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WRITING PRACTICES IN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES IN GRADE 7 CLASSES IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the academic requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Grahamstown, 2006

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the classroom writing of learners in their additional languages at four differently resourced schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The choice of languages on offer at schools and the medium of instruction seldom meet current language education policy requirements of additive bilingualism needed to support children's home language and general cognitive growth. The central question of my study concerns how school writing practices contribute to the development of learners' writing ability. The data collected and analysed in order to investigate this were all the regular classroom writing of Grade 7 children in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa, where these were additional languages, not the children's home language.

My findings were that there is no check by the Education Department on whether schools meet the official national curriculum policy requirements with regard to the amount of curriculum time allocated to language. Also, that there is a mismatch between the languages on offer at schools and the home languages of learners, and teachers, which is not monitored.

My key findings with regard to writing were that there are significant differences and inequalities in the amounts that learners write at these schools across Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. Decontextualised grammar tasks predominate in what learners write in all three languages at all four schools. Children write relatively few extended texts, and these are mainly personal expressive texts which are unlikely to develop their ability to write abstract, context-reduced genres. Teachers' neglect of impersonal formal and factual genres at all four schools makes it difficult for learners to experience the benefits of writing these genres – that these genres set the basis for the development of abstract cognitively-demanding language proficiency and disciplinary knowledge. In the case of English, which is the commonest medium of instruction even though it is

the home language of less than 10% of the population, this shortcoming is especially serious.

Keywords: language education policy, classroom writing, additional language, writing competence, writing pedagogy

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own original work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been sumitted previously for any other degree or examination in any other university.

_____

Monica Hendricks

_____ day of _____, 2006

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GLOSSARY

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills, the informal pole of Cummins's (1984) construct of language proficiency.
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, the formal pole of Cummins's (1984) construct of language proficiency.
C2005	Curriculum 2005, formulated in 1997 as the first non-racial curriculum policy for schools.
CLA	Critical Language Awareness, the pedagogical arm of critical discourse analysis.
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching, an approach to the teaching of English as a second language.
CNE	Christian National Education, the dominant ideology which informed apartheid education policy.
DET	Department of Education and Training, the education department reserved for Africans-only under apartheid.
DoE	The post-apartheid National Department of Education.
ELTIC	English Language Teachers' Information Centre, an NGO established in 1973 by the English Academy with the aim of providing resources for black English teachers, now defunct.
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems.
HOA	House of Assembly, the Parliamentary House designated for whites only during apartheid.
HOD	House of Delegates, the Chamber in the apartheid Tricameral Parliament designated for Indians only.
HOR	House of Representatives, the Chamber in the apartheid Tricameral Parliament designated for coloureds only.
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council, a government think-tank.
LiEP	Language-in-education policy.
L1	first language
L2	second language

L3	third language
MOI	medium of instruction
NCCRD	National Centre for Curriculum Research and Development, in the national Ministry of Education.
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee, formed in 1986 to organize opposition to apartheid schooling, now defunct.
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation, a research project launched in 1990 to investigate educational policy options for a democratic South Africa.
NLS	New Literacy Studies.
PRAESA	Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa, an independent research unit based at the University of Cape Town.
READ Trust	Read, Educate and Develop Trust, an NGO that aims to improve the quality of education and reduce illiteracy in South Africa.
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statements, a reviewed and revised version of Curriculum 2005, formulated in 2002.
SAALA	Southern African Applied Linguistics Association
SAALT	South African Association for Language Teaching, formed in 1966 as the South African Language Study Group.
SACHED	South African Committee for Higher Education, an alternative education NGO formed in response to the 1959 Extension of University Education Act, now defunct.
SAILI	Scientific and Industrial Leadership Initiative, an NGO started in 1996 with the aim of increasing the number of previously disadvantaged people in leadership positions in science and industry.
SGB	School Governing Body, an elected committee of parents and teachers (and learners, in high schools), introduced by the 1996 South African Schools Act, with control of school's language policy, fees and appointments.
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
WCED	Western Cape Education Department.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

There are many general indicators of problems with South African schooling – a high failure rate in the first year of school, a high dropout and grade repetition rate throughout schooling, a high matriculation failure rate, an ongoing need for academic development and/or language enriched programmes at tertiary institutions. Several large-scale studies such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study: South Africa (TIMSS:SA) (1995) and the TIMSS-Repeat (1999) have pointed to underlying factors for these general problems, amongst others, learners' failure to acquire grade appropriate language competence (reported in Howie 2002).

These problems persist despite curriculum reform and the restructuring of the education administration to reduce the historic inequalities, especially in schooling. The racialised inequalities of the education system were also regionally-biased and rural areas remain the worst off (De Souza 2003). This research examines Grade 7 learners' classroom writing in their additional languages at four different schools in a district of the rural Eastern Cape Province to assess the extent to which language-in-education policy aims have been met. Language-in-education policy (LiEP) operates within a national context of 11 official languages[1] since 1996, nine of them formerly subjugated African languages. LiEP aims to "promote multilingualism … through an additive approach to bi- and multilingualism" (Bengu 1997:1) and to "pursue the language policy most supportive of general cognitive growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in

[1] These are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu (South African Constitution, Chapter 1 (6) 1996).

education" (DoE 1998:4). The curriculum also advises that "learners' home languages should be used for teaching and learning whenever possible" (DoE 2002:20).

There are two dimensions to evaluating the success of these policy aims: firstly, whether additive aims are being met, i.e. whether children are developing their home language at school and whether it is the basis from which they learn other languages; secondly, whether the majority of African-language speaking children are learning English as an additional language (L2) and whether Afrikaans- and English-speakers are learning an African additional language. Children's writing ability in English L2 is important for pedagogical reasons because English, the most widely-used language of assessment, is the home language of less than 10% of the population. It is important that Afrikaans- and English-speaking children learn African languages as additional languages for the purposes of nation-building and ensuring that previous racist divisions do not persist. As Mamdani (1996:4) notes

> apartheid produced a dual identity: race solidarity among its beneficiaries, and an ethnic particularism [based largely on linguistic differences] among its victims. … The legacy of apartheid is summed up in not one but two sets of identities: racial and ethnic.

Though oral proficiency in an African language would allow cross-cultural communication and informal social interaction, African languages also need to fulfil the formal functions of writing and recording if their official status is to amount to more than tokenism.

My study addresses two related question, 'What are the writing practices in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa as additional languages in Grade 7 classrooms in the Eastern Cape? Do these writing practices contribute to the development of learners' writing?' The dominant languages of the

Eastern Cape Province are Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa[2]. In the rationale which follows I justify reasons for choosing additional languages and for examining classroom writing in the selected schools. Though children can learn additional languages in natural multilingual contexts, bilingualism is often not reciprocal. Generally, the less powerful learn the language of the more powerful; locally this means that the African languages of the largely poor majority are seldom valued or learnt by the mainly better-off minority of Afrikaans- and English-speakers. Given the growing inequality between the few haves (largely but not entirely English-speaking) and the many have-nots (mainly African language speakers) in contemporary South Africa, it is especially important that schooling deliver on the language curriculum intentions of using and maintaining children's home language, which for most poor children would be an African language, **and** developing proficiency in English. Certainly to ensure social justice in terms of language, the education system needs to develop learners' proficiency and literacy in English as an additional language without also contributing to the dominance of English and the consequent marginalisation of African languages. For policy purposes it is therefore important to know the extent to which additional language learning is taking place in schools.

The choice of medium of instruction (MOI) goes to the heart of additive multilingualism and also illustrates the politicised nature of language-in-education debates. English is the language of assessment in most South African secondary schools, is the main language used in higher education and is also globally powerful, even though it is the home language of a small minority of the population. Yet, among African home language speakers, English has been the choice as MOI since the time of missionary schools (Alexander 1989), despite apartheid (Hartshorne 1987 and Macdonald 1990a) and from 1991, when school communities could

[2] I have ordered these three languages alphabetically.

decide on a MOI, there has been a steady move towards introducing English as early as possible. Though there is a wide-spread choice of English as MOI, actual classroom practice is that teachers who share a common home language with learners frequently code-switch during whole-class interactions (Adendorff 1992, Probyn 1998, and Taylor and Vinjevold 1999).

Underlying my research interest is a conviction that parents would be willing to opt for an African home language as MOI, if additional language teaching can deliver access to English. Research shows that home language MOI is pedagogically important both for cognition (Cummins 1984) and identity (Klaas 2004).

Writing is my focus since it is crucial to educational success and underpins literacy. Classroom writing is not heavily dependent on material resources in the same way that reading, for instance, is. What is required are pen and paper, which are available in most schools. While my selection of four school sites takes historical and material differences into account, the study explores factors beyond differences in material resources to explain differential writing outcomes because writing competence as a learning outcome can cut across the material differences between schools.

This dissertation is structured in the following way:
Chapter Two provides a broad historical overview of the context of schooling, curriculum and language-in-education policy in South Africa in order to situate the study. Societal perceptions of and attitudes towards the national policy of eleven official languages create the context within which curriculum and language-in-education policy on paper become practice on the ground.

Chapter Three builds on the discussion of language curriculum and pedagogy by focusing on the theories underpinning writing pedagogy, as

these theories provide the tools for the linguistic framework for analysing learners' writing. Policy is often not informed by research, even when its findings are readily available. Simultaneously, "the forces of complication" operating during research and the "forces of simplification" as policy is implemented in schools (Bailey 2002:34) contribute to making classroom-based research findings inaccessible to teachers. I explain the conceptual framework employed to analyse Grade 7 learners' classroom texts in their additional languages, mindful of these communication gaps between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners.

Chapter Four demonstrates the alignment between my research questions and the methodology to address them. I justify the multi-method case study approach and my selection of Grade 7 additional language teachers and classes. I also show how the research questions are addressed by relating the conceptual framework discussed in chapter three to Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold's (2003) social theory of schooling.

Chapter Five presents the secondary data on the different historical, physical and demographic contexts and language practices at the four case study school sites. School histories are drawn from interviews and documents. The linguistic and print backgrounds at learners' homes and teachers' qualifications and classroom practices are based on the questionnaire information about the home language(s) and print resources at learners' homes, as well as teachers' qualifications and teaching experience.

Chapter Six presents an analysis of a learner's writing in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa to provide a comparison of one learner's written output and competence **across** the languages. My purpose is to preview the more detailed analysis of many different children's writing in the chapters that follow, in which each language is considered in a separate chapter.

So, in the following three chapters (Seven, Eight and Nine) I undertake a fine-grained analysis of learners' classroom texts in their additional languages in order to identify differences with regard to the amount written; the range of genres, topics and modalities; learners' control over topic choice; whether the texts are written independently or with support (from peers or the teacher); the nature of learners' errors; and clause development in learners' writing. Through these measures I intend to understand how learners' writing differs, and to establish whether there are patterns of systematic difference in learners' writing competence in the different languages across the different schools. I also hope to contribute to teachers' better understanding of those differences with a view to changing their pedagogical practices in order to develop learners' writing more effectively. Chapter seven analyses the amount, variety and complexity of learners' classroom writing in Afrikaans as an additional language, which was taught at three schools.

Chapter Eight analyses the amount, variety and complexity of learners' writing in English as an additional language, taught at three schools.

Chapter Nine analyses isiXhosa additional language policy documents at the two schools where it is taught, as well as Grade 7 learners' writing in order to compare how curriculum time is used and what the results are for the status of isiXhosa and for learners' written competence in isiXhosa as an additional language.

After the analytic description of the primary data, learners' classroom writing, chapter ten addresses the second research question: Do writing practices in additional languages contribute to the development of learners' writing? Patterns with regard to the quantity and quality of learners' writing across Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa are compared. In

conclusion, the implications of these findings for pedagogy, policy and research are discussed.

There is a particular imperative to ensure that the tensions resulting from the interplay of curriculum policy and practice and theory are explored productively when the focus of research is writing in the school curriculum, because writing underpins the bigger educational outcome of literacy. The assertion by British researchers that "for standards of achievement in writing to be raised we need to make the research basis for national literacy initiatives more explicit, and to question policy where it is not supported by research" (Bailey 2002:23), is as valid in South Africa. I am convinced that a detailed, grounded understanding of the reality of classroom literacy practices and of learners' writing is necessary to begin to change the ongoing patently unequal educational outcomes that our schools produce. I believe, along with Amartya Sen (in Vale 2004:28), that

> In a democratic country, like South Africa, people will not accept that nothing can be done for the poor until the country as a whole becomes richer. And they're right not to believe it. … It is important to distinguish between two kinds of welfare priorities: those that are important for economic development, such as education, health care and microcredit, and those that are important for reasons of economic justice and equity, such as providing unemployment support. Government cannot sacrifice the former – the creation of developmental opportunities – if it is interested in the long-term future of the economy. It would be short-sighted.

CHAPTER TWO

Context and policy

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a historical overview of schooling and language-in-education policy in South Africa. I am particularly interested in the implementation of post-1994 language reforms and in the changing status of the different languages, and how this is reflected in language-in-education policy. However, it is impossible to discuss the present period without contextualising it in terms of our past, which continues to shape the provision and quality of education, and education policy choices. My four case study sites also exemplify these historical processes. I start by providing a brief survey of colonial schooling and language-in-education policies until the first democratic elections in 1994. Secondly I focus on contemporary language-in-education policies in more detail, and finally I analyse selected language-in-education research which speaks to the changing policies in South Africa.

2.1 Segregated schooling

Pre-colonial education is not documented because indigenous inhabitants were not literate. The form of education was informal and closely linked to community cultural practices. The first settler-colonists, the Dutch, "did not pay much attention to education" (Christie 1994:32) for either black or white children. There were schools run by the Dutch Reformed Church, for which parents paid fees, and two slave schools for adults were set up by the colonial government by 1663 (Christie 1994:33). According to Alexander (1989:15) the language taught and the medium of instruction at the slave schools was Dutch. Linguistic historians dispute the relationship between Dutch and an emergent Afrikaans. Belcher (1987:26) argues that, by the end of the 17th century, a creolised form of Dutch that he calls proto-Afrikaans rapidly became the *lingua franca* among East Indian and

African slaves and Dutch settlers. Roberge (1995:75) claims, rather vaguely, that Afrikaans is “somewhere between a creole and non-creole”.

When the British took over the Cape Colony from the Dutch in 1815, they replaced Dutch with English as the official language in 1822, established a Department of Education in 1839 and gave financial assistance to local schools. The policy of promoting English as an official language and medium of instruction relegated Dutch/Afrikaans to “the private and religious spheres” (Alexander 1989:16). Indigenous African languages were even more marginalised because of colonial oppression of the African language speakers and also because the languages existed only in oral form. As education became more formalised and regulated, schools reflected differences of social class and colour (Christie 1994:34), but schooling was not yet compulsory for anyone. Well-off white parents started private schools; for poorer children there were also a few state schools; for black children there were only mission schools. Most mission schools provided two to three years of “basic education” (Christie 1994:74), while exceptional institutions (like Lovedale in the Eastern Cape) extended to secondary schooling and teacher training. In line with their commitment to fostering a black elite, the mission schools’ language policy amounted to a promotion of literacy in English and the use of English as medium of instruction (Hyslop 1999:61). Indigenous languages were used for the ‘basic’ mission school education and for proselytising (Smit 1997). Alexander (1989:22) quotes Harries (1988) who shows that missionaries played a key and divisive role in producing orthographies of indigenous African languages and in fostering ethnic differences based on language.

During the rest of the 19th century colonial dispossession of black inhabitants and white settlement of the interior of South Africa occurred: the voortrekkers who had left the Cape Colony after the abolition of slavery in 1834 established the republics of Orange Free State and Transvaal (as well as the short-lived Stellaland and Goshen), and the British annexed

Natal. Initially in the Boer[3] republics education was mainly left to parents and the church, which in practice limited formal schooling to whites. Even though over time schooling in the republics became better organised as schools were subsidised by the government, by 1892, 92% of learners in the Transvaal were in primary school and many were unschooled (Christie 1994:41). In Natal a schooling system segregated like that of the Cape Colony was slowly established, with mission schools being the mainstay of schooling for blacks and private and state subsidised schools being the norm for whites.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in the interior spelt the end of the Boer republics. As Callinicos (1987:49) asks, "The question was: who would control the new, profitable [mining] system – the [British] mine owners or the Boer rulers?". British victory in the South African War (1899-1902) meant that Britain had political control over the whole of South Africa, and the formation of the Union in 1910 was a logical step. With the unification of South Africa, the limited franchise of black South Africans in the Cape Colony was not extended to the rest of the country, but was instead confined to the Cape. In piece-meal racist fashion, black South Africans were removed from the Cape voters' roll in 1936, while coloureds were removed in 1951. After the failure of Milner's policy of Anglicisation (1897-1905), Dutch was accorded official language status along with English in 1910. Despite their differences over language policy, one of the results of the shared anti-black political interests of the Boers and Britons was that compulsory education for white children was introduced in 1905 (in the Cape, Natal and Orange Free State) and 1907 (in the Transvaal). Alexander (1989:29) cites speeches from African National Congress and African People's Organisation leaders to demonstrate their Eurocentric language choices: "the black middle class,

[3] Boer is Afrikaans for farmer and is one of the terms used to refer to the Afrikaans-speaking descendants of Dutch colonial settlers. The other, more general, term is Afrikaner.

true to its missionary origins, plumped for English and adopted an elitist and patronising attitude to the languages of the people [i.e. indigenous African languages]". In 1925 when Afrikaans replaced Dutch as one of South Africa's official languages, its official status enhanced the corpus development of Afrikaans and its capacity to be used as an educational medium of instruction, and in formal spoken and written discourse.

