, in effect, is the core of her reading programme, and the differentiation and detail contrasts with Kholo's reading-aloud-in-turn method of guided group reading, which focused only oral reading fluency. Violet's observation of what she encountered 'one time' is a description of Marian's practice of one-to-one reading, which was not uncommon in the subfield associated with the most privileged sector historically. That it was as 'foreign' as the methods she saw in the UK again shows the relative isolation of practice in different sectors of the field. However, Violet's heterodoxic practice is clearly revealed in both extracts.

In this group reading time, Violet and Brenda appeared to develop code-breaking skills and some meaning-making skills (Freebody and Luke, 1990). This was shown by Brenda, who said, 'I find fluency and reading with expression … with many children is a problem. So I deal with that by asking questions when there is an opportunity' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Brenda developed language comprehension and oral fluency skills together, implying, correctly, that reading without comprehension was mechanical, like reading a word-list. It also showed that comprehension was taught implicitly, and not in a structured way, in the same way as it was taught in Marian's reading programme.

The use of group reading is interesting when contrasted with Marian's position. Marian had tried group guided reading and found that 'children slipped through the cracks' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015),* so remained using one-to-one reading. Violet felt the opposite: having seen one-to-one reading, she considered group reading the better instructional strategy. Both teachers were reproducing and normalising the principal method of reading development used in the historical education system in which they had each trained and worked, reproducing an aspect of the historical field, but both showing heterodoxis (Bourdieu, 1990).

With Violet and Brenda, as with Marian, shared reading, the whole-class instructional strategy prescribed in CAPS, had been marginalised. Brenda said:

> A couple of years ago we had the GPLMS and they gave us packs of books but each reader had a Big Book so we'll do shared reading …and that assisted them because they are reading with the other learners *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

It was evident that this was not when the real 'teaching' of reading took place. When shared reading was used by Violet and Brenda, their method did not conform to the shared reading experience explained by Holdaway (1979) and the extract suggested that the Big Books were used for choral whole-class reading.

Another strategy Violet and Brenda used, which was not mentioned in the GPLMS or CAPS, was described by them as 'buddy' reading. Violet and Brenda explained that this happened when the children were paired, a struggling reader with a stronger one, in order to read to each other. Brenda said:

> They've got the buddy. My little Pam will sit and read confidently to her, the bright learners are very eager to help. I love that, and they also love to help, and be helped, by peers *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

This extract reveals the embedded value of cooperative learning associated with the subfield, also shown in the way these two teachers worked together. The extract also shows how reading in these different ways (in pairs, group and as a whole class), Violet and Brenda align with another Cunningham and Allington's (2007, p. 6) observation about effective teachers in the US: 'Excellent teachers use a variety of formats. In addition to whole class, small group and individual instruction, excellent teachers use a variety of collaborative grouping arrangements to allow children to learn from one another.'

Referring to phonics instruction, the teachers explained that they used interactive activities, such as games and songs. They also used little stories and explicitly taught phonic rules. These are pedagogies traditionally used in the HOR historical system. Violet said, 'We start to teach them rules, like with *ll*. I call him 'bangbroek[39]', he doesn't like to stand on his own, he wants his brother. Little stories - they will remember that' Brenda added, 'Lots of games, lots of matching… ' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Their continued use of these strategies within a fast-paced, content-rich curriculum, showed their determination to make the learning interesting for the children and aligned with their caring, child-centred habitus.

[39] Coward

7.4.3.3 Brenda and Violet's teaching practice

Violet and Brenda had a reading programme which appeared to be a strengthened GPLMS programme. The programme was significantly enhanced through the adjusted phonics programme, highly-focused group work programme, and the various, child-centred instructional strategies they used. They had incorporated meaning-making into the programme through their picture-word method, their use of themes, and their focus on oral reading fluency showing comprehension. They did this with the minimum of materials, making many of the resources themselves. Their programme thus had the dual components of a balanced programme, although, as with the other teachers, decoding was clearly foregrounded.

The teachers' evident content knowledge, adaptive teaching practices and frugality in resourcing were underpinned by their pre-service training and experience in the historical system. That many of their practices could be traced back thirty years to their teacher-training was shown in the exchange quoted earlier, in which they discovered that they both used the textbooks they had used during their teacher training, the 'red' book and the 'blue' book *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).* Their practice was clearly embedded in the historical field, but they did not exhibit *doxic* practice, as their current practice was shown to represent informed choices.

They stood out as particularly effective teachers in their school, through their effective practice, together with dispositions of caring, commitment and hard work. This was similar to the way in which Marian and Kholo stood out. Dispositionally, Violet and Brenda's commitment to the children, and their professionalism, both mentioned by the principal, might be pastorally based, as both are committed Christians. Their devotion to the children was recognised. The principal pointed out that they used their own money to buy additional resources, and the HOD added:

> I have great respect for my Grade 1 teachers…they will be up at 12 o'clock sms-ing each other …Then they are up at 4 o'clock again – they're abnormal. Really, they're hard workers. *(PI/P6/27.8.2015).*

Violet said, 'We need to know the child is taught, that is the important thing' *(TI/T6 and T7/27.8.2015).*

Their positioning in the broader field was difficult to determine, but there was a sense in which they, more than the other two teachers described, might be out-standing in other subfields, and that their practice was transposable to other subfields. They exhibited signs of durable habitus, but they had coped with larger classes, changed language conditions, a lack of resourcing and 'different' parents, and may have been able to adapt to more, or less privileged subfields.