By the 1940s, the mission schools were "breaking down at all levels" (Hyslop 1999:11) due to the pressures of a growing urban black population and the economic demand for more skilled black labour. The newly-elected National Party established the Eiselen Commission in 1949 to investigate the sorry state of black schooling, which had never really been part of the state machinery. The Commission recommended state provision of schooling for Africans, and the separate provision and administration of schooling on the basis of learners' colour and language. All the provinces except Natal accepted its recommendations, that a child's home language should be the medium of instruction up to Standard 4, and that from Standard 4 the medium should be either English or Afrikaans (Natal opted for English as medium of instruction). Both English and Afrikaans were compulsory subjects from the first year of school. If both Afrikaans and English were home languages, the parents could choose the medium of instruction for their child.

On the basis of these recommendations, the National Party phased out dual-medium whites-only schools and turned them into single-medium English or Afrikaans schools. For black children, official apartheid Language-in-education policy (LiEP) advocated the use of a child's L1 as medium for the whole of primary schooling with classes arranged on an ethnic basis as far as possible. The first piece of apartheid education legislation, the 1953 Bantu Education Act, put black South Africans' education under the control of the Minister of Bantu Affairs and required

that schools for Africans be registered with the government. All mission schools had to register or close, and many closed rather than register.

For the first time the state built (mainly primary) schools for black South Africans on a large scale. Apartheid education, despite its racism and damning inequities, extended schooling to greater numbers of black children than had ever been the case before. Hyslop (1999:54) notes that between 1956 and 1966 the number of African learners in school "doubled, from about one million to about two million"; most of these learners were in primary schools, and a backlog of secondary schools and serious overcrowding continued to be a problem for African learners well into the 1970s. In the Eastern Cape the shortage of classrooms remains a problem to this day (Fiske and Ladd 2004).

The Bantu Education Act was followed six years later by its tertiary level equivalent, the Extension of University Education Act (1959), which established ethnic colleges like the University of the Western Cape, the University of Zululand, University of Venda, Turfloop, and designated the formerly multicultural University College of Fort Hare an institution for Xhosas only. A series of racist laws (1963 Coloured Persons Education Act, 1965 Indian Education Act, and 1967 National Education Policy Act which set out Christian National Education principles, supposedly for white education[4] but which were in fact more general) established the basis for apartheid schooling: conceptualised, funded and administered separately on the well-documented colour-coded scale going from white advantage to black deprivation. The differential funding for white, Indian, coloured and black schooling fostered racism, while the particular role of the language-in-education policy was to further subdivide black South Africans along

[4] Prinsloo's (2002) analysis of first language syllabus documents during apartheid shows that the wording of large sections of the Afrikaans and Bantu Languages syllabuses were identical: "evidence of the extent to which Christian National Education thinking became conveniently invoked for African education" (Prinsloo and Janks 2002:27).

linguistic lines. Another signal of the inequities in the legislation was the fact that schooling became compulsory for coloured (1963) and Indian (1965) South Africans, but not for black South Africans.

Bantu education in all its manifestations, as part of the broad policy of apartheid, was resisted from its inception. For example, the African Teachers' Association of South Africa tabled a memorandum to the government in 1962 proposing that a child's L1 be the MOI until Standard 2 and that either Afrikaans or English become the MOI after Standard 3 (or Grade 5, the fifth year of school). However, the apartheid government survived for as long as it did through a combination of oppression and cooptation, as Hyslop (1999) and others have shown.

LiEP was the immediate trigger for the 1976 Soweto uprising. One of the main reasons for the uprising was the enforcement of the 50/50 policy. The 50/50 policy, which sought to make Afrikaans the MOI for half of the curriculum in black secondary schools, was formulated in 1953 but not systematically implemented because so few African teachers spoke Afrikaans fluently. Schools could apply for permission to depart from the 50/50 rule, and Hyslop (1999:158) claims that "a majority of secondary schools were granted such permission". Though exact figures are not given, Hartshorne (1995:311) too asserts that the Bantu Education Department "authorised widespread exemptions from the applications of the dual medium policy in secondary schools, especially at the Standard 9–10 level". Another reason for the uprising was the Bantu Education Department's response to overcrowding in primary schools – to move Grade 5 to secondary schools, creating a bottleneck.

In 1979, as a result of the Soweto uprising, English became the MOI from Grade 3 and the 50/50 rule was made optional. The apartheid-initiated departure from the mission school norm of English medium has had lasting effects; the use of African languages as medium of instruction

became associated with Bantu education and the issue of home language as medium remains tainted to this day. Mda (2000:156) makes the point that apartheid LiEP called African languages 'tongues', thereby denying African languages the "esteem, rights, recognition and privilege" associated with the term 'language'.

One of the effects of the Soweto uprising was to politicise education, language-in-education policy and the official languages. Afrikaans was stigmatised through its association with the oppressive apartheid system. English, in contrast, acquired positive associations; rather than being regarded as an instrument of colonial oppression, it was instead used as a language of liberation in the post-1970s mass democratic civic and trade union movements. This was in addition to its role, since the days of the mission schools, as MOI, and a vehicle of social prestige and mobility. In its 'politicised' guise as the *lingua franca* for protest action and political discourse in the multilingual urban areas, English further marginalised indigenous African languages.

The government's responses to the 1976 protests and the educational crisis were cosmetic. In addition to allowing more flexible language practices around the MOI and the 50/50 rule, the Education and Training Act (1979) replaced the 1953 Bantu Education Act, the Department of Education and Training replaced the Bantu Education Department and more schools, especially secondary schools, were built. In 1980 a government think-tank, the Human Science Research Council (HSRC), set up the De Lange Commission to investigate alternatives in view of the ongoing protests in schools since 1976 and the complaints from industry and business that the schooling system was not delivering the skilled labour needed. In its 1981 report, the Commission recommended one education department for all South Africans, equal quality education, and a changed schooling structure. They suggested six years of free compulsory basic schooling for all, followed by streaming at the post-basic

(secondary) level. There would be formal academic schooling paid for by parents, or three years of commercial and technical schooling paid for mainly by business, or non-formal education in apprenticeships, and in-service training.

The government sat on the De Lange Report until 1983 when it rejected the suggestion of a single education department, and reaffirmed the Christian National Education (CNE) principles of education in a White Paper. A year later, the National Policy for General Education Affairs Act (1984) reshaped education control and provision in accordance with the yet-to-be established racially-based and racist Tricameral Parliament from which blacks were completely excluded. Coloureds were represented in a House of Representatives (HOR) and Indians in a House of Delegates (HOD) while whites remained the only citizens represented in the central parliament, the House of Assembly (HOA). The 1984 Act distinguished between general and own educational affairs; general matters were centrally controlled in the HOA, while 'own' affairs were controlled by 'own' racially representative 'ministers' in their separate 'Parliamentary Houses'. Black African education in South Africa and also in Bantustan 'homelands' was a general matter as were education financing, salaries and conditions of employment of teachers, and norms and standards for syllabuses and examinations. 'Own' matters, as can be seen, were the minor residual aspects of educational control and provision that remained outside of centralised 'general' matters.

While the recommendations of the De Lange Report held the possibility of educational reform, the 1984 Act compromised any hope that the tension of separateness and equality could be reconcilable (Hartshorne 1999:80). Educational protests had become part of more overtly political struggles, and in 1985 a state of emergency was declared and the student organisation, Congress of South African Students, was banned. The Private Schools Act (1986), which allowed private, mainly church, schools

to admit learners of any colour and also allocated state subsidies to private schools, passed almost unnoticed. Catholic schools had had an 'open admissions' policy since 1976, but Christie (1994:96) notes that in 1986 black learners comprised, at most, 20% of the total enrolment at most 'open' schools. More significant educationally, in 1986, was the formation of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC).

The NECC drew together community educational organisations, activists in NGOs (like SACHED) and progressive academics involved in developing a non-racial alternative to apartheid education, called People's Education. People's Education was concerned with democratising access to good quality critical education for all learners. It did not promote African languages as media of instruction in schools rather than English (or Afrikaans), instead it challenged the white Eurocentric bias of standard South African English and advocated a more critically aware People's English (Norton Peirce 1989).

The political changes in South Africa in the early 1990s when the National Party unbanned popular liberation organisations like the African National Congress, freed political prisoners and started multi-party negotiations for a non-racial representative democracy are familiar. Political and legal equality for all South Africans in a single united country was the outstanding achievement of the 1990s (thus in 1996 for the first time education became compulsory for all children), but it has proven more difficult to build a single education system capable of providing equal quality schooling for all learners. Territorially, the 'new' South Africa has nine provinces replacing the former four provincial relics of British and Boer colonialism and the patchwork of 'independent' and 'self-governing' homelands of apartheid. In terms of education administration the 17 formerly separate departments of education became one national department. The Eastern Cape Province, in which my four school sites are located, is an amalgam of two former homelands, where people have

a form of communal land tenure, and mainly white commercial farming land – it is predominantly rural, with the underdevelopment which this usually denotes. For instance, the Eastern Cape Province's expenditure per learner is significantly lower than that of the urban provinces like Gauteng and the Western Cape[5].

2.2 Post-1994 curriculum and language-in-education reform

In the plethora of policies that has emerged from the post-apartheid national Department of Education (DoE) it is often difficult to distinguish the status of different education policy documents. According to Lungu (2001:95), there are two routes for official policy: either the legislative, which means a White Paper, bill, amended bill and Act passing through a Parliamentary Portfolio Committee and Parliament, or the executive, which means that a White Paper is announced as policy by a national Minister. Following either route, the policy document has to be announced or printed in the Government Gazette. Documents like the South African Schools Act (DoE 1996) were legislated, while A New Language Policy in General and Further Education (Bengu 1997) and the curriculum documents (DoE 1997a and 2002) followed the executive route. Discussion or guidance documents, like the Language-in-Education Implementation Plan (DoE 1998), have an indeterminate status until they have been legislated or officially ratified.

LiEP documents have the stated aims to "promote multilingualism … through an additive approach to bi- and multilingualism" (Bengu 1997:1) and to "pursue the language policy most supportive of general cognitive growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education" (DoE 1998:4).

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[5] In 2000/1, Gauteng spent R4396 per learner and the Western Cape R4392, as compared to R3436 per learner in the Eastern Cape (De Souza 2003:134).

LiEP and curriculum policy have been formulated in separate, rather uncoordinated processes, by a variety of different bodies. For instance, Curriculum 2005 (C2005) (DoE 1997a) and the new LiEP (Bengu 1997) were announced in the same year, but in March and July respectively. C2005 was reviewed during 2001-2002, but the implementation of LiEP has yet to be reviewed. One of the effects of this separation of curriculum and LiEP processes has been to restrict considerations of language in education to the learning area of Languages, as demonstrated in the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) (DoE 2002), rather than to have it considered across the curriculum. The reason is partly that one Ministry and government department, DoE, was involved in curriculum policy, while two Ministries and government departments, the DoE as well as the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, not to mention statutory bodies like the Language Plan Task Group and the Pan South African Language Board, were involved in LiEP. Heugh (2000) contends that the separation of the two processes has been detrimental to achieving curriculum and language policy outcomes. Yet congruence between various education policies, for instance LiEP and curriculum, is crucial for social and educational aims of access and equity to be met.

Post-apartheid curriculum documents, C2005 (DoE 1997a) and the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) (DoE 2002), represent a shift from particular subject syllabus documents formulated at different times, to a single curriculum document for all learning areas and all learners. With regard to language as a learning area, these new curriculum documents also apply to all 11 official languages. Whereas apartheid education racialised learners through its literacy practices in documents such as syllabuses and examination papers, the new policies construct learners very differently[6]. Like many multi-authored policy

[6] "The curriculum seeks to create a lifelong learner who is confident, literate, numerate, multi-skilled, compassionate, with a respect for the environment and the ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen" (DoE 2002:3).

documents, both C2005 and the RNCS contain different theoretical strands.

At the outset it must be noted that though the various models and pedagogical theories underpinning curriculum policy can be traced sequentially, these constructs do not constitute a progressive development and often several co-exist in one document. Because aspects of the theory and pedagogy of English as a school subject have shaped current language curriculum policy for all official languages, this discussion starts with English and then examines the pedagogy of other languages.

The earliest documented approach to the teaching of English, grammar translation, dates from the middle ages and held sway for centuries. English L1 pedagogy in Britain shifted from a formal grammar approach to a more literary-based Cultural Heritage[7] approach in the 1920s. The Cultural Heritage approach was dominant in Britain until the 1960s and is still a significant current in South African English L1 pedagogy.

In the 1960s and '70s a Personal Growth model challenged the dominance of the Cultural Heritage approach in Britain. The literacy practices associated with the Personal Growth model tasked the teacher with learners' moral formation, the cultivation of their imagination, and the ordering of learners' experience and social competence. Analysing this development 20 years later, Medway (1990:19) states that, "Subjectivity –

[7] The Cultural Heritage approach to the teaching of English is associated with the Newbolt Report of 1921 and with the reverential scrutiny of canonical literary texts advocated by the Cambridge academic, F.R. Leavis. It entailed literacy practices that "positioned teachers as an elite brotherhood, whose role it was to develop an attitude of reverence to the literary text" (Prinsloo 2002:61) and learners as apprentices who should learn to respond appropriately to a text through "detailed analytic interpretation addressing questions of tone, style, artistic structure and figurative language" (Prinsloo 2002:60).

what it feels like to be the unique experiencing subject – is now [in the 1970s] a central writing topic". A wider range of texts were considered objects worthy of study, including popular and current writing, when these were judged to have literary merit.

Coinciding with the Personal Growth approach to English L1 pedagogy, the dominant approach to the teaching of English L2 was Communicative Language Teaching[8] (CLT). CLT prioritised appropriate language use in authentic situations, and the associated literacy practices involved "communication tasks to be achieved *through* the language rather than simply exercises *on* the language" (Maley 1986:88, emphasis in the original). This entailed a significant shift in the role of the teacher, from the Cultural Heritage as well as Personal Growth models where the teacher was central to classroom interaction. In a CLT approach, the teacher designed tasks and monitored learners' responses and activities. Learners were at the centre of classroom interaction, engaged in tasks in which language skills were integrated[9] and grammar was seldom explicitly taught. Writing was no longer considered central to communicative competence or literacy and competed with other language skills, especially speaking.

In South Africa, CLT entered language policy in the mid-1980s (DoE 1986) and the *Interim Core Syllabus for English L2* (DoE 1995a:3) stated that "The approach recommended in this syllabus is based on the principles informing communicative language teaching". Though CLT became established orthodoxy in policy, it was seldom successfully implemented in English L2 classrooms (Macdonald 1990a). CLT was challenged

[8] Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was influenced by Dell Hymes's (1968) idea of communicative competence and, later, by Hallidayan functional linguistics (1994).

[9] In a CLT classroom, according to Maley (1986:89), "It will be rare to find students given a listening or reading text in isolation and asked to answer questions on it for no apparent reason".

politically by the notion of People's English (Norton Peirce 1989) and theoretically on the grounds that it did not problematise linguistic standards or rules or appropriacy and promoted the language norms of dominant groups in society (Janks 1990, Norton Peirce 1989).

The more recent pedagogical currents, critical language awareness (CLA) and genre theory, emerged in the 1980s but only influenced local curriculum policy in the post-apartheid period. CLA is based on Fairclough's (1989) theoretical work on language and power. Using the tools of critical discourse analysis, Fairclough (1989) linked linguistic textual analysis to the context of text production and use, and to societal power relations. Unsurprisingly, critical disourse analysis and its pedagogical form, CLA, were anathema to apartheid curriculum policy. CLA was introduced to South African teachers through a workbook series (edited by Janks, 1993) designed for classroom use. It was only during post-apartheid educational reform that CLA was incorporated into curriculum policy (DoE 1997a).

The origins and development of genre theory in Australia may explain why it has shaped curriculum policy in so many parts of the world, including South Africa. Cope and Kalantzis (1993:231) attribute to Halliday the initiative for "bring[ing] together linguists and educators to forge educational linguistics into a transdisciplinary, rather than simply an interdisciplinary, field" during his work at the University of Sydney. Halliday's (1994) functional grammar provides a basis for genre studies and linguistic analysis of written and spoken texts. According to Martin (2000), genre theory was the curriculum arm of Hallidayan functional grammar.

A combination of these theories informs the language provisions of C2005 (DoE 1997a), as is evident from an examination of the policy. In the introductory section of the document there is a reference to an 'ideal

language user' (scare quotes in the original, DoE 1997a:6), which is reminiscent of a decontextualised skills approach. The specific outcomes[10] in one case reflect a CLA approach and in another CLT, while the range statements[11] draw on genre theory. The term genre was used in C2005, but the structural and linguistic features of the different genres were not explained and neither was the relationship between grammar teaching and creative and factual writing. Given the theoretical incoherence of C2005, coupled with the different curriculum histories of the various official languages, it is unsurprising that there were problems when the curriculum was interpreted and implemented in classrooms.

The RNCS (DoE 2002) shifted the balance of theories informing the language curriculum by back-grounding CLA and fore-grounding a skills approach through its focus on the four core language skills. The second specific outcome of C2005 (see footnote 10) was removed as a separately articulated general language learning outcome. Instead a critical dimension was included together with appropriacy as outcomes for the receptive skills of listening and reading/viewing, but not the productive skills of speaking and writing, where only language appropriacy is required. Thus, the outcomes require learners to "listen … and respond appropriately and critically" as well as "read and view … and respond critically", but to "communicate confidently in spoken language in a wide range of contexts" and to "write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes". Janks (2001a:243) suggests that in the curriculum CLA underpins listening and reading/viewing but not writing or designing texts because "the earlier work on CLA focused on the

[10] For instance, the second specific outcome, 'Learners show critical awareness of language usage' reflects a CLA approach while the fifth outcome, 'Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context' reflects CLT.

[11] The range statements advocate that teachers should use a wide variety of texts and that learners write in a personal/expressive way as well as impersonally, objectively and factually.

deconstruction of texts in relation to their conditions and processes of production and reception … [while] the more recent work in CLA on writing … and the multiliteracies perspective on design has probably not yet influenced this curriculum".

Though all 11 official languages, whether taught as L1, L2 or L3, are currently served by one language curriculum policy document, this was not the case historically. The discussion now turns to the historical influences on Afrikaans and isiXhosa L2 curriculum policy in order to contextualise the particularities which shape how language curriculum policy is instantiated in Afrikaans and isiXhosa L2 classrooms.

Kroes (1999), writing about the role and origin of the South African Association for Language Teaching (SAALT), a predominantly Afrikaans language body historically, also reflects on the important theoretical trends in Afrikaans language teaching. According to Kroes (1999:2), audiolingualism and an "underlying theory of structural linguistics" underpinned the teaching of Afrikaans in the 1950s and '60s. This approach shifted towards the end of the 1960s in response to the challenge Chomsky's mentalist theory of language learning posed to Skinnerian behaviourist theory. Kroes notes (1999:5) that "eventually a 'communicative approach' was being debated" among second and foreign language teachers in SAALT, including Afrikaans teachers. Kroes does not specify the time period denoted by 'eventually'. While it is unclear when Afrikaans L2 teachers debated CLT, Afrikaans L2 policy documents did not shift their emphasis from a grammar-oriented structural linguistics approach until the mid-1990s. The *Tussentydse Kernsillabus vir Afrikaans Tweede Taal* (DoE 1995b:5), which uses the term "kommunikatiewe benadering" [communicative approach], recommends a CLT teaching approach with the urgency of the newly-converted:

> Daar is egter 'n dringende behoefte aan 'n klemverskuiwing wég van die onderrig van die komponente van 'n sillabus (taalwerk, begrip, stelwerk, letterkunde as studieterreine in eie reg), na 'n

> benadering wat die taalvaardighede by die leerder sal bevorder, ŉ benadering wat die leerder baie duidelik sentraal stel, want dis hulle wat die kennis moet verwerk en die vaardighede moet bemeester – onder leiding van die onderwyser.
> [There is however an urgent need to shift the emphasis aẃay from teaching components of the syllabus (language, written work, and literature) as separate areas of study towards an approach that will develop the learners' linguistic competence, an approach that very clearly positions learners as central since it is they who need to internalise the knowledge and master the competencies – under the guidance of the teacher.]

Though isiXhosa, like other African languages, was not official until 1996, it was taught almost exclusively as L1 in the majority of state schools in the Eastern Cape during the days of apartheid. The structural linguistics basis of Afrikaans curriculum policy was duplicated in curriculum policy for African languages (Prinsloo 2002). There was no formal curriculum policy for the teaching of African languages as additional languages prior to C2005. Yet C2005 did little to clarify the balance between L1, L2 or L3: the range statements used terms like 'engage with', 'display' and 'respond to' without explaining whether learners were expected to 'engage' and 'respond' in writing or orally. In general, in the post-1994 period, where African languages are taught as additional languages, they are taught as L3 rather than L2; what Moyo (2002:156) notes of multilingual schools in KwaZulu-Natal, that African languages are "offered as a pastime and given a third position", is also true in the Eastern Cape.

The LiEP offers a range of options, but has several shortcomings. The most serious are around the acquisition of African languages, as both home and additional languages. All English- or Afrikaans-speaking learners are expected to have at least three years of instruction in an African language by the end of Grade 9. But this allows primary and secondary schools to shift the responsibility between them, and for both to do little or nothing about the teaching of African languages. For isiXhosa-speaking learners at an English- or Afrikaans-medium school, it is common for Afrikaans or English to be taught as the L2, while isiXhosa is

either taught as an L3 to non-mother tongue speakers only, or not taught at all. Such isiXhosa-speaking learners, who cannot become literate in their home language at school, fall through the policy gap in respect of African language acquisition.

2.3 Research into language-in-education policies

2.3.1 Pre-apartheid research

LiEP in the early part of the 20th century reflects how contested language was between white Afrikaans- and English-speakers. Yet simultaneously there was a racially-defined unity of purpose about the language policies that would best serve white political interests *vis-à-vis* black South Africans. Thus, during his term of office as British High Commissioner (1900-1910), Milner vigorously promoted an English-medium policy in schools, which his Afrikaner successor, Prime Minister Louis Botha, did little to change. The Pact government (1924-1939), led by the Afrikaner National Party, made Afrikaans an official language in 1926, promoted its use as a medium of instruction and established many dual Afrikaans-English medium schools.

The earliest South African research into bilingualism was conducted in 1938-39 by Malherbe, the Director of the National Bureau for Educational and Social Research. He employed his own departmental resources and staff and also co-opted Education Department officials to conduct a large-scale survey of bilingualism among 18 773 white learners in primary and secondary schools in three provinces. The research tools included detailed questionnaires to elicit information about children's home and school backgrounds, psychometric tests to determine children's IQ and aptitude, and standardised tests of language ability in English and Afrikaans.

Malherbe (1946) shows that by the 1940s, most white South Africans were at least bilingual. As the title of his book, *The Bilingual School*, suggests,

Malherbe favoured bilingual schools. The political concern motivating Malherbe's research in the late 1930s was to build unity between English- and Afrikaans-speaking white South Africans. The introduction to his book has a (mistaken) confidence in a post-World War II 'new world' for whites:

> Fullness of life, educationally and spiritually, is not compatible with the barbed wire fences of racial politics. With the sun of a new world rising over the grandeur of our limitless veld, the darkness of estranging barriers will yield; it will yield before the creative inspiration of giving ourselves to South Africa – ourselves undivided to her undivided. (Malherbe 1946:15)

Malherbe's survey (1946:40-41) had four aims:

- To determine the degree of bilingualism attained from primary school to high school;
- To study factors which determine linguistic growth in a child (individual factors, home environment factors, extra-home/social factors, school factors);
- To study the influence of medium of instruction on learners' attainment in Afrikaans and English, as well as on their progress in other school subjects (arithmetic and geography);
- To determine the degree to which lack of knowledge of one or both of the then-official languages affected employment possibilities of school-leavers.

Among his most interesting findings, for present-day LiEP, was that 43% of the children surveyed considered both English and Afrikaans as their home languages; "if the home language medium principle were consistently applied, in the case of the 43%, instruction should be given through both media in varying degrees" (Malherbe 1946:119). However, as already noted, when the National Party came to power in 1948, it adopted a crude version of 'the home language medium principle' for the initial years of schooling.

2.3.2 Research into apartheid LiEP

Heugh (2000) examines variations in the use of mother tongue instruction for children who speak African languages, and divides apartheid education into a first phase, 1953-1976, and a second phase, 1976-1991. She holds that in the first phase there were seven years of mother tongue instruction, with English and Afrikaans being taught as subjects – and that, for this reason, matriculation results were significantly better in this period than after 1976. In the second phase, after 1976, there were only four years of schooling in a child's mother tongue, and then an abrupt switch, in Standard 3, to English (or Afrikaans, more rarely) as the medium of instruction (MOI). Pedagogical and language problems resulted (Macdonald 1990b); Standard 3 (presently Grade 5) had the second highest failure rate[12] of all 12 years of schooling (NEPI 1992:32). Heugh's (2000) periodisation is sound, but I would question the direct link she draws between the matriculation results and mother tongue MOI for two reasons. Firstly, it takes a minimum of 12 years for a child to get from year one to matric, so that one cannot validly claim immediate end-result benefits from the introduction of MOI policy. The earliest one could make a link would be from 1964 matriculation results. Secondly, causal links in education are seldom simple or direct; the MOI policy doubtless played a role, but it would have been one among several other factors. The fact that the failure rate peaked (and continues to do so) in the first year of school, when the MOI is usually mother tongue, points to additional problems in the education system related to teaching strategies and limited resources, such as those found by Arthur (1998) in Botswana.

Research in the early 1990s into educational alternatives to apartheid was, in many senses, overtaken by the speed of the political transition and the

[12] The highest failure rate (NEPI 1992) occurs in the first year of schooling, where the medium is usually a child's home language. More recent work on the Imbewu Project (2004:21), calculated a combined drop-out and repetition rate of 34% in Grade 1 for the Eastern Cape, in 2002.

need for rapid planning and policies after 1994. The work of the Threshold Project (Macdonald 1990a) especially, and the NEPI Language Group (1992) to a lesser extent, have not been thoroughly evaluated and used to inform debates around current LiEP. The next section attempts to do so.

Macdonald (1990a) led an evaluation of the Molteno Project, a language programme which develops teaching materials to promote additive bilingualism. Molteno enliterates learners in their home language and then systematically develops their English literacy during primary schooling. The Molteno approach is widely used in South Africa as well as in neighbouring countries (Namibia and Botswana), but there has been no comparative study on its efficacy in these different contexts.

Macdonald's research questions and her methodological-conceptual framework are an innovative, eclectic combination of cognitive psychology and a socio-cultural approach. The wide-ranging aims were to:

- describe the nature and extent of the linguistic abilities of the black child in Std 2-3;
- describe the nature of children's reasoning skills using a model that would enhance our understanding of their performance in school learning tasks;
- describe the difference between what is expected of children in Std 2 in English as a subject (conventional English second language learning), and what is expected of the same children when they start to use English in the content subject classroom;
- describe the nature of children's school-based learning experiences and see how they help or hinder effective learning;
- produce principles intended to inform syllabus makers and curriculum developers.

My discussion focuses on the third and fourth aims, and the relevant research findings, which are of special interest to my study, as well as on

the methodology and conceptual framework of the research. The methodology (Macdonald 1990a:8) is described as "artistic …concerned with the creation of meaning … with the drawing of a detailed picture which researchers and other concerned people can identify as authentic". The theoretical framework draws on Vygotsky because the study analyses the social nature of teaching and learning and how children cope with higher order cognitive tasks like reading with comprehension and expository writing.

The third and fourth research questions are concerned with learners' level of English proficiency by Std 2, and the extent to which their school-based learning experiences (obviously, including core language abilities like reading and writing) provided a basis for further learning through the medium of English. The most significant finding was that "the burden of formally starting to learn two foreign languages in the second and third years of instruction is part cause of [learners'] alienation" (Macdonald 1990a:47) leading to many dropping out of school before the end of primary education. Consequently, "children are inadequately prepared for the sudden transition to learning ten subjects through the medium of English in Standard Three" (Macdonald 1990a:48). In summary, the Threshold Report (Macdonald 1990a:57) makes three further points, relevant to present LiEP. Firstly, that "the 'straight for English' scenario is not likely to meet with success except when it is introduced into a sophisticated school". Secondly, that "the 'gradual transition' scenario is widely used in Anglo-phone Africa, and conditions would seem appropriate for its introduction in South Africa". Thirdly, that "a great deal of importance should be attached to children's becoming effectively literate in their mother tongue before introducing English literacy". This third point, though concerned with optimising pedagogical strategies, unfortunately echoes the ideologically and politically motivated recommendations of the 1949 Eiselen Commission, which had shaped apartheid schooling.

As the findings of the Threshold Report were released during the period of South Africa's political transition to democracy, it was one of several factors that played a role in the national Minister of Education's formal policy shift in June 1991: that the choice of the MOI devolved to the parent body at schools. This formality also acknowledged a wide-spread practice, following the 1976 uprising, of schools deciding on the MOI, especially in urban areas. Because the choice of the MOI was politically rather than pedagogically motivated, the preferred MOI in most cases was English.

NEPI was launched in December 1990 at the National Congress of the National Education Co-ordinating Committee, and its research was intended to inform educational policy in a democratic, 'new' South Africa. The Framework Report (NEPI 1993:4) claims that "the tenor of the NEPI reports has been shaped by the general relationship of experts and researchers to political strategy and struggle... [and that] the emphasis in the NEPI reports is therefore on policy analysis rather than on policy proposal". The NEPI Language Report (1992:14) cautions further that "there is no single policy that would guarantee adherence to the principles [of non-sexism, non-racism, redress, democracy, a unitary educational system]. Neither is there a single policy that would be educationally sound and implementable in all schools. Context is very important in assessing the appropriateness of a policy". With regard to language policy, the NEPI Report holds that LiEP is "to a large extent determined by three factors: the language of the government; the political agenda of the government; and the socio-political status of the speakers of a given language" (1992: 21).

NEPI reviewed the history and considered the various options of the four broadly racially-based Departments of Education, which still existed (DET, HOA, HOD, HOR). The three alternatives for children at DET schools endorsed the Threshold Report findings:

- Straight for the long-term medium of instruction – which could be either Afrikaans or English or an African language, but in most cases meant English. DET warned that "elsewhere in Africa the results of a 'straight for English' option have been 'disappointing', [and suggested] a compromise, what the Threshold Project called a 'modified straight for English' model where initial enliteration takes place in the L1 which thereafter continues to be taught as a subject" (NEPI 1992:29).
- Sudden transfer from the mother tongue to a second language medium – which "involves a sudden change-over from one medium of instruction to another" (NEPI 1992:29), very much like the DET practice that had prevailed.
- Graduated transfer from the mother tongue to a second language medium – which is based on the HSRC Threshold Report and suggested a "staggered transition from the L1 to an English medium of instruction during the first four years" (NEPI 1992:29-30).

For children at HOA schools, the report noted (as had Malherbe) that by the mid-1940s there were several dual-medium primary and high schools in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. According to the NEPI Report (1992:30), "The decision [to phase out dual-medium schools] was taken on political grounds. Its aim was to ensure the promotion of the Afrikaans language and culture."

For children at HOR schools, according to the NEPI Report (1992:31), the Coloured Persons Education Act of 1963:

> stipulated that at the schools in a predominantly Afrikaans-speaking area, Afrikaans had to be used as the medium of instruction, with English taught as a second language from Std 1. The reverse applied in areas where English was the dominant language … In areas such as the Transvaal where both languages are equally strong, parallel-medium schools had to be established.

For parents of children at HOD schools, the Indian Education Act of 1965 placed Indian education under the control of the Department of Indian

Affairs. Most 'Indian' children had to learn both official languages at primary school and the medium of instruction was the official language dominant in the area.

The NEPI researchers advocated additive multilingualism and the view that "increasing the use of African languages and extending access to English should [not] be treated as mutually exclusive in practice, and we favour the simultaneous pursuit of both" (1992:18). The term additive bilingualism entered the South African policy arena mainly through the work of NEPI. The NEPI definition of additive bilingualism, "the gaining of competence in a second language while the first language is maintained" (Luckett 1993:46), carried over into later policy documents. However, neither NEPI nor the earlier Threshold Report considered the possibility of a child's African home language being the MOI throughout schooling.

2.3.3 Research into post-apartheid LiEP

One of the challenges of assessing the implementation of current multilingual LiEP is the paucity of research into the teaching and learning of African languages, whether as home languages, as media of instruction or as additional languages. This is especially striking when compared to the steady research into the teaching and learning of English. Two surveys, commissioned by the Pan South African Language Board, convey a sense of the territory. The first, a national survey into language attitudes, found a strong measure of support for African languages with respect to educational language policy. Respondents were allowed to select more than one alternative among four options (Markdata 2000:7):

- Mother tongue MOI and good teaching of another official language 37%
- Opportunity to learn both mother tongue and English equally well 42%
- Both English and mother tongue should be the MOI 39%
- More important that English be the MOI than any other language 12%

The second survey was limited to 13 schools each in the Eastern and Western Cape Provinces, and sought to investigate Grade 11 learners' perspectives on the learning and teaching of isiXhosa as a first language (Barkhuizen 2001:9-12). The overwhelming majority of respondents believed that it was important to study isiXhosa at school, but reported serious differences between the standard, 'deep' dialect of isiXhosa taught in school and that commonly used outside of school. Some learners indicated that they found learning English, an additional language, easier than learning their home language. The second significant finding was that isiXhosa was seldom taught through a communicative language teaching approach. Bearing out Prinsloo's (2002) research finding that a structural linguistics approach underpinned African language teaching, according to learners most lessons concentrated on isiXhosa grammar, phonetics and the development of language accuracy, not on isiXhosa for social, communicative purposes. Surprisingly, in the light of the other findings, learners enjoyed reading the prescribed isiXhosa literature, and considered it one of the easiest classroom activities. Yet outside of school, fewer than one quarter of respondents reported reading much in isiXhosa; the most commonly-read text was the bible.