7. 5 CONCLUSION

To an outsider, the Johannesburg teachers in this study showed many similarities of practice. In their use of traditional resources, their enactment of a form of a balanced approach and their beliefs about the nature of literacy as school-based, there was clear alignment with one another. In addition, the teachers all used structured routines and traditional instructional strategies, and had not fully engaged with strategies linked to constructivist approaches or whole-language teaching. In this, vestiges of the broader historical field were shown, a historical field that was isolated from global trends for many years because of the stigma of apartheid.

The groups' out-standing practices seemed to be less about the programmes or instructional strategies they were using, which varied in many ways, and more about the effective and efficient way in which their reading programmes were being delivered. The teachers showed that they have dispositional tendencies that ensure this delivery, which is aligned to their good classroom management, effective time management, organisation, and thorough planning and preparation. However, in all cases, the practice was underpinned by a commitment to the progress of the children.

Despite these interesting commonalities, the teachers revealed nuanced divisions in their implementation of aspects of the curriculum, seen in their different practices. These included significantly different practices around differentiation, the amount of time children in their classes spent reading, and, importantly, the way they reproduced or enhanced the common curriculum. These divisions can be directly aligned to the divisions in the historical field, which affected the knowledge, skills and ideologies the teachers had acquired.

The implication is that some teachers, because of the subfields in which they worked or had been immersed, had more institutionalised capital than others in terms of the content

knowledge and linguistic knowledge required to teach reading in English. Much of the capital that was acquired in the least privileged system and subfield is no longer used or valued. This positioned some teachers in the transforming field in a way over which they have had little control.

The three in-depth discussions confirmed the commonalities of practice found in all twelve teachers and showed explicitly the disparate practices aligned with exposure to the different historical education systems. In this, the teachers immersed in the more privileged subfields, Marian, Violet and Brenda, showed stronger reproductions of past practices, a more durable habitus and more extensive content knowledge. They had the institutional capital to make changes to programmes and choices regarding resources. Their interpretation of the instructional strategies required by the curriculum seemed to be in name only. This contrasted with Kholo, from the dominated field, who had made extensive adaptations to her practice in the transforming field, both in terms of her reading programme and instructional strategies, even though she was not fully equipped with the underpinning knowledge to embrace these changes ideologically, or sometimes practically.

When the specific teaching practices of these outstanding teachers are considered against reading models, such as those of Wren (2001) or Scarborough (2001), the teachers are all seen to be enacting a version of the balanced approach. However, using the Four Roles framework (Freebody and Luke, 1990) the privileging of particular reading skills was shown, revealing that there are crucial aspects of reading that are not being fully addressed, even by these out-standing teachers. According to Freebody and Luke (1990), this is likely to hinder the children becoming proficient, critical and thoughtful text users. In addition, when compared to conditions in highly privileged, private schools in Johannesburg, or of Grade 1 classrooms in the United States, (Azevedo, 2015; Morrow et al, 1999) it is clear that aspects of their good practice could be further developed if they were teaching in similar contexts of small classes and rich resources.

Even if these teachers were not out-standing in terms of their innovative practices, or would not be considered out-standing outside of their particular schools, they all showed adaptive tendencies, in that they could operate effectively and systematically in the transforming field and ensured that the children progressed with their reading. They were all ‘practising’ teachers who had a consistent record of teaching children to read (Pearson & Hoffman, 2011) and managed to ‘beat the odds’ under the particular conditions in which they worked, which

included large classes, a new LoLT, a fast-paced, prescriptive curriculum, and, for most of them, minimal resources. In this, further group dispositions are revealed, of resilience, and compliance. It appears that these teachers' out-standing practices emerged from a combination of their habitus, their capital and their interactions with the historical and current fields. This shows how Bourdieu's equation works in practice, by being applied to this small group of teachers, revealing the deeper, sociological patterns inherent in their teaching practices (Maton, 2008).

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

8.1 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

My research questions were: *What are the teaching practices of a small group of out-standing reading, teaching Grade 1 to 3 in government schools, in different socio-cultural contexts in Johannesburg?* and *How are these practices a response to the historic and current conditions in which they worked and work?*

By answering these questions, I hoped to deepen the knowledge of teacher practice regarding the teaching of early reading in South Africa, and to consider whether the practices of these out-standing teachers offered any insights into solving the problem of our low literacy levels.

I found that the practices that each teacher described are centred around the implementation of a systematic, balanced reading programme, but one which foregrounds the teaching and learning of decoding skills (Wren, 2003). The programmes are implemented using mainly traditional pedagogies and resources, such as flashcards and graded readers. They are implemented in an efficient, child-centred and compassionate way, underpinned by the teachers' good organisation skills, good time-management, class-management and thorough planning. These are also some of the attributes of effective teachers described in studies in the United States (Allington and Cunningham, 2007, 2003) and of the 'practising' reading teachers described by Pearson and Hoffman (2011).

Although the teachers worked in different socio-cultural contexts, there are similarities in the teaching conditions in which the reading programmes were delivered. The majority of the teachers taught classes of multicultural, multilingual, working-class children, in classes of similar sizes. The children had a range of primary languages but are being taught to read in English. These represented significantly changed classroom conditions for all twelve teachers when compared to the socio-historic field.

However, despite similarities, significant differences were revealed both in their teaching conditions and their practices. For example each teacher moved at a different pace, and

enhanced or complied with the curriculum in nuanced ways, had different expectations of the parents, and of the role of homework, and revealed different attitudes towards differentiation.

Most significantly, different core instructional strategies for teaching reading were revealed, ranging from one-to-one reading to group guided reading, and group work. There was no uniformity of pedagogy, even though the terminology of the curriculum was used. The differences in practice aligned to the different socio-cultural and socio-historic backgrounds of the teachers, and of the schools in which they taught.