A likely reason for the limited amount of isiXhosa reading may be the shortage of printed resources in isiXhosa. A weekly multilingual community tabloid was launched by Johnnic Publishing in March 2002 in the western part of the Eastern Cape. The tabloid, *Ilizwe*, has a print-run of 20 000. It sells for R1, but about 80% of the total print-run is given away free. Mostly, *Ilizwe* is inserted in subscribers' copies of *The Herald*, the biggest daily newspaper in the Eastern Cape. A further 3000 copies of *Ilizwe*, about 15% of the total print-run, are given to schools in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage metropole and the Bisho area. To date, the publishers have not investigated the size of the readership or whether *Ilizwe* is used as a teaching resource in schools. The isiXhosa teachers in

the Grahamstown district did not mention *Ilizwe* as a classroom resource and I saw no evidence of it in any of the schools.

The language teaching practices identified in Barkhuizen's survey (2001) are of isiXhosa as a first language, but they form the pattern for the teaching of isiXhosa even when it is an additional language. Fortunately for the teaching of isiXhosa as home and additional language, recent research is exploring communicative language teaching approaches in isiXhosa (Nomlomo 2001), as well as research into the genre approach (Mavela 2001).

The first study into the implementation of current LiEP was by the English Language Teachers' Information Centre (ELTIC) in 1997. Their aim was to "work with a cross-section of 12 schools in Gauteng with different language communities and histories to develop language policy plans which satisfy legislative requirements" (ELTIC 1997:5). The sample was a representative cross-section of both primary and secondary schools. The ELTIC team of researchers, together with stakeholders (teachers, parents, members of the School Governing Body, Education Department officials), formed a working group at each school. The study relied on focus group discussions with teachers for information about classroom language practices, rather than classroom observation. It found that most participating schools did not have the resources to conduct research into language policy and practice: "gathering, recording and transcribing data [from focus group discussions] proved extremely labour intensive. … [Working groups also] needed skills to analyse and interpret data from transcripts" (ELTIC 1997:62). Schools also needed further assistance to use the research findings to formulate language plans and policy.

The second study, Brown's in KwaZulu Natal, did "not seek a representative sample" (1998:11) of schools and focused on 12 linguistically complex primary and secondary schools ('linguistically

complex' is the term Brown uses to describe former HOA, HOD and HOR schools which have tended to become linguistically and culturally diverse). The study sought to "assess the perceptions of language teachers, principals and governing bodies" (Brown 1998:1). It also relied on focus group discussions with teachers for information about classroom language practices, rather than classroom observation. The findings illustrate an uneven language spread (Brown 1998:31):

> the dichotomy between aspiration and context: at the same time that multilingual opportunities are expanding in some schools [suburban, ex-HOA schools], others [township, ex-HOD and ex-DET schools] continue to display comparative cultural uniformity based on specific linguistic identity. In fact, in township schools in KwaZulu-Natal, a diminishing number of languages are now available.

The third study, conducted by the National Centre for Curriculum Research and Development (NCCRD) in 2000, targeted four provinces (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, and Northern Province), in two phases. Phase one set the background; it "consisted of policy analysis, a bibliographic survey and interviews with 24 individuals or institutes involved in language-related research or developmental work" (NCCRD 2000:v). In phase two, Education Department officials in each of the four provinces selected at least one primary and one high school in an urban, peri-urban and rural setting: 26 schools and four Adult Education and Training Centres. "Of these institutions, nine were rural, (including two farm schools), seven urban, ten peri-urban and four Adult and Education and Training Centres. In terms of ex-department, 17 schools were ex-DET, seven ex-Model C[13], one ex-HOD and one ex-HOR" (NCCRD

[13] In 1990, the Minister of Education gave HOA state schools (until then restricted to whites-only) three options (Model A, B or C) through which they could open admission to black children. Model A allowed white schools to close as state schools and re-open as private schools. Model B allowed such schools to remain state schools but to have an open admissions policy and Model C meant that the state paid teachers' salaries while the school had to cover running costs but could set its own admissions requirements. By 1992, 96% of white schools had chosen Model C (Chisholm and Fine 1994:239).

2000:39). The sites selected for this study are a bigger sample and more representative than in other recent studies. The data for phase two included 174 single session lessons observed in Grades 1, 5, 8, and 12, interviews with teachers, in groups and individually, and group interviews with learners. The findings represent a generalised mosaic of non-implementation of LiEP from which it is not possible to make informed conclusions about the nature of the learning that occurs. The study, no more than an "exploratory investigation", found that "the limited effect of the LiEP can be ascribed to weaknesses in implementation, as well as to strong social forces militating against it" (NCCRD 2000:89).

The fourth study, by the Scientific and Industrial Leadership Initiative (SAILI 2000) in the Western Cape, reported on a project initiated by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) with three primary schools. All three are linguistically complex and had language aides paid by the WCED. Language aides, usually parents, share the home language of target learners (isiXhosa in this case), are proficient in the main language of learning and teaching, English, and they are not teachers. The purposes of the research project were to evaluate the schools' language policy and practice, and to identify ways to support the functioning of language aides in the classroom. In order to do so, SAILI collected data about teachers' and learners' languages, observed classes, met with teachers and language aides to discuss classroom language practice and teaching methods, and met with parents. With regard to their first aim, they found (like the ELTIC study) that schools needed more assistance to formulate language policies and were "at a crucial point in their processes of developing and revising their language policies and practices" (SAILI 2000:20). On the role of language aides, "there was enough evidence of positive impact to conclude that the language aide component of the project in the three schools has been successful" (SAILI 2000:19).

The fifth study, reported by Murray (2001) investigated the state of school language policy in four districts in the Eastern Cape: Alice, East London, Grahamstown, and King William's Town. The study entailed a survey into language policy and whole-school language practices among primary schools in the four districts. The survey was followed by a focus on one school per district and the sample sought representivity by selecting an ex-DET urban school, an ex-DET rural school, an ex-HOA school and an ex-HOR school. The data collected from schools included not only focus group discussions with teachers and learners, but also some classroom observation of actual classroom language practices. The findings were that the schools demonstrated three broadly different approaches to language of instruction policy:

- Home language, Afrikaans, throughout (the King William's Town school)
- Early English immersion in two situations – where all the learners and teachers speak English as an additional language (the King William's Town school); where the majority of learners and teachers speak English as their first language and others do not (the East London school)
- Dual medium (isiXhosa/English) with a gradual transition to English in a situation where all the teachers and the learners have the same home language, isiXhosa (the Alice and Grahamstown schools).

None of these studies attempted to measure learners' acquisition of the various languages taught at school, which is the only way to establish whether the LiEP aims of additive bi- or multilingualism are being achieved. The studies cited above also illustrate one of the criticisms of South African policy research: there is a proliferation of small-scale case studies with such varied research sites and methodologies that it is difficult to generalise from their findings.

Theory provides a means for generalising from research findings. The next chapter draws on Bourdieu's (1991) notion of a linguistic market to provide an explanation for why different languages or language varieties carry different weight and have unequal social positions. Primarily, Chapter Three builds on the Chapter Two discussion of language curriculum and pedagogy by focusing on the theories underpinning writing pedagogy as these theories provide the tools for the linguistic framework for analysing learners' writing.

CHAPTER THREE

Language learning and literacy

INTRODUCTION

Policy documents, classroom practice and societal perceptions with regard to language in education in South Africa were politicised, initially through Dutch and then English colonialism and for most of the 20th century by a series of successive minority governments promoting Afrikaans for racist supremacist reasons and African languages for politically divisive ends. Current curriculum documents (DoE 1997a, 2002) treat all official languages as equal and advocate additive multilingualism. Yet the various languages have unequal status in society, and LiEP falls short with regard to the teaching and learning of African languages both as home and as additional languages.

This chapter first discusses perceptions and attitudes to the various official South African languages by drawing on aspects of Bourdieu's (1991) theory of a linguistic market. Parents' and schools' decisions with regard to language in education and the MOI are discussed with reference to the notion of language learners' interests and investments (Norton 1997, 2005). Secondly, the contending theories and pedagogies informing classroom writing practice are reviewed. Thirdly a conceptual framework to analyse Grade 7 learners' classroom texts in their additional languages is developed by integrating the ideas of Britton *et al.* (1975), Cummins (1984), Haas Dyson (1997, 2003), Kress (1994, 2003) and Perera (1984).

3.1 The linguistic market

Language and the MOI are emotionally-charged issues which have provoked intense debate. Among African home language speakers, English has been the choice as MOI since the time of missionary schools (Alexander 1989) and during apartheid (Hartshorne 1987 and Macdonald 1990a). From 1991 when school communities first had the choice of

deciding on a MOI, there has been a steady move towards introducing English as early as possible, a 'straight for English' option, despite African languages being the home languages of the majority of the population.

During the 1990s, Alexander (1995) and Heugh (1995) under the auspices of the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) and Luckett (1993) advocated the use of indigenous languages as MOI. For Alexander (1995:38), advocacy of multilingualism, "the project of changing the status of the disadvantaged language(s)" is integral to a broader socio-economic strategy to produce a more equitable society. He holds that, to promote nation-building and the majority of learners' educational interests, African languages need to be developed through corpus planning and as media of instruction. In agreement, Heugh (1995:51) proposes home language MOI for the initial stages of schooling in order to develop additive bilingualism, since to "continue to implement subtractive bilingual programmes of education for any group of students, [means that] inequality is a foregone conclusion". Luckett (1993:55) argues that a successful additive multilingual policy should promote African languages, "both as a means to the desired proficiency in English and in order to recover their intellectual and cultural resources for the nation".

The arguments of Alexander (1995), Heugh (1995) and Luckett (1993) outlined above, however politically well-intentioned, cannot replace empirical research and analysis of the nuances of multilingualism and changing school contexts in South Africa (Makoni 1994). Neither do they explain the reasons why parents make the MOI choices that they do. Luckett (1993) suggests that the demand for access to English is based on what Gramsci called 'common sense', not 'good sense', because children's educational and cognitive interests would be better served by using their home language as MOI, at least in the initial years of schooling. The inference that 'common sense' influences the popular choice of

English as MOI ignores the reality of the power of English and assumes that children can, and do, acquire proficiency in English when it is taught as a subject only.

Janks (2000) provides more subtle insights into the relationship of inequality among the official South African languages. Janks (2000:176) drawing on Lodge (1997) claims that dominance and access together confront teachers with a paradox, that giving more people access to a powerful language makes the language even more powerful. The paradox is particularly sharp because the language of power, English, is the home language of less than 10% of the population, while the numerically dominant African home languages are not used in powerful socio-economic domains. A number of questions arise when one teases out the implications of this paradox for our education system. How does one provide **all** children with access to the language of power, English, without also contributing to the marginalisation of African languages? What level of proficiency in English constitutes 'access', and what level of proficiency in isiXhosa can avert marginalisation? Can one speak of marginalisation in the case of a language that is as widely-spoken as isiXhosa in the Eastern Cape? Bourdieu's (1991) concept of a linguistic market and Norton's (1997) idea of investment are useful when addressing these issues.

Predating Bourdieu's (1991) notion of a linguistic market, Alexandre (1972:86), suggests that the former colonial languages were an essential component of the economic and sociopolitical power of elites in post-colonial Africa:

> [T]he kind of class structure which seems to be emerging is based on linguistic factors. On the one hand is the majority of the population, often compartmentalized by linguistic borders which do not correspond to political frontiers; this majority used only African tools of linguistic communication and must, consequently, irrespective of its actual participation in the economic sectors of the modern world, have recourse to the mediation of the minority to communicate with this modern world. This minority, although

> socially and ethnically as heterogeneous as the majority, is separated from the latter by that monopoly which gives it its class specificity: the use of a means of universal communication, French or English, whose acquisition represents truly a form of capital accumulation. But this is a very special kind of capital, since it is an instrument of communication and not one of production. It is nevertheless this instrument, and generally this instrument alone, which makes possible the organization of the entire modern sector of production and distribution of goods.

Bourdieu (1991) develops the idea of language being a form of capital and operating within a linguistic market. He defines a linguistic market as a "system of specifically linguistic relations of power based on the unequal distribution of linguistic capital" (Bourdieu 1991:57). According to Bourdieu (1991:62), a language or language variety has linguistic capital when it is uniformly *recognised* as being legitimate but when *knowledge* of the legitimate language is unequal. Other languages, even if they have official status and are known, do not necessarily have linguistic capital if they are not socially recognised as being legitimate, or having distinction. Distinction, which carries the double meaning of a language being distinct (different) and also distinguished (prestigious) (Bourdieu 1991:62), gives a language legitimacy. When a language has distinction and is recognised as legitimate, it carries symbolic power. In a multilingual country unequal symbolic power attaches to different languages, or language varieties, and in South Africa, English is recognised as a legitimate language.

After the 1976 Soweto uprising, English emerged as the language of liberation (Hartshorne 1987) while Afrikaans was seen as the language of oppression (Kamwangamalu 2002). Thus, a colonial language, English, more than African home languages, became the preferred language of public political discourse. Some, for example Cele (2001), have proposed that English needs to be repositioned to play an even bigger role in education and that Africans risk further oppression through the purportedly "liberatory" advocacy of African languages as MOI. Surveys (Markdata 2000) report that African languages function mainly within the domain of

oral personal and informal usage, but provide no reasons for African languages' subordinate role in the democratic era.

Norton (1997) challenges the long-standing concept of motivation to explain linguistic choices and language learning outcomes (e.g. Schumann 1978) because it individualises language learners and learning. Instead of focusing on an individualised understanding of language learning, Norton (1997) emphasises the social identity of language learners and that language learning takes place in the social world as much as in the minds of individual learners. She proposes (1997:411) the term investment "to signal the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practice it", and argues that identity changes over time and depends on an individual's position in particular sites.

What is proposed is a dialectical relationship between the linguistic market and investment. English has symbolic power locally for historical reasons and because it is a global language. As African language speakers in the present South African linguistic market invest in learning and using English at the expense of African languages, the potential for the formerly subordinated African languages to acquire symbolic power diminishes. Without symbolic power, the linguistic market provides few reasons, or rewards, for English-speakers to invest in learning African languages. Official status can be conferred on a language, but if the educational system does not promote acquisition of that language, the language policy serves symbolic purposes only (Jansen 2001).

The language choices of the emerging black elite (Bond 2000) are particularly significant for African languages such as isiXhosa, which will become prestigious not merely through official status but also, arguably only, if used by people with power. In her survey of language shift, De

Klerk (2000:95) describes the majority of parents with children at a former-Model C school in Grahamstown as being "from the higher levels of South African society, members of the more 'elite' classes". She concludes (2000:106-107) that:

> By the time institutional support for Xhosa is sufficiently impressive and reliable, the elite among this community will probably have already shifted allegiance to English completely. … Many of these families, prior to their decision [to enrol their children at English MOI schools], were virtually monolingual families, which instead of becoming bilingual, are in the process of replacing Xhosa with English in more and more contexts.

Parents who can afford to, send their children to better-resourced schools which charge high fees, thereby excluding poor children. As the shift from African languages towards English occurs among the black elite, with parents sending their children to more expensive schools, Samuel and Sayed (2004) suggest that the racially-based segregation of apartheid education has been replaced by a class-based segregation. The former-DET schools have the lowest school fees, still have limited resources and serve the majority black population. Barring isolated exceptions, only the former HOD, HOR and HOA schools have become linguistically and racially diverse, as far as learner enrolment is concerned. In fact, some ex-HOA schools now have an entirely black learner population while the teachers remain all white. Though the learner profile in former HOD, HOR and HOA schools has changed, the languages on offer at these schools have remained largely the same. The linguistic mismatch between learners and teachers contributes to teachers having disciplinary problems with learners (Gordon and Barkuizen 1994; and Murray 1999), as well as conflict among learners (Dolby 2001; and McKay and Chick 2001).

Some of the central concerns of my research interest in written competence in additional languages arise precisely because learners are now free, with the proviso of the ability to pay fees, to attend any school. In linguistically diverse schools where English and Afrikaans are offered as L1 and/or L2, elite black children's primary literacy is in an additional

language, typically English. They are illiterate in their home language because it is offered as L3. At many township schools, while an African home language is maintained as L1, English is being introduced as L2 and as MOI in the foundation phase of schooling in an effort to develop learners' proficiency in English (Taylor and Vinjevold 1999). Both practices marginalise African languages and are at odds with the promotion of additive multilingualism (DoE 1997a, 2002). On the one hand, an outdated rural-based standardised isiXhosa L1 is taught (Calteaux 1996, Prinsloo 2002), which is slow to develop technical scientific vocabulary partly because it is not used as MOI beyond elementary education. On the other hand, when isiXhosa is taught as L3 it is allocated less timetable time than Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) recommend for foreign language learning, and it is restricted mainly to developing elementary oral proficiency with limited exposure to reading and writing isiXhosa texts. The breakdown between national and local language policy occurs because parents and teachers in School Govrning Bodies (SGBs), the local language policy-makers, encourage language practices that restrict the teaching of majority African languages as L1 and L2, as well as their use as MOI.

The growing dominance of English in South Africa enables it to function, ever-more effectively, as a *lingua franca*, and the impetus for Afrikaans- and English-speakers to develop oral proficiency in African languages, let alone written competence, continues to decline. As Kamwangamalu (2002:131) argues

> Language consumers need to know what an African language, if adopted as medium of learning, would do for them in terms of upward social mobility. What payoff or reward … would it generate? Would it, for instance, open up job opportunities and give the consumers access to employment?

Prevailing language education practices and societal usage reinforce diglossic patterns of African language use, rather than multilingualism. Diglossia characterises the societal, macro-level functions that languages

perform and bilingualism refers to the individual, micro-level use of one or more languages. De Mejia (2002:37-38) defines diglossia as "a situation where two varieties of a language [or different languages] exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play". Importantly, the roles of the languages (or language varieties) and their domains of use differ with regard to status, with one language being used in high status domains and the other in low. Kamwangamalu (2002:131) holds that "only when the language achieves a full range of functions and no stigma is attached to its use has it arrived. African languages are yet to take their first steps toward achieving this goal". To paraphrase Alexander (2000:1), the central dilemma of language education policy is that for most (poor) South Africans literacy in English is "unassailable but unattainable". The corollary is that for many other (well-off) South Africans, literacy in African languages seems equally unattainable.

3.2 Literacy, genre and classroom writing

This section builds on the discussion of language curriculum and pedagogy by focusing on the theories underpinning writing pedagogy, as these theories provide the tools of my linguistic framework for analysing learners' writing. Bailey (2002:34) alerts one to the communication breakdowns that result from "the forces of complication" which operate during research and the "forces of simplification" as policy is implemented in schools. In addition to these forces, curriculum policy-makers in South Africa have consistently borrowed from theory developed elsewhere. When curriculum policy is theoretically incoherent (as Chapter 2, Section 2.2 indicated the current language curriculum to be), it is ambiguous and open to contradictory interpretations, adding to teachers' difficulty in understanding and implementing the policy.

Theorists within the field of New Literacy Studies contend that writing and written language can assign social positions to people. Street and Street (1991) argue that the literacy practices of ordinary people are all but

invisible. What Sheridan *et al.* (2000:7) claim about Britain is also true of South Africa, that "[W]e live in a society that has reserved 'legitimate writing' for a select few. Novelists, journalists, academics, government officials, poets and a small number of others are viewed as legitimate writers; their writing carries authority". Kress (1994:34) expands on this point, and refers to productive and reproductive writing. Productive writing goes together with high levels of education, and economic and political power, while reproductive writing refers to the routinised writing of scribes, secretaries and school children.

At issue is whether contemporary South African children's classroom writing is 'alive with possibility'[14] or routinised and dull. To convey this distinction I would like to suggest the terms 'composing' and 'scribing'. 'Composing' denotes writing activities and tasks in which learners convey their own meaning about a topic for the purpose of communicating thoughts and/or feelings, while 'scribing' denotes writing activities and tasks in which learners practise content and display knowledge and grammatical accuracy. Though the **purpose** for classroom writing is central to this definition, it also denotes the different sense of ownership learners would have over their writing, depending on whether they are composing or scribing. Both Norton (2005) and Datta (2000) claim that a sense of ownership of meaning-making is important to the development of literacy.

Understandings of the purpose and form of classroom writing differ or have different emphases within various writing pedagogies. Grammar translation, an enduring L2 approach, is associated with writing tasks intended to develop learners' understanding of the grammatical structures

[14] A popular advertising jingle claims that present-day South Africa 'is alive with possibility'. In contrast, presumably, to the former political dispensation in which the aspirations of the majority of the population were denied.

and rules of language. These writing practices exemplify 'scribing' and reproductive performance.

Whether writing in one's home language or an additional language, the various steps in the writing process – planning, drafting, conferencing, revising and publishing – are similar. The process approach to writing, in which learners explore a topic through writing, share their drafts with the teacher or each other and use what they write to read over, think about and move on to new ideas, can be employed in a Personal Growth or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) pedagogy. The Personal Growth model specifically prioritises learners' writing about their unique experiences, whereas in a CLT approach, writing competes with other language skills, especially speaking. The best practices associated with process writing encourage productive, original 'composing', while the worst practices often ensue when teachers do not understand the distinction between editing and revising, an indispensable understanding in the process approach. As Raimes (1983:10) explains, teachers "give their students two crucial supports: *time* for the students to try out ideas and *feedback* on the content of what they write in their drafts" (emphasis in the original). Both Personal Growth and CLT assume that grammatical and genre knowledge need not be taught and will be tacitly acquired.

It could be argued that genre theorists like Martin (1985) suggest a variation of the process approach to writing, with a key difference – the teaching of writing and grammar are integrated. In a four-stage process, teachers (1) introduce a text model of the genre, for example factual report, (2) analyse the structure and grammatical features of the genre with learners, (3) together with learners jointly produce a text of the same genre, and (4) let learners write the genre independently. Though Reid (1987:2) refers to a period of "'genre vs process' polarisation", both pedagogies promote a carefully staged and joint (learner-teacher and/or learner-learner) approach to classroom writing. Another essential

difference is that genre theorists privilege factual impersonal genres above the more personal writing favoured by the Personal Growth approach and CLT. Other important differences that distinguish genre theory from both the Personal Growth approach and CLT are the claims that there are six key genres for school literacy (report, explanation, procedure, exposition, recount, and narrative) and that factual writing is crucial to learners learning socially powerful forms of knowledge (Martin 1985).

However, Martin's (1985) claim[15], that factual writing can develop a critical engagement with social reality in a way that other forms of writing do not, has been challenged from both ends of the writing pedagogical spectrum. On the one hand, critical theorists (e.g. Green 1987:87) argue that genres reify powerful written forms, "there are certain problems and contradictions in the rather strict classificatory and normative logic associated with genre theory, expressly from a gender point of view". On the other, the progressive pedagogues associated with the Personal Growth approach (Graves 1983, Dixon 1987) and CLT (Raimes 1998) contend that genre theory provides a writing 'recipe' that inhibits spontaneity and originality in writing. The summary below, based on Derewianka (1990), demonstrates the ease with which genre theory can be interpreted pedagogically in a formulaic manner.

[15] "[W]hile the primary purpose of narratives, for instance, is to entertain, factual genres are intended to explore the world … [they] focus on how things get done and what things are like" (Martin 1985:9).

- **Report**

Purpose – to organise, document, store factual information on a topic (which can be something living, like a plant or non-living, like the telephone).
Types – report is a widely used term; an information report refers to texts used to store information about a class of things. It can classify different kinds of information, examine components, or examine various aspects.
Text organisation – the focus is on a class of things. The topic is introduced by a general statement. The rest of the report consists of facts about various aspects of the subject. The facts are arranged in paragraphs and topic areas, sometimes headings indicate different areas of the topic. Diagrams, photos can be used to add clarity, detail.
Language features – generalised participants referring to a class of things; some action verbs (material processes) but also many linking verbs (relational processes); usually in the timeless present tense; factual descriptions; language for defining, comparing and classifying; likely to contain technical vocabulary; writing is formal and personal writer's comments are not appropriate.

- **Explanation**

Purpose – to give an account of how something works, or reasons for a phenomenon.
Types – at least two, explaining how and why.
Text organisation – explanations focus on a process and are concerned with a logical sequence. They often start with a statement about the phenomenon and then a sequenced explanation of how or why something occurs.
Language features – generalised non-human participants; time relationships, esp for 'how' explanations, whereas cause-and-effect relationships are more common for 'why' explanations; mainly action verbs (material processes); some passives and the timeless present tense.

- **Procedure** (also called Instructions)

Purpose – to tell how to do or make something.
Types – recipes, science experiment, craft instructions, games rules, directions for appliance or to reach a destination.
Text organisation – goal (often contained in the heading or diagram), materials, method.
Language features – generalised participants referring to a class of things; reader is not referred to; cohesive items to do with time; mainly action verbs to do with material processes; tense is timeless simple present tense; detailed factual description of participants (shape, size, colour, amounts).

- **Exposition** (also called Argument)

Purpose – to take a position and justify it.
Types – part of the genre of exposition concerned with analysis, interpretation, or evaluation.
Text organisation – begins with a statement of position or thesis statement, together with some background information, and often a preview of the line of argument to follow. The argument consists of several points related to the position taken in the opening paragraph. Each point should be supported by evidence in the form of statistics, quotes, or examples. Finally there is a summing up position.
Language features – generalised participants, sometimes human often abstract issues or ideas; variety of verb types including action (material), linking (relational), saying (verbal) and mental; mainly timeless present tense; frequent use of passives; actions are often nominalised; connectives are associated with reasoning.

- **Recount**

Purpose – to tell what happened.
Types – personal, factual, imaginative.
Text organisation – orientation, series of events, personal comment.
Language features – specific participants (in personal and imaginative recount you would use I, we, while in factual recount use s/he, it); simple past tense; action verbs; cohesive items to do with time.

- **Narrative**

Purpose – to entertain (may also seek to inform, extend the reader's imagination).
Types – many types, including fairy tales, mysteries, science fiction, romance, horror, adventure stories, parables, historical narratives.
Text organisation – a sequence of actions. It begins with an orientation, where the reader is introduced to the main characters and the setting. The details included are chosen because they will enhance the later development of the story. The story develops through a series of events during which we expect some complication to add interest. For a satisfactory ending, there must then be a resolution of the complication, whether for better or for worse.
Language features – specific participants with defined identities and they are human or animals with human characteristics; mainly action verbs and also verbs to do with mental and verbal processes; usually past tense; many cohesives to do with time; dialogue often included; descriptions used to enhance story; can be written in the 1st or 3rd person, and the reader can be addressed as 'you'.

The staged teaching process suggested by the genre theorists is thorough, but the early stages all involve controlled and guided writing. The deadweight of decades-long state control of school curriculums through prescriptive syllabi makes it very likely that South African teachers will implement genre pedagogy in a mechanical way (Murray 2003). Research into the implementation of C2005 bears out this *caveat* and adds that: "the most unequivocal finding about teachers is that a poor grasp on the part of teachers of the fundamental concepts in the knowledge areas they are responsible for is a major problem in disadvantaged classrooms" (Taylor and Vinjevold 1999:159). Few South African language teachers have the depth of content or pedagogical knowledge to be able to understand and interrogate the genre theory informing the new curriculum in the sophisticated manner that Kress (1987) or Kamler (2001) do.

Kress (1987:42) presents a persuasive defence of genre theory against the charge that it treats genres as fixed and immutable:

> If genre is entirely imbricated in other social processes, it follows that unless we view society itself as static, then neither social structures nor social processes, nor therefore genres are static. Genres are dynamic, responding to the dynamics of other parts of social systems. Hence genres change historically … new genres emerge over time …

Kamler (2001:83) seeks to "disrupt the binary division between personal and factual writing", arguing that to improve a writer's writing a teacher needs to work with the genre and linguistic features of text as well as the writer's subjectivity. Kamler (2001:103) explains how she taught a failing learner to improve her writing of argument. Using Theme[16] "as a tool for exploring the politics of writing argument, the fact that Western cultural tradition places high value on analytic, logical thinking" (2001:102), Kamler showed her student how to remake her sentences using modality and conditional clauses, and impersonal formulations (using the passive rather than 'I'). Most empoweringly, she taught her student about nominalisation and explained the "various motivations for using nominalisation, for example, to make information more concise and highlight abstract ideas rather than people and actions …[and that] there are also ideological reasons for omitting agency and hence causality and responsibility" (2001:106).

3.3 Theoretical framework

This section discusses studies of children's classroom writing in order to develop a theoretical framework to analyse such writing in local South African classrooms. An early investigation into how school texts developed children's writing was conducted by advocates of the Personal Growth model, Britton *et al.* (1975), who analysed 2122 classroom texts in English, History, Geography, Science and Religious Studies of selected British children, in four different years of school.

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[16] According to Halliday's (1994) functional grammar, the start of a clause in English is called Theme and the rest is called Rheme.

Britton *et al.* (1975:83) propose a writing continuum which has expressive writing as the pivotal, and initial, form of writing for learners while transactional writing is at one pole and poetic at the other. The idea of expressive writing as a matrix for other forms of writing was based on Vygotsky's (1986:181) theory that writing is "a second degree of symbolization naturally … much harder than oral speech for the child". As Figure 3.1 shows, the poetic and transactional poles represent the range that mature writers command.

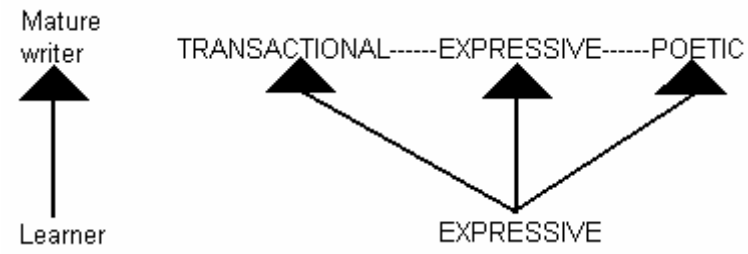


Figure 3.1: The expressive as the matrix for the development of other forms of writing (Britton *et al.* 1975:83)

Using the continuum, researchers categorised school writing in terms of its purpose, audience and function. While the terms 'transactional', 'poetic' and 'expressive' convey different purposes and functions for writing, the change in audience along the continuum, as writing shifts from the expressive, is implicit. The continuum does not take into account the effect on children's writing development when a teacher is the sole audience for writing, as is the case for most South African school children. The continuum also does not differentiate linguistic features of the different types of writing.

Martin *et al.* (1987:63) point out that in the original 1975 study, Britton's research team experienced problems operationalising the model. Assessors disagreed on the coding of more than half (1438 out of 2122) of the texts analysed. In a more fundamental criticism of the model, Martin *et*

al. (1987:63) cite research by Newkirk (1984) which discredits the idea that children begin with expressive writing before moving on to other forms of writing. Perera (1984:216) also claims that there is no psycholinguistic evidence of progression from expressive to transactional or poetic writing. If one disregards the idea that expressive writing is the starting point for writing development, the other short-comings of Britton *et al.*'s continuum are the fluid boundaries between genres and the lack of a built-in hierarchy of text types.

In a subsequent study analysing children's school writing in the UK and US, Perera (1984:217) suggests her own framework. The two elements of the framework are: the organisation of the subject matter (whether it is chronological or logical), and the relationship of the writer to the subject matter and to the reader (a personal-impersonal scale: close personal, intermediate personal, distant impersonal). The first dimension of the framework, the **organisation** of subject matter in the text, differentiates between texts that are chronological (like narratives), and non-chronological writing (like exposition) that uses logic, not temporality, to order the writing. Some logical sequencing patterns include comparison, contrast, similarity, whole-part, and cause-effect. Perera cites (1984:217) "widespread agreement that … [children] find chronological texts the easier of the two types."

The second dimension of Perera's framework is "a continuum ranging from 'close' personal writing at one end to 'distant' impersonal writing at the other" (1984:218). The linguistic feature that identifies rough divisions along this continuum is the number and type of personal pronouns in the text. At the personal end the subject matter is known and concrete (family, pets) and there are many personal pronouns (I, we, he, she, they). At the impersonal end, the subject matter is more abstract (concerns objects, processes, ideas, explanations), and there are fewer personal pronouns and more noun phrases, while the personal pronouns tend to be 'it' and

'they'. Though it is easy to distinguish between writing at the ends of the continuum, there is a large intermediate area that has features of both. Personal writing is closer to speech and is the kind of writing that children produce first, while "fully impersonal writing is not normally found until about the third year of secondary school" (Perera 1984:220).

Perera's framework resembles that of Britton *et al* (1975) in that it proposes a writing continuum. It represents an advance from Britton *et al* as Perera uses linguistic features (personal pronouns and noun processes) in her analysis and suggests a hierarchy of text types. However, since both Britton and Perera analysed only extended writing, their frameworks do not take into account the total amount that learners wrote or the proportion of extended writing as compared to shorter sentence-length or single-word writing tasks. Also, both studies analysed children's writing in their L1, whereas my research is on learners' L2 writing.

Cummins (1984) proposes a continuum of linguistic proficiency, which can apply to L1 or L2: from informal face-to-face conversational ability, basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). He elaborates the distinction between conversational and academic language proficiency into a model consisting of two intersecting continua "which highlighted the range of cognitive demands and contextual support involved in particular language tasks" (Cummins 2003:4). Figure 3.2 below shows Cummins's model:

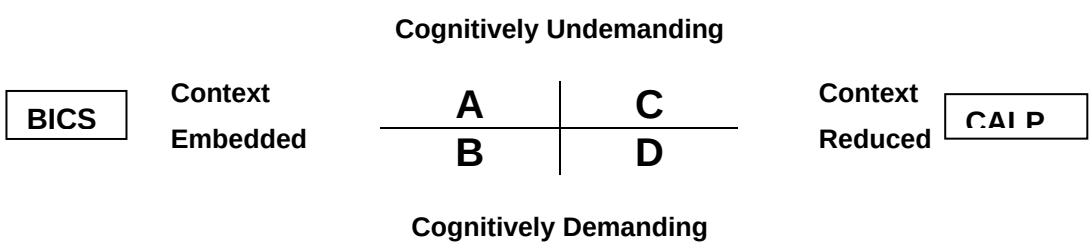


Figure 3.2: Cummins's model of linguistic proficiency

Building on Cummins's model, I explore several lines of enquiry to develop a more detailed framework to analyse the link between children's L2 classroom writing and their writing competence. First, I extend Perera's (1984) proposal that learners find chronological texts easier to write than logical ones, using Kress's (1994) research on literacy development. Second, I consider a widely-used language teaching genre ignored by Britton *et al.* (1975), Perera (1984) and Kress (1994), the comprehension exercise, in which learners read a text and respond in writing to an accompanying set of questions. Thirdly, I integrate the views of Haas Dyson (1997 and 2003), Kress (2003) and Nixon (2003) about children's use and incorporation of multimodality in their school literacy practices.