Individually, each teacher had acquired different forms of capital and where teachers had qualified and worked in the historically more privileged sectors, capital in the form of deeper content knowledge was shown, and unchanged reproductions of historic practices were common. Teachers from the historically dominated sectors were more likely to have changed their practice and any historically acquired capital was often undervalued in the changed field.

Practice is also significantly affected by the schools at which each teacher works, particularly regarding the overall time management of the school, and the extent of the reading resources. Both affect the pace of teaching and the extent of supervised reading.

The study contributes to the field educationally by describing the reading programmes and pedagogies of these twelve out-standing early reading teachers. Their different programmes, based on their own backgrounds and the positioning of the school in which they teach, show many variations of good practice. It not only a question of identifying their reading programmes as more or less meaning-based, or more or less balanced, but rather understanding the 'professional' capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2010) of these teachers, who manage to 'beat the odds' and attend to the individual needs of the children learning to read in their classes, year after year. This points to the importance of developing rich and multifaceted understandings of literacy amongst reading teachers, where the expertise of the teacher is recognised alongside the knowledge of a range of instructional strategies, the provision of appropriate sets of resources, and the provision of adequate time.

Bourdieu's theory of practice was helpful in revealing the social nature of the teachers' practice. His equation, '[(habitus)(capital)] + field = practice' **(**Maton, 2014, p.51) drew attention to the way many of the teachers' practices were embedded in the transparent and

less-than-transparent ideologies of the historical education field, and how, because of their habitus, were adapting to or resisting the changes in the transforming educational field. This study thus contributes to the field sociologically by showing an application of Bourdieu's theory of practice to twelve teachers with a common trait, providing a deeper understanding of how practice reflects the relational alignment between the habitus, capital and field.

The study also met my research aims.

First, I wanted to understand the teaching practices and the reading programmes the teachers used, which had enabled them to become 'practising teachers' (Pearson and Hoffman, 2011). These are explained and analysed but I believe that the teachers stood out principally because of their teaching habitus, which ensured the efficient and organised delivery of a traditional, balanced programme, rather than revealing innovative practices in the South African context.

My second aim was to establish how these teaching practices had evolved and the extent to which the historical practices remained embedded in the current field. This linked to my third aim, which was to establish to what extent their practice was a response to the post-1994, transforming educational field. I was able to establish the origins of much of the teachers' practice and explain how it aligned to the historical field and to their socio-cultural backgrounds. Their current practice is a clear response to the transforming field, but vestiges of the historical field are evident, and particular historic practices reproduced, particularly in the more privileged subfields.

My fourth aim was to try to understand the differences between the practices of the teachers, who represented a range of different socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-linguistic backgrounds and who taught in different but not highly privileged contexts. The latter was an attempt to explore instances of effective local practice in the divided socio-historic and socio-economic contexts within the city. I hoped to disrupt the 'deficit myth' (Gregory, 2008), that poverty and illiteracy are necessarily linked, and to provide a democratic representation of effective teaching practice in Johannesburg schools (Mills and Comber, 2013). This aim was met by describing the teachers' different programmes and pedagogies, and aligning these differences to their backgrounds and the contexts in which they worked. Regarding the 'deficit myth', eleven of the twelve teachers taught children from families with a low SES. These teachers were able to disrupt the myth because all the children in their classes were learning to read consistently, year after year.

My fifth aim, aligned to this, was to compare and contrast the practices of the out-standing teachers, in order to find commonalities that might describe an out-standing reading teacher in the current educational field, and simultaneously to question the 'fiction' of an ideal teacher whose practice is appropriate in all contexts (Comber, 1996). The commonalities that were revealed, and the differences that were explained, showed how teachers can 'beat the odds' and still practise in a variety of ways. The implication is that there is no ideal teacher, and no programme which would work for every teacher in every situation.

8.2 CONSTRUCTING THE PICTURE

I built up this picture of the teachers systemically, following Bourdieu's steps of the analysis of practice, and using the thematic content analysis of the data obtained from the teacher interviews, discussions with principals and classroom observations.

I began by mapping the field in which the teachers practice, describing the macrofield of the education system in which all the teachers worked, and the microfield of the individual schools in which each teacher was situated. I established the boundaried field of the early reading teacher as a distinct and specialised aspect of the broader field. The macrofield was shown to be a transforming field (Bourdieu, 1977) for early reading teachers, in that conditions had changed significantly and relatively suddenly after the democratisation of this country in 1994. I explained that the introduction of the legislative changes had been effected to redress the results of apartheid and create an equalised system of education (Chisolm, 2004). However, I found the level and extent of the changes had required different adaptations by each teacher, based on the conditions in which they had taught before and after the transformation. This became an issue of social justice, as, although this group of out-standing teachers had all adapted to teaching a different cohort of learners with different linguistic needs, it was the teachers from the historically deprived education systems who had needed to be the most adaptive, changing to significantly different linguistic, pedagogic and curriculum conditions (Fleisch, 2008).

In the microfield of the individual schools in which the teachers worked, I identified subfields, the origins of which lay in the four separate education systems in the historical field, each with a different level of economic resourcing and each offering different forms of symbolic, institutionalised capital to the teachers and the children, which privileged particular

groups hierarchically (Christie, 1985). Enduring vestiges of the systems were seen in the microfield, to the extent that schools in one or other of the subfields were immediately recognisable, based on their built environment and management of time and space, which significantly affected the culture and climate of the each school, despite the unified post-democratic context. The identification of subfields in the culture and climate of schools twenty years after the field was unified through a common education department revealed an ideological vacuum which had not been filled. A hybridised school which did not conform to this pattern was included in this study, and this may represent the future of Gauteng schools.

Exploring the relational connections between the field and the habitus, two sub-sets of teachers were identified, one set consisting of the eight teachers who taught in schools which aligned with the historical subfield in which they had been immersed in their formative years, and one set, consisting of five teachers who taught in schools with a culture which represented a disjuncture from their formative educational field. Enduring reproductions of historical practices were strongest in the teachers who had not moved, while those who had changed to a new subfield showed not only changed practices but changed ideologies, in line with the values and practices of the new, invariably more privileged, subfields. In this, the teachers appeared to have absorbed the dominant local practice and there was little evidence of their re-shaping or transforming practices in the subfield to which they had moved. It was evident that there had been little cross-subfield sharing of practice, except by these teachers who had moved. They were further along Beeby's (1962) scale of self-actualisation because they were able to compare practices in different subfields, showing their heterodoxic practice (Bourdieu, 1988; Deer, 2014).

With the other subset of teachers, those who had not moved, cross-subfield sharing was less common, although many heterodoxic practices were described during some teacher interviews. The conclusion was that where teachers had reverted to historic practices, this was mainly as a default, when insufficient re-training or support was offered in order to implement changed practice, or when the new practices were felt to be less effective than the embedded practice.

The relational alignment between the changes in the field and habitus of these teachers showed the three possible responses to a transformed field explained by Bourdieu (1977), those of correlation with, adaptation to, or resistance to the changed conditions (Thompson,

2014). The problematic areas, where resistance was articulated by the majority of these teachers, focused on the new cohort of parents, the changed language situation, and the pacing of the CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011). Interrogating the discourse further, it became evident that teachers had problematised these areas differently, and this was aligned to the subfield in which they worked. So, while some teachers found teaching children to read in a language which was not their primary language problematic, others were more concerned with the number of languages represented in the class, or the diverse backgrounds of the children. While some teachers were concerned about the impact of parental neglect, others were more concerned that they did not support homework practices, or that parents did not come to the school when summoned. The nuanced differences were linked to ideologies from the historic education systems and indicated a 'time-lag' between a habitus, formed in a particular socio-historic and socio-cultural context and the transforming field.

Yet all twelve teachers had adapted to most of the changes in the field, and were 'practising' teachers in the current field, teaching the majority of children in their class to read at grade level, year after year, in a way that made them out-standing. They used systematic practices to teach the children, who, many of the teachers felt, were disadvantaged by their home circumstances or linguistic profiles. The teachers' adaptability to the new conditions in the field confirmed the Bourdesian understanding that a habitus is 'durable but not eternal' (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53). However, the study showed that the level of adaptability required of the teachers differed, and for teachers trained in the dominated subfield it was formidable, whether they had moved to a different subfield or not. It was evident that the teachers' adaptations and innovations had not been acknowledged by educational structures or by the parents of the children, and that some teacher capital was misrecognised, particularly capital aligned to the disadvantaged historical fields, such as multilingualism or local knowledge.

To stand out in the schools in which they teach meant that these teachers were positioned as more effective than their peers, which implied that they had acquired some form of symbolic capital not acquired by other teachers (Bourdieu, 2006). In Chapter 6, examples of this capital were identified and found to include capital manifested as out-standing organisational skills, good time-management, linguistic capital in the legitimated language (English), lengthy experience in a specialised field and, principally, the ability to deliver a systematic reading programme, which in itself involves good classroom management and planning and preparation skills. Individual teachers revealed other forms of capital which distinguished

them in the field, such as a diagnostic ability regarding barriers to learning to read, a love of reading, a particular affinity for young children, an awareness of how young children might be othered in the classroom, and an interest in different cultures. These different forms of embodied and institutionalised capital enhanced their practice and prestige in different ways within their school context.

Understanding the origin of this capital meant looking at the influence of the historical, familial and social fields in which particular teachers had been immersed. The teachers from the less-privileged fields had acquired little institutionalised capital from the formal educational structures of the historical field, and much of their embodied capital through the familial field or through their own agency. Institutionalised capital had only been acquired subsequent to 1994, through apprenticeships in high-functioning schools, through the support of literacy interventions or through qualifications. Conversely, teachers from the more privileged fields had acquired much of their knowledge and skills as institutionalised capital, through their long immersion in more privileged education systems. Within the broader field, it was evident that historical positioning of schools, and often of teachers, remained intact. In this way, the idea of social justice and reproduction of the historical field (or the lack of it) is seen once again.

Understandings regarding the relational connections between the field, habitus and capital of these teachers underpinned the nuanced pictures of reading-teaching practices that were described by the teachers. These descriptions were surprising to me, both in the number of commonalities between the twelve teachers in the study, despite disparate contexts, and also, conversely, in the extent of the differences between their teaching practices. What became evident was that out-standing practice could be enacted in different ways, with good results, and that there was, indeed, no perfect teacher. The out-standing teachers' continued efforts to 'beat the odds' and ensure that their whole class learnt to read were underpinned by their ability to implement a systematic reading programme that developed competent code-breakers, and, implicitly, meaning-makers, in changed and changing conditions (Cunningham and Allington, 2007; Freebody and Luke, 1990). However, in the context of the Four Roles, only two of the roles were being addressed and even the fortunate children in the classes of these out-standing teachers may not have the skills and knowledge to become critical and analytic readers in the future.

8.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FINDINGS

A number of my findings have implications for the field of early reading. The first is that policy and legislative changes such as the introduction of new curricula do not necessarily lead to changed teaching practice, although this must be their aim. In the post-democratic field of early reading in South Africa, there have been three national curricula in twenty years, with the last, CAPS, being highly descriptive and prescriptive (DBE, 2011). However, even this level of prescription has not led to a real change in teaching practice, nor towards complete uniformity of practice. Although a policy may describe a new set of practices, the habitus is durable and it must be acknowledged that it requires time and scaffolding to effect real changes in teaching practice. Changing official policies without investing in resources and professional development, limits teachers' ability to make change and informed choices about change. Ultimately is not a question of imposing a particular reading programme, whether meaning-based, or balanced, on early reading teachers, but developing the 'professional' capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2010) and expertise of teachers, so that they develop a thorough understanding of language and literacy, knowledge of effective instructional strategies, and organisational and management skills.