Kress (1994) holds that understanding what a sentence is all about is one of the most important things a child has to learn when writing, since a sentence is not part of spoken language. Kress (1994:155-156) proposes five stages in a learner's use of conjunctions, and clauses, in writing:

- A first pre-conjunction stage;
- A second stage of rudimentary conjunction, in which mainly co-ordinating conjunctions and temporal connectives are used;
- A third stage in which conjunctions and connectives are used to sequence and for substitution/cohesion;
- A fourth stage in which linear sequence begins to be replaced by hierarchical order;
- A fifth stage in which embedding and hierarchical and logical order predominate.

Kress (1994:118) supports the idea that clause development is linked to cognitive demand by suggesting that certain clauses are indicators of learners' writing development because they are more difficult to form. These include relative clauses, which require substitution (Kress's third stage), and noun clauses (also called projected clauses in functional grammar) since,

> The ability to assimilate other speech leads to the possibility of assimilating other knowledge. Cognitively and conceptually this development has immense implications and potential, for in effect it allows the child to apprehend another's thought or perception and make it her own, as a conscious step to assimilate and make use of someone else's knowledge. … The affinities between this process in narrative and the same process in the development of scientific modes of work are no doubt obvious, but may, because of their very obviousness, be overlooked.

Kress (1994:114) also identifies the universal present tense, the general pronoun 'you', and agentless passives as important generalising strategies towards the development of formal, objective scientific writing. He argues (1994:97) that:

> The development of the impersonal style has a significant cognitive corollary. The freeing from the demands of the known, single, immediately present addressee is a necessary prerequisite to the development of a conceptual and textual structure which is not determined (however weakly) by the felt demands or needs of the known addressee and his known world. The freeing from the specific addressee brings with it the possibility of a freeing from the dependence on the order and logic of the real world. As the addressee recedes, so the demands (however adequately or inadequately grasped) of the subject matter become foregrounded. The two processes lead to formality, impersonality, but permit the development of abstract, cognitive conceptual orders, expressed in the textual structures made possible and available in writing.

The focus of Britton *et al.* (1975), Perera (1984) and Kress (1994) on children's extended writing ignores the genre of comprehension exercises, whereas Granville (2001:14) points to several South African studies which document that a narrowly textual view of reading underpins comprehension teaching in South African classrooms, "even in the more privileged sectors". In a formulation reminiscent of William Blake's 'mind-forg'd manacles', Granville (2001:14) asserts that the questions which accompany the comprehension text "imprison learners in thoughtless reading practices and actually stop them from understanding and responding to texts". Such literacy practices run counter to the range of literacy competencies envisaged in the new curriculum. More importantly,

it is hard to imagine how these mental shackles can have anything but a negative impact on learners' other, extended writing.

Kress (2003) argues that genre has outlived its conceptual usefulness as words on pages are being superceded by images on screens. He suggests that text as a category is forward-looking and would enable a more nuanced understanding of multiliteracy beyond alphabetic literacy, because text can include multimodality and genre-mixes. Kress (2003:35) is interested in how learners integrate writing and images coherently in one text; "to know on what basis this spreading [across written and visual modalities] happens, what principles are at work". Nixon (2003) argues, in support of Kress, that learners should be encouraged to produce diverse texts and that the affordances of the visual can develop learners' written competence.

Kress (2003:65) suggests that the placement of letters, words and images is important in the meaning of a text. In Figure 3.3, he suggests a spatial meaning potential to the position of writing and images on a page, despite his caution against the existence of an automatic reading path to understand images.

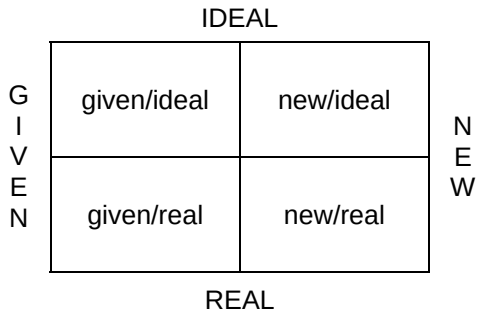


Figure 3.3: Quadrant of spatial meaning potential in 'Western' images (in Kress 2003:70)

Figure 3.3 suggests a spatial meaning potential based on 'Western' writing and art traditions: like writing[17] which goes from left to right, the given information in an image or multimodal text is on the left, and the new is on the right, while the ideal is positioned at the top and the real at the bottom. Countless English metaphors, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) show, represent the idea of the ideal being at the top. However, Haas Dyson (1997, 2003) challenges the idea of a 'reading path' or stable meaning in children's use of space and images from popular media. Haas Dyson (2003) finds a variety of different meanings and representations in her research on how young children incorporate popular media images into their school literacy practices.

In the following research methodology chapter I explain how I applied these theoretical insights to the analysis of the link between children's classroom texts and their writing development.

[17] Functional grammar also regards the typical, or unmarked, position for Given information, or Theme, as the beginning of a clause (Halliday 1994).

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology

INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts by relating my research questions and paradigm, and elaborating on my assumptions about language teaching and learning. Secondly, I justify my selection of an education district, school sites and participants. Thirdly, I explain the tools employed to analyse the data. Issues of validity and ethics are considered throughout the chapter.

4.1 Research questions and paradigm

Schools have become increasingly complex language learning environments as the pattern of material inequality inherited from apartheid is overlaid by learners' migrating and teachers' redeployment. This thesis seeks to understand how these inequalities play themselves out in the context of children's language and writing competencies. There are township schools which have remained exclusively black where isiXhosa-speaking children have little contact with English home language speakers or print material, are learning English as L2 and yet these schools are using English as the medium of instruction and assessment. Desegregated schools tend to be mainly independent schools and state schools which were historically advantaged. Some desegregated schools have become Afrikaans/English dual-medium and offer English and Afrikaans as L1 and L2 to different learners in the same class taught by the same teacher, while African languages are taught as L3, and accorded less curriculum time than a foreign language[18], or not taught at all (De Klerk 2000). The results are that many African-language speakers do not learn their home language at school and a child's home language cannot

[18] Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:129) claim that, "Most foreign language education around the world at the present time is structured to be delivered in classes of 50 to 75 at a rate of three 50-minute periods each week."

be assumed from the language that s/he studies as L1 at school. Both are completely contrary to the additive multilingual aims of LiEP. Thus far, research about how language teachers at dual-medium schools negotiate between L1 and L2 in the same class, and the actual level of language taught and learned in the complex linguistic environment of these Afrikaans and English Language[19] classrooms, is scarce. My research project makes a contribution towards filling this gap.

Studies which rely on lesson observation have been criticised for their failure to focus on actual learning achieved (Vinjevold and Taylor 1999:66). Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold (2003:36) present an overview of large-scale testing in schools nationally in the period 1998-2002 and point to the ongoing problems of reliability and validity in the design and implementation of such research instruments and results, especially in a multicultural, stratified country like South Africa. Despite these limitations, as a result of such testing, Taylor *et al.* (2003:47) claim that:

> We know not only that they [learners] are performing far below the international benchmarks for their age and grade cohorts, but we also know much more clearly what it is that they know and do not know and are able to do or not do. This information must be more comprehensively and systematically monitored, and it must be more systematically used to inform systemic interventions aimed at improving performance.

This research project responds to the need to problematise **why** it is that South African learners 'are performing far below the international benchmarks for their age and grade cohorts' by analysing children's actual writing in their Language lessons. I make two major assumptions in this thesis. My basic assumption is that an analysis of daily classroom practice provides a richer understanding of what constitutes learning than does testing. Using children's regular classroom writing as evidence of

[19] I use Language (with a capital L) when referring to Language lessons in the different languages, e.g. Afrikaaans, isiXhosa or English and language (lower case) lessons when referring to grammar lessons rather than literature or writing lessons.

their learning avoids the researcher's cultural bias inherent in language testing or the validity problem that learners' test performance, rather than their actual language and written competence, is measured. My second assumption is that language teachers' understandings of the purposes of writing, and of the writing provisions of the curriculum, shape what they set children to write in class, which is the major focus of this thesis.

These assumptions, which influence my research design, avoid the paradigmatic binaries of interpretivism, that social reality is a construction of the meanings and actions of individuals, and positivism, which posits that social reality exists independently of individual wills, motivations and actions (Carr and Kemmis 1986:103). Instead of the snapshot synchronic picture provided by testing, I interpret data collected over an extended period.

Taylor *et al.* (2003:108) support the finding by Howie (2002) that language is a factor that affects learner achievements at school and claim that two language indicators that are central to my research – quantity and quality of learners' writing – are important. My research question asks what the writing practices in Grade 7 additional languages are, and how these contribute to the development of learners' writing. The secondary questions, which follow from the main research question, expand on these indicators of quantity and quality:

- How much do children write in their additional languages?
- What is the quality of their writing?
- What is the content, i.e. range and variety in terms of genres, of their writing?
- What say do children have over the topics for their writing and to write independently?

Because this project takes into account the structured inequality in different schools, the research methodology most appropriate to my needs is the case study which prioritises important contextual factors such as the variety and complexity of language learning settings in schools and which

languages the curriculum offers as L1, L2 or L3. In selecting school sites as cases I decided not to look for similar schools with the purpose of finding similar evidence, what Yin (1993:34) refers to as “replicating logic”, because this would necessarily have meant a choice between linguistically diverse desegregated schools or, in the Eastern Cape, linguistically homogenous township schools. Instead, I decided to engage with the complexity of schools and purposively chose four different schools to give a sense of how old-apartheid categories continue to impact on schooling.

As is common practice, I take children’s home language as the primary determinant in describing them linguistically. Thus a child with Afrikaans as a home language would be considered an Afrikaans-speaker and any other language s/he learns would be regarded as an additional language. However, the imprecise term ‘additional language learner’ does not distinguish between second, third or foreign language learning, all of which have different curricular implications. I treat the official level at which a language is offered at a school as secondary because a child’s home language cannot be assumed from the language that s/he studies as L1 at school, especially in dual-medium schools.

My initial interest was to compare children’s written competence in additional languages when these are taught only as a subject, and when the language(s) are taught as a subject **and** used as the MOI. The home language profile in the Eastern Cape suggests that there should be schools where Afrikaans and isiXhosa are the MOI until at least Grade 6, the end of the Intermediate Phase: the 2001 Census found that isiXhosa-speakers constitute 83,4% of the population in the province, while Afrikaans- and English-speakers are 9,3% and 3,6% respectively (Statistics SA, 2003). Despite these demographics, there is such an aspiration for English that there are few schools where Afrikaans is the sole MOI until the end of Grade 6 and I did not succeed in finding a single school where isiXhosa is the MOI until the end of Grade 6.

4.2 School sites sample and participants

In my initial search for schools where Afrikaans and isiXhosa are the MOI until at least Grade 6, I used the Eastern Cape EMIS (Education Management Information System) data. In 2000, EMIS inaccurately recorded 4184 schools as being isiXhosa-medium until Grade 6, several of them in the King William's Town district, adjacent to the Grahamstown district where I live. On my first visit to the King William's Town District Office I learnt from the district Curriculum Head that the EMIS data about isiXhosa-medium primary schools were wrong. He claimed that not a single school in the district was isiXhosa MOI until Grade 6 and, moreover, that there were no schools officially using isiXhosa as MOI until Grade 6 anywhere in the Eastern Cape. Though schools may have an official policy of English MOI, South African researchers (e.g. Adendorff 1992 and Probyn 1998) report that code-switching between an African home language and English L2 is common in high school classrooms where teachers and learners share a common home language.

To explore classroom language choices and establish the *de facto* MOI as compared to the school language policy reported on EMIS forms, in February 2001 I conducted a pilot study at an English-medium primary school with isiXhosa-speaking teachers and learners in the King William's Town district. For three days I observed and taped an English and Science teacher teaching a Grade 5 and Grade 7 class, respectively. Contrary to my expectations, I found that the official school language policy of English MOI was enacted in classroom practice. There was one instance of code-switching into isiXhosa, not to explain lesson content, but to focus learners' attention on the task at hand (Hendricks 2003).

The King William's Town Curriculum Head gave me the contact details of the Umtata District Manager, because this district includes deep rural areas like Libode and Port St Johns, where he judged there was a greater

likelihood of isiXhosa being the MOI. Several long phone calls to the Umtata District Manager in the course of 2001 failed to turn up any schools that were officially isiXhosa-medium until Grade 6, indicating that the inaccurate information recorded in the EMIS data included many districts of the Eastern Cape. Rather than search across the entire province dependent on doubtful EMIS data, for practical reasons I decided to choose my sample of schools from a single education district, the Grahamstown Education District, since it is where I live.

By 2003, in an effort to improve the accuracy of the EMIS data, all information that schools supplied in the EMIS questionnaire went through a series of checks: the form had to be signed by the school principal and the Chairperson of the SGB, and then by an Education District Officer and the District Manager before being sent to the provincial databank in Bisho.

The Grahamstown Education district has a District Office situated in a medium-size town serving a surrounding rural area, with a total of 105 schools, 84 primary and 21 secondary (Interview, 11 March 2005). Like many others in the Eastern Cape[20], the Grahamstown Education District Office is hamstrung by the extent of vacant posts, especially among Subject Advisors who are **the** crucial district-level link in the chain from national and provincial education structures through to schools and classrooms. Their role is to ensure that the curriculum is understood by teachers and implemented in their classroom practice. Thirteen of 16 Subject Advisor posts in the Grahamstown District Office have been vacant since 2001 (Interview, 11 March 2005), and these include all Language Subject Advisors.

[20] According to the Superintendent-General of the Eastern Cape Education Department, Dr Dave Edley, "The province needs 600 education development officers – also known as subject advisers – to roll out outcomes-based education. There are only 34" (Mkokeli 2005:2).

In addition to no school in Grahamstown having isiXhosa as MOI until Grade 6, there was only one Afrikaans-medium school, an ex-HOA school, that had only one isiXhosa-speaking Grade 6 learner in 2002. Because of the possibility that this one learner might fail Grade 6 or leave the school, and in order to have a more even spread of Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers, I decided to exclude this Afrikaans-medium school. Instead I decided on Afrikaans/English dual-medium schools where there was a good spread of isiXhosa- and Afrikaans-speaking learners, in addition to English-speakers.

I consulted the Grahamstown District manager to recommend well-functioning schools in the district that are representative of different resource-bases as regards both material and human resources. It was necessary that schools were well-functioning because children's classroom writing was likely to be limited in a dysfunctional school. I chose a total of four primary schools, which represent a range of different school contexts which continue to bear the traces of apartheid social and educational engineering. The four schools were:

- an Afrikaans/English dual-medium historically disadvantaged ex-HOR school which I call John Bishop;
- an Afrikaans/English dual-medium historically advantaged ex-HOA school which I call Sea View;
- an English-medium historically disadvantaged ex-DET school which I call Enoch Sontonga;
- an English-medium well-resourced independent school which I call St Katherine's.

I gave an information sheet explaining the research project and a consent form (Appendix 1) to the Grade 7 Language teachers and the Grade 7 learners. All research correspondence with the learners, their parents and the teachers was in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. My aim was to practise multilingualism and to give participants a choice of the language

in which they could read the documents and complete the questionnaire. For reasons of space, I have included the trilingual version of only Appendix 1 and the English version of the other documents such as the questionnaire for Grade 7 parents and learners (Appendix 2) and for teachers (Appendix 3).

To establish learners' home languages and domestic settings, participants completed a questionnaire (Appendix 2) because a child's home language cannot be assumed from the Language that s/he studies as L1 at school. All the children who agreed to participate were included in the sample and I collected all the writing they did in their Language lessons. However, I selected and analysed only their writing in their additional Languages. So, if a child indicated on the questionnaire (Appendix 2) that s/he was an English-speaker I examined only their Afrikaans and isiXhosa writing, whereas if a child was Afrikaans-speaking I analysed their English and isiXhosa texts.

To build a rich picture of the school contexts in which children develop written competence in additional Languages, I employed the following data collection techniques:

- questionnaires for teachers to complete about their qualifications, experience and Language backgrounds and the Language practices in their classrooms and schools;
- interviews with teachers about their plan of work for the first term of 2003;
- interviews with principals and other key informants about the history of the schools;
- observation of language practices at the schools when I visited them;
- questionnaires for learners to complete about their Language backgrounds at home;
- photocopies of learners' writing in their additional Languages.

The various sources of data allowed for triangulation and meant that I could cross-check and validate teachers' and learners' self-report questionnaire information with interview data from school principals and official databases like EMIS.

According to Bassey (1999) research ethics has three components – respect for democracy, respect for truth and respect for persons. Respect for democracy is primarily about being accountable as a researcher. I obtained consent from the Education District Office, as well as the school principal, teachers concerned, and the parents of learners as well as the learners involved in my study, at each of the three schools. As regards respect for persons, I guaranteed all participants' confidentiality and the freedom to withdraw from the study should they wish (see Appendix 1). I also gave the schools, teachers and learners pseudonyms.