The second implication is that Taylor's statement (2013), that teachers from the least privileged sector historically, 'can't or won't' change their practices around the teaching of reading may not fully capture the complexity of the situation. That teachers from this sector have changed their practice is shown in this study. Understanding how this change was effected has implications for changing teacher practice on a larger scale. For some teachers, immersion in a different type of school supported the change, particularly with regard to a change in LoLT and the use of different pedagogies. The different management of time and space, better resourcing, and support from more qualified colleagues underpinned this change. As with second language acquisition, immersion appears to offer a real possibility of lasting change.

Other teachers described the GPLMS literacy intervention as crucial to changes they had made to their practice, and associated this intervention with their curriculum compliance. A curriculum is not always easily transferrable into daily classroom practice and the intervention provided a structured framework, and the resources, to enable the teachers to do this. Four of the teachers had also experienced some coaching as part of the GPLMS, and this

proved to be an additional source of support in effecting change in subsequent interventions (Fleisch, 2016).

Another factor in changed practice is personal agency. The main example in this study was Lerato, the teacher who was often an outlier. Her personal agency in engaging with different literacy NGOs, publishers and teacher unions, and in examining children's books from other schools, had changed her teaching practices and attitudes, and this was shown in her celebration of multilingualism and diverse cultures in her classes (Botha, 2007). This suggests the importance of developing teachers' agency and confidence, and of making access to further knowledge and skills available to teachers who wish to pursue new, more effective practices.

The third overarching implication of this study concerns the reproduction of aspects of the historic field, although using the terminology of the transforming field. Often the practices were not implemented as doxic practice to preserve the status quo, but chosen by teachers who believed that certain familiar teaching practices around reading would be in the children's best interests. It seems that effecting changes to teacher practice is a complex process, and vestiges of historic practices or ideologies are likely to remain, unless the alternative practices are shown to be viable and more effective. For example, despite the changed class of many parents (Soudien, 2004), who may be unable or unwilling to help their children read in English at home, some teachers persist with the pedagogies they had used historically, in which parents played a crucial role in their children's reading development, because they had experienced good results with this practice. The implication is that alternative practices need to be explained and demonstrated so that teachers can see the advantages for the children they teach. This study suggests that in the absence of material or personal support, or a focused intervention, teachers will tend to naturally revert to practices that have been normalised for them and that are part of their habitus (Bourdieu, 1977; Thompson, 2014).

The teachers in this study all seemed to be compliant and were attempting to adapt to the transforming field as prescribed by the education structures and the curriculum. They had not asked for, nor had they been offered support concerning the implementation of the changes. Areas where they might have benefited from additional support include support for teaching reading in multicultural, multilingual classrooms; using differentiation strategies in large

classes; managing time and space efficiently in order to deliver the curriculum; working with parents who may not see the value of children reading at home; dealing with the difficulties of teaching children whose homes are geographically some distance from the school; and how to develop their own linguistic skills and content knowledge regarding the teaching of reading.

In specific areas, such as teaching English phonics, developing comprehension skills, and gaining a deeper understanding of the purpose of group guided reading and shared reading, stronger content and pedagogical input could enhance practice. The teachers who had the deepest knowledge of teaching reading, Marian, Violet and Brenda, were able to make better choices and enhance their reading programmes. The overarching implication here is that changes to the curriculum and policy might have been made without considering the implications for up-skilling and increasing the content and pedagogical knowledge of the teachers in this country.

The secondary implication of this is that the teachers who were disadvantaged in the historical field remain disadvantaged in the transforming field because of the level of adaptation that has been required, built on the poor foundation of teacher-training during the apartheid era. These teachers' past experiences have generated very few forms of capital which would be recognised in the transforming field, and they have been expected to up-skill, or even to re-train, without sustained structural support. This perpetuates the system of social injustice and privilege which began in colonial times. It is only the literacy interventions after 1994 that have attempted to support reading teachers in making changes in their classrooms. However, because of the magnitude and urgency of the problem, these interventions have focused on standardised support to benefit the children in the shortest time (READ, 2005; GPLMS, 2013). This is not always aligned to the content knowledge that individual teachers need in order to become self-actualised as reading teachers in the transforming field, able to make effective choices and implement heterodoxic practice (Beeby, 1966; Deer, 2014).

The converse also applies: imposing changes, through the curriculum or through interventions, on teachers who are already consistently and enthusiastically 'beating the odds' in different ways, is counter-productive. Although 'practising' teachers also have much to learn about operating in the field, they also have much to share and this is often unacknowledged. Teachers like Marian and Violet are employing pedagogies that are very

different from each other's, but they are developing children's reading skills successfully. The current national mood of conformity and prescription may be a sincere attempt to enhance the practices of teachers disadvantaged by the past, but it should not be used as a way of negating effective local practice. Practices that are currently benefiting children should be acknowledged, supported and shared, so that levelling the field does not mean disempowering teachers.

Finally, through this study, the valuable bimodal model Fleisch (2008) outlined has been built upon, showing that there are complex combinations of skills and experiences in teachers in both rungs. The bimodal model was not meant to imply that every teacher has been impacted by the historical field in the same way, and this study does not suggest that the issues of social justice stemming from the historical field do not need to be urgently redressed. But the out-standing teachers revealed how exposure to literacy interventions, immersion in new subfields, and access to more resources can change practice and facilitate the acquisition of new capital. Teachers are sometimes labelled because of the historical field from which they emerged, and good teaching may be unacknowledged because of the subfield in which a teacher works. All these teachers have nuanced insights regarding the teaching of reading, and each teacher could provide an example of an effective reading programme being implemented in a specific context which could contribute to our knowledge of good practice in the broader field.

Ultimately, the findings of this study imply that the ideal reading teacher or the ideal reading programme is a fiction, and that many teachers, in many different contexts, are 'beating the odds' to teach reading effectively in ways that may or may not entail a close alignment to the curriculum (Cunningham and Allington, 2007; Comber, 1996). That these teachers are out-standing seems to be less about innovative practices and more about systematic routines, effective use of time and a carefully structured reading programmes, less about a list of distinguishing classroom features, and more about a broad set of dispositions that distinguish them as exceptionally caring, organised, hard-working, professional, 'practising' teachers, who have been able to adapt to and succeed in teaching children to read in significantly changed teaching conditions. The implication is that at this time, in a new democracy, and in a transforming field which is still struggling to achieve equality and social justice, this is an entirely admirable outcome to have achieved.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Providing recommendations is important, as this study was conceived of as applied research, at least hypothetically. The study has shown that the field remains an unequal one, and that although some consider literacy a 'solvable' problem, there is an implication that there will be a need for further literacy interventions in the future (Spaull, 2016). In drawing up recommendations based on the findings of this study, I position myself as a hypothetical advisor to the education sector in designing possible future interventions.

I hesitate to suggest changing the current curriculum, as the imposition of new curricula have been shown to be destabilising for teachers in South Africa, and particularly for less well-trained teachers (Hugo, 2013). In addition, the country has had an inordinately large number of curricula over the last twenty years and the cost of these changes, economically and emotionally, was still being felt by the out-standing teachers. However, I am aware that the two English Language and Literacy curricula currently available for South African teachers do not meet the needs of eleven of the twelve teachers in this study (DBE, 2011). The Home Language curriculum, which all twelve teachers follow, is not designed for children learning to read in a new language, and the First Additional Language curriculum only applies to children learning to read in their primary language, where English is an additional language (DBE, 2011). My first recommendation would be that there could be an Adjusted Home Language curriculum, specifically for children learning to read in, and learning in, English, where English is not their primary language. This applies to the majority of children learning to read in this study, and perhaps to the majority of children in the city of Johannesburg.

The additional curriculum could be based on the Home Language curriculum, but move at a slower pace, with an adjusted sequence of learning, and include a greater emphasis on building oral vocabulary and language development in English. More explicit detail concerning the scope of the content could be provided, with this content clearly separated from the pedagogies. Other features could be the inclusion of explicit comprehension strategies and term-by-term vocabulary targets. Pedagogies could be suggested which offer alternatives to the whole-language instructional strategies, and practical strategies to deal with differentiation explained.

My second recommendation relates to literacy interventions. Considering that the majority of the out-standing teachers used the GPLMS and found it useful, I would advocate extending

the life of the intervention, or a version of it, by making the lesson-plans, which were part of the programme, readily available to schools, so that teachers such as Lerato would not have to photocopy them. As the GPLMS lesson-plans were never developed into a 'final' form, there is an opportunity for the provincial structures to revise and re-package the lesson-plans and re-print the posters which align with the lessons. Lesson-plans, or lesson-plan outlines, ensure that input to the children is equalised and helps with the establishment of routines and time-management, planning and systematic delivery of the curriculum, all characteristics that are associated with the out-standing teachers. Pacing could be adjusted to be more in line with that required by teachers with a background in the less privileged subfields, and differentiation issues explicitly dealt with. This may mean the lesson-plans become even more detailed in the short term, or that dedicated training around the plans would be needed. The positive results of using literacy coaches seem to offer the support which makes implementation of lesson-plans more viable (Fleisch and Schoer, 2014).

However take-up of an intervention cannot be guaranteed, and I believe the greatest likelihood of take-up lies in the provision of reading resources. Considering that four years after the GPLMS was implemented, the project-supplied reading materials remain the principal source used for teaching reading for at least five of the teachers in this study, the re-provisioning of reading resources at GPLMS schools needs to become a priority. My third recommendation is thus for the urgent replacement or replenishment of the graded readers used in the GPLMS. As in 2013, this could be achieved by ring-fencing part of the provincial educational materials budget. In a revised model, greater numbers of graded reader titles could be supplied to allow for more differentiation. Greater numbers of each title could be supplied to obviate the extensive photocopying that was revealed in this study and to ensure that teachers use the books without the anxiety of having too few copies.

To widen this, it is evident that every Foundation Phase class in Gauteng needs adequate resourcing to ensure equalised reading development. This study clearly showed how teachers in better resourced schools are able to extend homework and independent reading practices in their classrooms, and more easily meet the needs of children with different abilities. The provision of reading resources for early reading needs to be urgently addressed before a fully equalised reading programme can be implemented. Global studies showing the effect of books on children's early reading development are undisputed, and the extensive use of books by the out-standing teachers in this study emphasise the urgent need for resourcing early reading classrooms (Elley, 1992). It is clear from the literature that up-skilling teachers

will not raise literacy levels unless the children they teach have appropriate texts to read and this needs to be a priority (Elly, 1992; Holdaway, 1979, Fountas and Pinell, 2010). Finally, in a field that remains unequal, it is tempting to focus only on schools which traditionally had few resources, but for the teachers from historically privileged schools in this study, who are using books dating back to the 1980s, adequate, updated reading resource provision is also critical and urgent.