To respect truth, I asked teachers, as participants, to do member checks of my observations and interpretations of learners' writing and school language policy. Maxwell (1992:289) argues that interpretive validity "is most central to interpretive research, which seeks to comprehend phenomena not only on the basis of the researcher's perspective and categories, but from those of the participants in the situations studied". I agreed to share my findings and interpretations with participants for the ethical reasons suggested by Gee (1990:22):

> One always has the (ethical) obligation to (try to) explicate (render overt and primary) any theory that is (largely) tacit and either removed or deferred when there is reason to believe that the theory advantages oneself or one's group over other people or other groups.

4.3 Tools to analyse the data

This section justifies how I adapted and applied the theory informing my analysis of language curriculum and classroom writing that was explained in Chapter Three (Section 3.2). As a measure of quantity I analyse the total amount learners wrote in their additional Language lessons, the

range of genres and topics for them to write about, the extent to which learners could decide about topics and the level of support for their writing. I examine comprehension exercises because they are a link between learners' reading and writing.

Support for writing is an important measure of whether children's autonomy as writers is being developed through classroom writing. Research in Britain indicates that bilingual children who became competent English L2 writers took "a controlling interest in writing … [and] made choices about best topics" (Datta 2000:123). Raison and Rivalland (1997:15) describe four forms of support for extended writing: modelled, shared, guided and individual. However, these terms have certain shortcomings: first, the terms 'shared' and 'guided' do not specify whether a text was produced jointly by a teacher and learners, or independently of the teacher by a group of learners collaboratively, or individually with the guidance of a writing 'frame'; second, none of the terms takes into account whether learners had any choice about topics for their writing. I therefore adapted Raison and Rivalland's (1997) terms: instead of referring to 'modelled' texts, I use the term 'copied' (coded as copied) as it is common for South African learners to copy a model text from the board, without the text serving as a model of a genre for learners' own subsequent writing of the same genre. I introduce the term 'controlled' (coded as contr) for grammar exercises in which children fill in a missing word or choose the correct word from a pair. I extend the term 'guided' writing (coded as guided) to include grammar exercises in which children transform a sentence or text (e.g. direct to indirect speech), as well as genre writing where children write longer texts for which the teacher provides a frame. I use the term 'independent' (coded as indep) for texts that learners produce without a frame.

For more detailed analysis, I selected the extended texts of children who had been in class regularly and completed tasks set during lessons or for

homework. As a measure of quality I focus on two aspects of complexity in learners' independently written extended texts: sentence structure and Theme choices, as well as learners' use of conjunctions and clauses. The start of a clause is called Theme and the rest of the clause is called Rheme. The element most likely to occupy the Theme position in a declarative clause is the Subject. According to Hallidayan functional grammar, when the Subject of a clause is the Theme, because it is in the most likely position, it is an unmarked linguistic choice. An adverbial phrase or clause as Theme is less likely, and is considered a marked linguistic choice. Analysing the learners' sentences in terms of Theme and Rheme focuses on their sentence structure.

I also measure the complexity of learners' independently written extended texts in terms of levels of subordination (or hypotaxis) because increasing use of subordination is regarded as a significant feature of writing development (Allison *et al.* 2002, and Kress 1994). I calculate the index of subordination (or hypotaxis) by expressing the number of subordinate clauses as a percentage of the total number of finite clauses in each text. Drawing on Kress (2003) and Haas Dyson (1997, 2003), I also compare the different ways in which learners employ the modalities of the verbal and visual to create multimodal texts.

Building on the text analysis, I measure learners' writing ability in terms of Cummins's (1984) theoretical constructs of written competence, as well as local language curriculum policy documents (DoE 2002).

Finally, I compare the traces of teachers' assessment practices evident on learners' texts. As evidence, I examined teachers' written feedback as well as whether they used explicit, or relied on implicit, assessment criteria.

My initial plan was to copy for a period of four weeks everything that learners wrote in their Language lessons. I regarded mid-February to mid-March in the first term as an optimal time for learners' writing as schools would have 'settled down to business', while examination pressures would not yet be driving classroom practices. What I ended up with was not as tidy. I used different time-frames for Afrikaans (four weeks), English (19 weeks) and isiXhosa (L2, four weeks and L3, nine weeks) so that the data is not comparable across language data sets; i.e. the Afrikaans data set is not comparable to the English or isiXhosa. However, the data within each language data set is comparable, i.e. learners' classroom writing across the various school sample sites in one Language (for instance, Afrikaans) can be compared.

The only Language where I carried out my initial plan was Afrikaans L2: I copied and analysed learners' writing for four weeks, as planned.

The amount that learners wrote in English L2 in the whole of the first term (nine weeks) at two of the four schools was very limited in quantity and range. The teachers told me that in the first term they concentrated on reading, in the one case, and on speaking, in the other. I decided to extend my period of data collection at the schools and to copy the learners' writing for the first semester, nineteen weeks. My primary consideration was to collect a representative sample of Grade 7 writing, not one that was skewed because teachers happened to be prioritising other areas of language development during the data collection period. Secondly, I believed that, since English is the main language of instruction and assessment in secondary school and beyond, it was important to collect enough writing to assess learners' levels of written competence.

At the two schools where isiXhosa was offered as an additional language, it was taught as L2 at one school and as L3 at the other. The curriculum (DoE 2002) differentiates between L2 and L3, emphasising understanding

and speaking in L3 rather than writing, while all four language skills are regarded as equally important in L2. In addition, the fifth learning outcome, that "the learner will be able to use the language to think and reason, as well as to access, process and use information for learning" applies only to L2. Predictably, L3 isiXhosa learners wrote very little in four weeks and I decided to copy their writing for the whole of the first term, nine weeks. The isiXhosa L2 teacher gave me copies of the learners' writing for four weeks of the first term, from mid-February to mid-March.

My level of proficiency in English and Afrikaans enabled me to conduct the analysis of learners' classroom writing in those languages, but I thought that I would require an isiXhosa-speaking research assistant to help with translating learners' writing in isiXhosa as my isiXhosa is rudimentary. In fact, I managed to do most of the translations from isiXhosa into English myself[21]. As a first step, I asked fluent isiXhosa-speaking friends to check my translations. Secondly, I presented a draft version of my translation and analysis of the isiXhosa data at an African languages conference (the African Language Association of Southern Africa conference) in July 2003. Thirdly, an isiXhosa home language lecturer at Rhodes University checked the accuracy of my isiXhosa translation.

I translated learners' Afrikaans and isiXhosa texts into English and asked Afrikaans and isiXhosa lecturers at Rhodes University to check the accuracy of my translation. I typed out learners' texts as exactly as possible: in English I included errors of spelling and grammar but the Afrikaans and isiXhosa translations could not include grammar errors like word order errors, for instance, or spelling errors. Accordingly, I ignore spelling errors even though spelling is a feature of written language.

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[21] This is a measure of the simplicity of the Grade 7 learners' isiXhosa writing, as is demonstrated in Chapter Nine.

In order to meet the challenge posed by Kamler (2001) and Wyatt-Smith and Murphy (2002) of understanding how children's classroom texts stem from and lead to different writing competencies, I describe materials related to learners' own writing. These include comprehension exercises as well as their school and the classroom itself, which constitute particular discursive worlds that shape learners' disposition to writing.

The history and context of each of the four schools is described to provide the rich description required of a case study, in the following chapter. To present an overview of the research participants in the school sites, the questionnaire information from learners and teachers is collated and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

School sites, learners and teachers

INTRODUCTION

This chapter, firstly, sketches the different histories, physical and demographic settings of the four schools to contextualise how additional languages are learnt and taught in Grade 7. Secondly, I compare the responses of Grade 7 teachers to the questionnaire (Appendix 3). Teachers commented on their qualifications, teaching experience and language practices at the school as a whole and in their own classrooms. Thirdly, learners or their parents completed a questionnaire (Appendix 2) about their home language(s), languages used socially and print and information resources at home.

5.1 The four schools

A brief history of the schools illuminates the varied, but considerable, role that colonial missionaries played in providing schooling, as well as the effect of segregation in South African education. Not one of the schools was founded with an open admissions policy, admitting learners or appointing teachers regardless of 'race'. Three of the four schools (St Katherine's, Sea View, and John Bishop) were founded in the 1880s by missionaries or under the auspices of a church, while the newest school, Enoch Sontonga, was established in the heyday of apartheid by the state. In relating their histories I focus on changes in the schools' language and admissions policies. In the school profiles I consider the resources and facilities at each school, and the composition of the school in terms of home languages of learners and teachers as reflected in the 2003 EMIS data. I compare the mean age of the Grade 7 learners in the six classes, because numbers of over-age learners often signal prior disrupted schooling and indicate that learners are more vulnerable to failure or dropping-out (Soudien *et al.*, 2001).

5.1.1 Enoch Sontonga Senior Primary

Enoch Sontonga is a state school, begun in 1973 as an afternoon platoon senior primary school, on shared premises with another school. In the Grahamstown district, only schools for black South Africans shared premises in this way. Initially there were 600 learners from Grades 5 – 7 on the roll, all of whom, together with the teachers, were isiXhosa-speaking (Interview, 10 December 2002). In line with apartheid language in education policy, the MOI was isiXhosa home language with Afrikaans and English as subjects for the first five years, after which English became the MOI. Enoch Sontonga opened at its present site in 1975 with seven classrooms in one block. Once the school had its own premises, enrolment grew until a high point, by the late 1980s, of 1040 learners and 26 teachers. By 1987 two extra blocks had been built and there were 24 classrooms in total. When the present principal was appointed in 1988, the roll still stood at over 1000 learners with a staff of 26 teachers. In the late-1980s, the school was vandalized and partially burnt during student protests. It was renovated (floors resurfaced, walls plastered, painted, broken windows replaced, electrified, and water-borne toilets built) in the early 1990s. These renovations were done (Interview, 10 December 2002) because electricity was essential as Enoch Sontonga was platooning with another incipient high school (eventually built in 1994). The period of platooning meant that the principal could make a case that the school needed lighting particularly in winter when lessons started early while it was still dark and ended late in the afternoon when it was again becoming dark.

At present Enoch Sontonga needs maintenance work because of the passage of time, not vandalism. Enoch Sontonga (like most township schools) has limited resources because of the deliberate under-funding of black schools during the apartheid days. There is no school hall, library, science laboratory or staff room for teachers, and the sports fields are gravelly areas on the rather bare and windy school grounds.

Unlike the other three schools in my study, which have become more demographically representative since 1994, Enoch Sontonga has remained exclusively black as regards learners and teachers, and virtually solely isiXhosa-speaking. In fact, in common with many other township schools, especially after 1998, the number of learners has dropped as learners left to go to town and formerly 'coloured' schools. School fees are the lowest of the four schools, at R50 per annum.

I selected only one Grade 7 class because the learner language profile was very similar across the school, and classes were not academically streamed. In Grade 7E, 33 learners out of a total of 37 agreed to participate in my study, the highest response rate among the four schools. The appropriate age for children in Grade 7 is 13. The mean age of learners at Enoch Sontonga was 13,7. This average, however, covers a range which includes eight 12-year olds and one 20-year old. The oldest learner in my sample turned 17 in 2003.

5.1.2 John Bishop Primary School

The foundation stone of John Bishop was laid in March 1884 by John X Merriman as Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works in the Cape Colony. There is no reported name for the school, but it was connected with the Union Chapel Congregational Church. It was "opposite the Hottentot Location, from which the pupils will be supplied" (*The Journal* 1884:3), and planners expected 125 pupils. Two of the six erven for the school were donated by the government of the Cape Colony, while the bulk of the money for the school came from an annual quitrent of 5 shillings paid by the 'Hottentot' erfholders, which had been saved since 1855. When this money amounted to £437, various local notables increased the amount to £482 through donations, and in 1884 the building was begun. Merriman's speech at the stone-laying ceremony exemplifies

the idea of the dignity of manual labour, for colonised people. *The Journal* (1884:3) reported that Merriman was:

> very glad that this school would be built to a great extent out of the contributions of the people, because it would teach them to appreciate the value of the work. … Education did not consist – he might tell them – in reading books, and working out sums, but it consisted in doing work given them to do with intelligence and integrity. The education that made them think themselves too fine to use their hands was a curse to the country, and he would say to them that the properly educated man took pride in working with his hands and doing it well.

The newspaper report does not explain how many grades would be taught at the school, or what the language of instruction would be. It seems safe to assume that it would be English, since that was the practice at the time, especially in schools run by British missionaries. I was unable to establish exactly when, and for what reason, the language of instruction changed, but a former school principal who had attended the school as a learner (Interview, 3 February 2003) said that by the mid-1940s the medium of instruction was Afrikaans, and had been for years. Though *The Journal* report states that the school was to draw pupils primarily from the surrounding "Hottentot Location", it is not clear whether isiXhosa-speaking children from nearby Fingo Village were also admitted. The unofficial admissions policy from the mid-1960s (Interview, 23 September 2003) was that the school admitted children who had one 'coloured' parent, regardless of their home language or apartheid racial classification.

The Congregational Church sold the school to the Cape Education Department in 1970 and it took its present name, that of the then-current Congregational priest. In the early 1990s John Bishop admitted isiXhosa-speaking learners regardless of their parentage, and the first isiXhosa-speaking teacher was redeployed to John Bishop in 1997. John Bishop has become more integrated since 1994, and in 2003 the majority of learners (62%), and 21% of the teachers (5 out of 23) were isiXhosa-speaking. In response to these demographic changes, there has been a

change in language policy, though not to the additional languages on offer. In contrast to the decades-long practice of Afrikaans L1 and medium of instruction with English as L2, John Bishop is now a dual-medium English/Afrikaans school. This means that, in the same class, both Afrikaans and English are taught as L1 and L2: English L1 to isiXhosa-speaking learners and Afrikaans L1 to Afrikaans-speaking learners, while English L2 is taught to Afrikaans-speakers and Afrikaans L2 to isiXhosa-speakers. Both the Afrikaans and English teachers have the choice whether the L1 and L2 learners do exactly the same work or whether the L1 learners do the same core work as the L2 learners as well as extra, more advanced reading and writing. Teachers of content subjects use both languages as media of instruction, notes on the board (or handouts) are in both languages, examinations are set in both languages and learners can write their own notes, assignments and examinations in either Afrikaans or English.

The Education Department has not painted John Bishop since the early 1980s, and after so many years the school badly needs maintenance work. School fees of R100 per annum are used mainly for photocopy paper and sports equipment. For the same historical reasons and in similar ways, resources at John Bishop are as limited as those at Enoch Sontonga. John Bishop has a staff room whereas Enoch Sontonga does not, but it too has no school hall, library or science laboratory and the sports grounds consist of a tarred netball field and uneven, gravelly areas near the perimeter of the school. One teacher, doing a Masters degree specialising in the use of computers in education, is busy setting up a computer laboratory at the school as a practical project for his coursework. After two years he has the beginnings of a computer laboratory: in a big classroom, fully burglar-barred, there are long tables and electrical connections for 18 computers, all of which he obtained through donations and sponsorships. The computers have the software for word-processing, but no internet connection, and the computer laboratory is not yet in use.

I selected two Grade 7 classes (Grade 7 A and B) with different learner language profiles: Grade 7A was a class of 30 Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaking learners and Grade 7B was a class of 26, mainly isiXhosa-speakers with one Sesotho-speaker. A total of 46 learners agreed to participate in my study, 20 from Grade 7A and 26 from Grade 7B. The mean age of learners in grade 7A was 13,8 (one month higher than the mean at Enoch Sontonga), and in Grade 7B it was 14,2 years, 14 months above the grade appropriate age. The oldest learners in my sample, and also the oldest in each class, were 17 years.

5.1.3 Sea View High School

The forerunner of Sea View became firmly established in 1875 when an Anglican missionary arrived. Until then, schooling for whites had been organised, but intermittent. By 1889, the school had a roll of 50 boys and girls – all white, with English as medium of instruction. By 1896, the school had grown to such an extent that it needed a fulltime principal, for the first time a non-cleric. There was a succession of unremarkable headmasters, until a headmaster who arrived in 1923 and made significant changes to the school. During his term of office he improved and developed sport, established English and Afrikaans school libraries, initiated regular cultural activities, designed the school badge, and moved the school to its present premises in 1929.

The whites-only history of Sea View changed in response to legislation. In 1993 the first black pupil was admitted to Standard 1 and the first teacher of colour, an Afrikaans-speaker, was appointed in 1999 through the redeployment process. Like John Bishop, Sea View is a dual-medium school. The language policy is that English is taught as L1 to English- and isiXhosa-speakers while Afrikaans is taught as L2 to most learners and also as L1 to sufficiently proficient, usually Afrikaans-speaking, learners. As at John Bishop, the Afrikaans and English teachers have the choice as

to whether the L1 and L2 learners do exactly the same work or whether the L1 learners also do extra, more advanced reading and writing. Both languages are used as media of instruction and all notes are in both languages, examinations are set in both languages and learners can write their own notes, assignments and examinations in either Afrikaans or English.