My fourth recommendation is for further support for all teachers, if possible according to identified needs. In an ideal scenario, a menu of courses could be drawn up, with teachers required to complete a certain number of short courses each year. A menu would provide teachers with the agency to decide on their most urgent needs. Based on the findings of this study, courses could include English for Teachers, Teaching English Phonics, Teaching a Multicultural, Multilingual Class, Teaching Reading Comprehension, Implementing Group Guided Reading, Planning for the Reading Year, Options for Reading Homework; Creating Life-long Readers; Establishing Literacy Routines; Classroom Organisation and Learning to Read; Differentiated Reading Instruction and Development; Reading Levels and Assessment; Vocabulary Development and Time-management, Classroom management and Organisation for Teachers and Schools. Support for the implementation of the courses would be essential.

The coaching model has proved successful where the coaches are of a high calibre, but this is an expensive model, as shown in the GPLMS (GPLMS, 2013; Fleisch et al, 2015). Other methods of delivery need to be explored. Whole-school training, including the participation of the principal, over an intensive period, has been proved successful by NGOs (READ, 2005), and could effect broader changes in school organisation, time-management and resource provisioning.

Aligned to this is a fifth recommendation, to re-train provincial district officials and provide them with specialised skills in the development of early reading, so that they are able to assist teachers in this field in practical ways. It is partly some district officials' lack of knowledge in this area of specialisation that causes them to revert to imposing doctrinaire, prescriptive regimes on teachers, regardless of the their needs or the effectiveness of their practice. A more nuanced appreciation of what is being achieved by particular teachers, and in specific schools, would allow these over-extended officials to focus on schools where the children were not learning to read.

My sixth recommendation is a less concrete intervention to improve the morale and motivation of reading teachers. A series of motivational booklets, talks, videos and workshops could be designed to counter the deficit discourse around the teaching of reading in this country and provide examples of excellence. These could embed newer ideologies to replace some of the unproductive ones that still prevail; they could deal specifically with the *advantages* of a multicultural class and how to develop the prestige of different languages, and explain that children should not be marginalised because of their socio-cultural or ethnic background, or because of their lack of progress in reading and writing. A provincial message celebrating this province's diversity of children, of teachers, of pedagogies and of parents, applied to early reading development, that challenges current narrow thinking, would have a positive effect. Narrow thinking is a residue of the divided colonial and apartheid systems in this country, and perpetuates inequalities. An incentivised, prestigious awards scheme, with no monetary prizes other than further resource provision as a reward, could identify further master-teachers of reading in our Johannesburg schools.

My seventh recommendation also deals with morale, but tackles parental education. Parents or guardians need access to the literacy classroom in order to demystify the teaching and learning that takes place there, and to reveal the expertise of the early reading teacher. This would help them to understand their own crucial role in their child's reading development. One way of doing this would be if unemployed parents or guardians were trained as teacher assistants who could provide support in their children's classrooms. This would provide them with insights into reading development and allow the reading teachers to give specialised assistance to those who needed it, while the assistants helped with the rest of the children. By having another two adults in the class, the reading programme would be better managed and more differentiated help could be provided.

My final recommendation involves the sharing of practice. In this study, all the out-standing teachers seemed eager to know what other teachers were doing, and in interviews that involved more than one teacher, I felt they were learning as much from each other as I was. They also enjoyed hearing each other's life stories and I realised that they did not have time to get to know one another or hear explanations of how different teachers, in different contexts, worked to implement effective reading programmes. If a model of sharing practice could be implemented at district level, and all the teachers, including those who 'beat the odds', could share what works for them, it could break through some of the doxic practices observed in schools and described by teachers, as well as helping teachers visualise

alternative practices and entertain the possibility that models of effective reading can be drawn from different sectors of the education system. This would ideally take place during organised school visits so that ideas and pedagogies could be shared in situ. Even one day in the classroom of another teacher, in a different type of school, would encourage heterodoxic practices.

In conclusion, these recommendations are all centred around practical changes to practice. Documents outlining new policies or directives will not change practice without practical support on the ground. The recommendations in this study are geared towards meeting the teachers' needs, at the level at which they are currently operating, just as the literature about learning to read shows that this should begin where the child is currently situated (Fountas and Pinell, 2010). Well-intentioned changes to the curriculum, or the implementation of interventions, will not succeed without thinking through key questions concerning how it will be supported in the classroom, through resources, lesson plans and coaching, in order to create more 'practicing' teachers of reading. Without this kind of reflection some measures have the opposite effect, further marginalising undertrained teachers and maintaining rather than disrupting the practices which perpetuate the inequalities and privileges of the colonial and apartheid systems.

To equalise the field of early reading in Johannesburg, it is not enough to write about envisaged changed practice in policy documents or curricula, or provide theoretical courses. Concrete conditions that mitigate against social justice, such as poor resource provision, lack of teacher content-knowledge and inadequate classroom support need to be practically addressed in the field, in order to create a situation where an out-standing teacher becomes the norm rather than the exception, in every part of this city.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

A. **Initial training to be a reading teacher**

1. What primary school did you attend?
2. What was the language of teaching and learning at the school? Was this a familiar language?
3. Where did you train to be a teacher? What was the language of instruction at the institution?
4. Were you taught how to teach reading to children? Explain briefly.
5. In what language (s) did you learn to teach reading? With teaching reading, do you think you need different training for different languages? Explain briefly.

B. Current teaching conditions

1. How would you describe the type of school at which you are currently teaching?
2. What is the language of instruction in your class? Is this a familiar language for the majority of the children in your class?
3. How is your current class the same or different from the classes of children you taught 20 years ago?

C. Teaching reading in English in your class

1. Are you following the English HL or the EFAL curriculum?
2. Do you follow one specific reading programme, using graded readers?
3. Do you follow one specific phonics programme?
4. Which of following aspects of reading do you address over the year? **Please rate - 1: Daily, 2: Weekly, 3: Termly, 4: Never/seldom.**
    a) Phonemic awareness
    b) Sight words
    c) **Names** of the letters of the alphabet
    d) **Phonics/sounds**: consonants
    e) **Phonics/sounds**: short vowels
    f) **Phonics:** long vowels
    g) **Phonics:** Consonant blends and diagraphs
    h) **Phonics:** Vowel diphthongs

i) Sounding out or breaking up words whole words
j) Spelling
k) Vocabulary extension
l) Comprehension of short texts
m) Prediction
n) Summing up
o) Inferring meaning
p) Critical thinking
q) Different genres e.g. non-fiction, poetry

5. With which 3 aspects do your learners experience the most difficulty?
6. Why do you think this is?
7. How do you deal with this?

D. Methods of teaching reading in English

1. Which of the following methods do you use to teach reading?

Please rate - 1: Daily, 2: Weekly ,3: Termly, 4: Never/seldom

a) Reading aloud to children from an interesting text/book
b) Shared reading with the children
c) Guided group reading with a small number of children
d) Group reading where each groups reads simultaneously?
e) Informal discussion on the carpet
f) Classical teaching using the chalkboard, flashcards, charts.
g) Worksheet or workbook completion by children
h) Individual independent reading (of graded readers or other texts)
i) Songs and rhymes in English
j) Reading comprehensions
k) Reading games (such as *I spy* or matching letters and words)
l) Children reading at home using graded readers
m) Other…….

2. Which method do you find particularly successful with your class in terms of their reading progress? Enjoyment?
3. Why do you think this is so?

E. Resources in English

1. Which of the following resources do you use in your class to teach reading in English?

Please rate - 1: Daily, 2: Weekly, 3: Termly, 4: Never/seldom.

a) Big Books
b) Graded reading books /reading programmes (in sets?)
c) Charts
d) Flashcards
e) Pictures or illustrations
f) A Word Wall
g) Interest table
h) Books from a classroom library or central school library
i) Workbooks supplied by government
j) Workbooks as part of a published reading programme
k) Worksheets as part of a published reading programme
l) Worksheets used only at this school

2. What resource couldn't you do without?
3. What is the main challenge with your resources? How do you deal with this?
4. Which resource is most helpful in getting children to read? Explain why.

F. In-service training and interventions

1. Which of the following reading interventions or types of in-service training have you experienced?
    a) Living for learning project (READ)?
    b) Gauteng Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS)?
    c) Short courses at a college or university?
    d) Training at a university to obtain a further qualification?
    e) Training by an NGO?
    f) Training organised by the DBE or province?
    g) Being mentored by another teacher, HOD, or principal?
2. Which has had the most impact on the way you teach reading in English? Explain.

3. What did the intervention/training actually consist of? What did you experience regarding this training/intervention? Which aspect was most useful? Which aspect could have been more effective?

G. What do you think makes a successful reading teacher in South African today?

Appendix B: Information letter to principals

My name is Debbie Botha. I lecture at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand in the Foundation Phase Department. I am currently registered for a PhD.

My research focus is Early Childhood Literacy and, particularly, **effective and experienced grade 1 and 2 reading teachers.** I am interested in how these exceptional teachers teach reading, why they teach it in this way, and if their teaching practices have changed over the years.

I am conducting a study of a small number of these effective teachers. Could you recommend a teacher at your school to participate in this research? The research will consist of an interview of approximately 2 hours. The interview will take place after school hours, at the teacher's convenience.

If you have a highly effective teacher, and if she is in agreement, please could you forward me her contact details? I will then contact the teacher, explain the research and seek her written permission to participate. She will be under no obligation to participate, but, if she agrees to take part in the research, complete anonymity is assured. Your teacher and the school will be given pseudonyms. Also, the teacher may withdraw permission for the research at any time should he/she decides not to go ahead.
GDE research permission has been granted. (Please see attached letter).

Once the research is completed, I would be happy to share my findings about effective reading teachers with you, your staff, and SGB members, in the form of a short presentation.

My contact details are as follows: Telephone 083 264 2599. Email: debbie.botha@wits.ac.za.
My supervisor is Dr Kerryn Dixon, Telephone 011 717 3183. E-mail: kerryn.dixon@wits.ac.za.
I know time is a constraint, so thank you very much for your assistance, etc.

Appendix C: Information letter for selected teachers

My name is Debbie Botha. I lecture at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand in the Foundation Phase Department. I am currently registered for a PhD.

My research focus is Early Childhood Literacy and, particularly, **effective and experienced grade 1 or 2 reading teachers.** I am interested in how these exceptional teachers teach reading, why they teach it in this way, and if their teaching practices have changed over the years.

I am conducting a study of a small number of these effective teachers and you have been recommended as a highly effective reading teacher by your principal.

I would like to conduct a **one-to-one interview** with you to discuss your teaching practices. The interview will last approximately 2 hours and will take place after school, at your convenience. It will be recorded.

You are under no obligation to participate, but if you agree to take part in the research, complete anonymity is assured. You, and the school at which you teach, will be given pseudonyms. Also, you may withdraw permission to participate at any time.

I would be happy to share my findings about effective reading teachers with you, once the research is completed.

My contact details are as follows: Debbie Botha, 083 264 2599, debbie.botha@wits.ac.za.
My supervisor is Dr Kerryn Dixon, 011 717 3183, kerryn.dixon@wits.ac.za.

Your help is greatly appreciated etc..

Permission form:

I ……., a teacher at

…….

herby give permission for Debbie Botha to interview me and record my answers to the interview questions attached.

I also give permission for this information to be used for research purposes.

I understand that complete anonymity is assured.

Signed:……

Date: …….