The teacher who initiated isiXhosa lessons in 1986 was a fluent speaker in a fulltime post, not a qualified isiXhosa teacher, who committed her own time to teaching extra classes in the afternoons and to designing materials, because none existed for isiXhosa L3 teaching at the time (Interview, 17 June 2003). This informal, low status way of introducing African languages into the curriculum, as L3s, may be a trend. In similar formerly whites-only schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Moyo (2002:156) notes that isiZulu "is offered as a pastime and given a third position despite it being the most widely used among three languages [in that province]". At present, isiXhosa is taught as L3 to non-isiXhosa-speakers only, for one 45-minute period per week. IsiXhosa-speaking learners work and read in the library during the isiXhosa L3 lessons. Sea View has become more integrated since 1994, and in 2003, 32,1% of learners were isiXhosa-speaking as compared to 18,5% Afrikaans-speaking learners and 48,8% English-speaking. Despite these demographic changes, there has not been a change in language policy and there were no isiXhosa L1 teachers at the school in 2003. School fees rise for the different phases, unlike the flat rate for all grades at John Bishop and Enoch Sontonga, and for Grade 7 the fees are R2750 per annum.

Because it was a historically whites-only school, Sea View was better resourced during the apartheid days than state schools for blacks. It has been well-maintained and its resources include extensive grassed sports fields, a staff room, a school hall, library, and science laboratories. The school has one computer laboratory that is shared by primary and high

school learners; in 2003 the Grade 7s had one 45-minute period a week of dedicated time in the computer laboratory.

There are two Grade 7 classes and I decided to include both in my sample because learners' home languages vary across the two classes, with different combinations of Afrikaans-, English-, isiXhosa-speaking learners and a sprinkling of foreign nationals as well. Grade 7i was a class of 38, and Grade 7ii, 35. A total of 43 learners agreed to participate in my study, 26 from Grade 7i and 17 from Grade 7ii. The mean age of learners in Grade 7i was 13,5 and in Grade 7ii it was 13,6 (both closer to the grade appropriate average of 13, and lower than the mean at either Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop). The oldest learner in Grade 7i and ii was 17, and was not in my sample. The oldest learners in my sample were 15-year olds.

5.1.4 St Katherine's College

The forerunner of St Katherine's was established as a boarding school in 1894 when the Methodist church and interested locals formed a Board to establish a boys-only school. The Board bought land to build the school, and the Methodist priest chaired the Board and served as principal. The property, however, was vested in the Trustees of the Board, not the church. Initially the school was called Boys' College, later the Wesleyan Collegiate for Boys, and in 1896 its present name. In this early period it was housed in 'a large unsightly [tin] building' (Kirkby and Kirkby 1994:12).

As regards policies around language and admissions, the school was English medium of instruction and whites-only from the start, and boys-only for quite a while. It became co-educational in 1973, but has remained English medium. In terms of the admissions policy, "the opening of the School to all races" was accomplished by integrating pupils of colour from the most junior grades and letting them work their way up until "finally scholars were admitted at all levels" (Kirkby and Kirkby 1994:222). The

Executive Committee of the Council argued that "as the standards differ in Black schools, [St Katherine's] would begin by restructuring admission of Blacks to Sub A, unless there were exceptional circumstances present in any particular case" (Kirkby and Kirkby 1994:146). Integration at St Katherine's preceded legislation: an isiXhosa-speaking teacher was appointed in 1980 and the first isiXhosa-speaking pupil was admitted in 1982, i.e. four years before the Private Schools Act of 1986, which legalised an open admissions policy for private schools. Because St Katherine's policy of gradual assimilation was clearly articulated and well documented, it is easier to show that its aim was to integrate black children into the dominant white, English-speaking character of the school. Yet, the manner in which Sea View and John Bishop (the other schools in my study which have become more culturally and linguistically diverse with the advent of democracy) have dealt with changing learner demographics is similar. Another interesting common factor is the gap between the shift in learner and teacher demographics at all these schools.

In both the primary and secondary sections of St Katherine's, English remains the medium of instruction and is taught as L1. Until 2000, Afrikaans was taught as L2 to most pupils, and also as L1 to sufficiently proficient pupils. Both L1 and L2 were allocated similar amounts of teaching time. Since 1980 isiXhosa has been taught as an additional language (L3) at the primary level and its time allocation started off at 30 minutes per week in Grade 1 and increased to 90 minutes per week by Grade 7. In 2001, at the initiative of the isiXhosa teacher and with the support of the senior Afrikaans teacher, the policy for additional languages was changed so that both languages could be taught as L2s.

St Katherine's is an extremely well resourced independent school with a residential campus that has extensive gardens with trees, lawns and flowers. It has varied sports facilities and resources include science laboratories, a little museum of the school, a media centre with computers

and internet linkages including email, regularly used by the learners since many, in 2003 the majority, came from foreign countries.

Learners at St Katherine's were reluctant to participate in my research project, for reasons that neither the teachers nor I could understand. Since the Grade 7 classes were not academically streamed and learners' home languages were mainly English, but also varied a great deal, I decided to take the combined responses from the two classes of 24 learners each. I ended up with a sample of ten, five from each class, nine of whom are English-speaking and one seTswana-speaking. Annual fees for Grade 7 are R22 380 for day pupils and R45 825 for boarders; 27 out of the total of 48 Grade 7 learners board. The mean age of the Grade 7 learners in both classes at St Katherine's is exactly 13 years, the grade appropriate age. There were no learners older than 14 years, and quite a few 12 year olds.

In summary, Grade 7 learners' mean ages at the historically advantaged, higher fee-charging schools (Sea View and St Katherine's) are closer to, or at, grade appropriate age compared to those at the historically (and still) disadvantaged, lower fee-charging schools (Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop).

5.1.5 Comparative school resources and facilities

This section provides a detailed picture of the the current physical context of each school, after more than a decade of democracy and concerted efforts by the government to redress educational inequities. Table 5.1, below, summarises some key information such as total school enrolment, learners' and teachers' home languages, the medium of instruction, and the number of classrooms. Using this information, I calculate the teacher-learner and classroom-learner ratios at the four schools to show the correspondence with schools' relative privilege or disadvantage.

Table 5.1: School Profiles 2003

Indicators	Enoch Sontonga	John Bishop	Sea View	St Katherine's
1. Primary school enrolment	558	803	443	271†
2. Learners' L1:				
English	0	0	216	95‡
Afrikaans	0	305	82	13‡
IsiXhosa	558	498	142	14‡
Other			3	
3. No. of teachers	22	23	18	20
4. Teachers' L1:				
English	0	0	11	20
Afrikaans	0	18	7	0
IsiXhosa	20	5	0	0
	2 Sesotho			
5. Medium of Instruction	English	Dual Eng/Afrik medium	Dual Eng/Afrik medium	English
6. Additional languages	English (Afr only Gr 5 & 6)	Afrikaans and English	Afrikaans IsiXhosa	Afrikaans IsiXhosa
7. Number and construction of classrooms	21 brick	11 brick, 1 prefab, 6 divided by dry walls	14 brick	15 brick classrooms, 3 specialist rooms
8. Number of computers for learners	0	18, not yet in use	38, none with internet	27, all with internet links

† 122 South Africans, 149 foreigners
‡ These figures include SA learners only

The teacher-learner ratio at John Bishop of 1:34,9 approximates to the DoE (1996a) norm of 1:35 for the senior phase, while at Enoch Sontonga and Sea View the ratios of 1:25,4 and 1:24,6 respectively, are well below the norm. It is the classroom-learner ratios which reflect the impact of changing learner enrolment patterns. The classroom-learner ratio at Enoch Sontonga of 1:26,6 shows that, in common with many ex-DET schools, it is emptying, as ex-HOR (and also ex-HOD) schools, like John Bishop with a ratio of 1:44,6 become seriously overcrowded. At Sea View, the classroom-learner ratio of 1:31,6 is higher than the teacher-learner ratio of 1:24,6.

Favourable teacher-learner ratios in developed countries are usually a reliable indicator of learner achievement. However, in developing countries, research "provides no support for policies of reducing class sizes. … class sizes in the studies of developing countries are

considerably more varied than those in the United States studies" (Hanushek 1995:281). Confirming Hanushek's caution about inferring relationships between class size and learner achievement in all contexts, this research shows both that class size does indeed vary a great deal in South African schools, and also that favourable teacher-learner ratios like those at Enoch Sontonga do not necessarily translate into greater learner written output. It is not possible to make judgments about learner achievement via examination results because South Africa does not yet have national standardised testing at the senior primary phase. The systemic evaluation of the foundation phase (DoE 2003), the most recent and comprehensive assessment of learner achievement, confirms that most township primary schools continue to produce poor results even as their classrooms empty. Yet, arguably, the differences among state schools is less dramatic than between state schools generally and independent schools (as formerly private schools are now known). The ratios for St Katherine's are 1 teacher:13,5 learners, and 1 classroom:15 learners. The ratios alone, however, do not convey differences in the size and physical space of the classrooms or how the minutiae of walls, windows and floor surface create different learning environments.

Below, I analyse photographs of Grade 7 language classrooms in the four schools to convey how these physical features create more or less conducive learning environments. The first photograph is of the English classroom at Enoch Sontonga; the second is of the Afrikaans classroom at John Bishop (the physical features and size of the Grade 7 English and Afrikaans classrooms were identical); the third is of the English classroom at Sea View (the Afrikaans classroom was smaller than the English and there was no isiXhosa classroom); the fourth photograph shows the isiXhosa classroom at St Katherine's, which was typical of the English and Afrikaans classroom in terms of features and physical space.

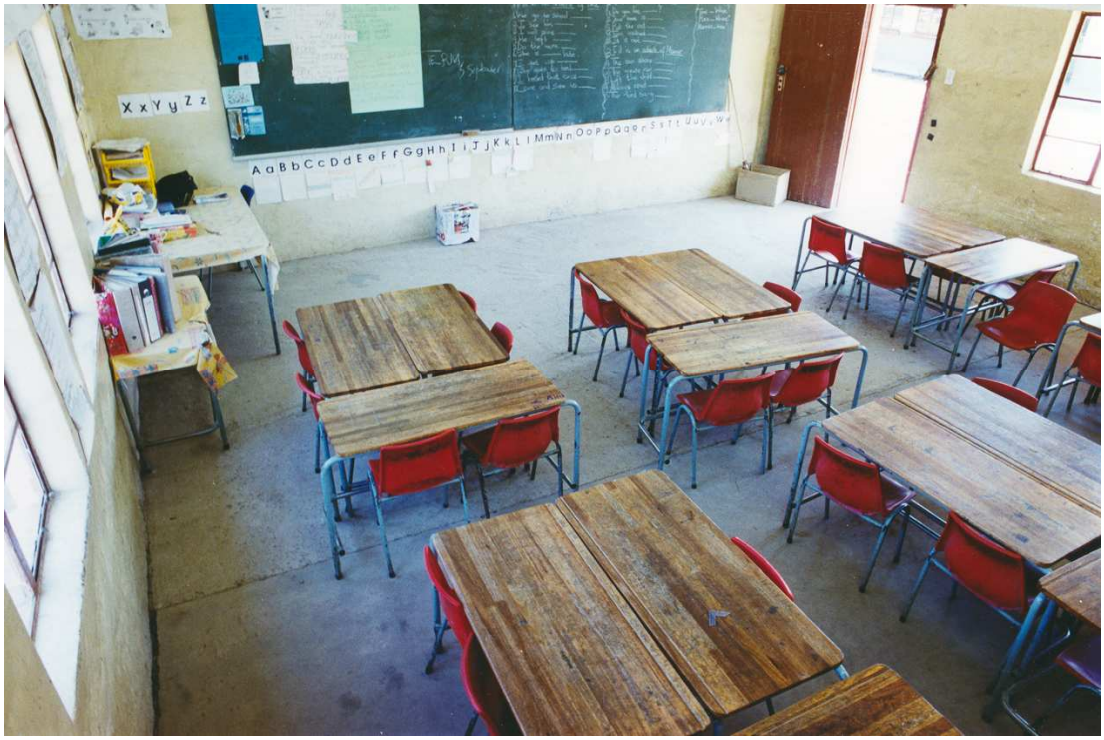


Figure 5.1: English classroom, Enoch Sontonga

Figure 5.1 is taken from the back of the classroom and shows the front half of the classroom. The classroom can accommodate learners' tables arranged in groups with enough space between the walls and tables for learners and the teacher to move around comfortably. The floor is of bare concrete, however, which would make shifting chairs quite a noisy business. The walls are roughly plastered and painted a drab colour. There are windows on both sides of the classroom, which let in a lot of light, but there are no curtains to block out strong sunlight. There was one cupboard at the back of the room and no notice-boards on the walls. The teacher placed tables against the walls for storage space and an extra working surface and charts (like the alphabet frieze under the chalkboard) are stuck directly on the walls. Despite the rather grey colour of the walls and floor, the classroom had some bright colour from the floral plastic cloths covering the side storage tables and the wall pictures and charts. In addition to charts that the teacher had made (mainly about the new curriculum) and commercially produced charts (mainly about health issues

like cholera and AIDS prevention), the walls also displayed learners' work. The two bins in front are boxes, and they are part of the reason that the classroom was usually (on every visit, announced or unannounced) neat. There were no teaching aids like a CD player or tape-recorder, or audio-visual equipment like an overhead projector.



Figure 5.2: Afrikaans classroom, John Bishop

Figure 5.2 is taken from the side of the classroom and angles in on a row of desks against a side-wall of the classroom. As at Enoch Sontonga, there are windows along the side-walls of the classroom, but no curtains. There is little space to move between the rows of desks because the Afrikaans (and English) classrooms at John Bishop are smaller than those at any of the other schools. Learners sit in pairs in the two-seater desks, many of which are broken. This reduces the seating available or forces learners to perch uncomfortably on the iron bars. There was one cupboard with a broken door towards the back of the room, for storing books, and no other surface or space for displaying learners' work or

books. Though it is not clear in the photograph, the floor is wood, a warmer and quieter surface than concrete. The cracked walls are one element in the generally neglected physical state of the classrooms. Adding to a dismal physical learning environment, the walls were mainly bare and the solitary notice-board at the back of the classroom had few charts. As at Enoch Sontonga, there were no teaching aids like a CD player or tape-recorder, or an overhead projector.



Figure 5.3: English classroom, Sea View

Figure 5.3 is taken from the front of the classroom. It shows individual desks and chairs arranged in rows with enough space between for learners and the teacher to move around easily. All the desks and chairs look shiny and less worn than the furniture at either Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop. The floors are wooden, like those at John Bishop, making for greater comfort than the bare concrete of the Enoch Sontonga classroom floor. The walls are well-plastered and painted. A lot of sunlight streams in through the curtained windows and there is a storage

cupboard that runs the length of the back wall of the room, and also provides a surface for displaying learners' work and plants. In addition, there are notice-boards on both side walls. Like the Enoch Sontonga classroom, the Sea View classroom is colourful because of the pictures on the walls. However, the Sea View pictures were chocolate-box pretty and depicted animals and natural scenic beauty, avoiding socially meaningful issues, while the Enoch Sontonga pictures and charts dealt with human social issues such as the new curriculum or health problems like cholera and AIDS. In the front of the classroom there was an overhead projector, which most classes seemed to have.



Figure 5.4: isiXhosa classroom, St Katherine's

Figure 5.4 is taken from the front of the classroom. It shows individual desks and chairs arranged in a horseshoe shape, only possible in a room where space is not at a premium. Like those at Sea View, the desks and chairs look shiny and less worn than the furniture at either Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop. The walls are practical face-brick for the first metre, and well-plastered and painted higher up. The sunlight that

streams in through the curtained windows, together with the carpeted floors, gives the classroom a comfortable appearance. There is a storage cupboard in the corner and at the back a notice-board displaying pictures and learners' work. The black box under the notice-board is a tape-recorder and there was an overhead projector at the front. Further conveying the picture of a comfortable well-resourced classroom, the books on the table on the right are dictionaries.

5.2 Grade 7 Language teachers' qualifications and settings

The teachers' questionnaire asked about their teaching qualifications and experience, their classroom environment, and language practices in their classrooms and in the school generally. A total of eight Grade 8 additional language teachers participated in my research project: one from Enoch Sontonga (English, Ms Jawana); two from John Bishop (Afrikaans, Mr Pearson and English, Mr Craig); three from Sea View (Afrikaans, Mr Payne; English, Ms Usher; and isiXhosa, Ms Nash); and three from St Katherine's (Afrikaans, Ms Relly; English; Ms Ames; and isiXhosa, Ms Burt).

5.2.1 Grade 7 Language teachers' professional backgrounds

Table 5.2, below, summarises the teachers' professional and academic qualifications, their years of teaching, their home language(s), and the language(s) that they teach.

Table 5.2: Teachers' professional profiles

Name	Qualifications	Teaching experience	L1	Teaching areas
Ms Jawana (Enoch Sontonga)	Primary Teachers Certificate (PTC), Diploma in Education (DE), Bachelor of Education (BEd)	27 years	IsiXhosa	English
Mr Pearson (John Bishop)	HOD (Hoër Onderwys Diploma)	40 years	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
Mr Craig	DE (Diploma in	11 years	Afrikaans	English; Economic and

Name	Qualifications	Teaching experience	L1	Teaching areas
(John Bishop)	Education)			management science; Mathematics
Mr Payne (Sea View)	Bed	7 years	Afrikaans	Afrikaans; Human and social sciences; Economic and management science
Ms Usher (Sea View)	Senior Primary Diploma; Remedial Diploma	21 years	English	English
Ms Nash (Sea View)	DE; Diploma in handicapped in speech and hearing	19 years	English	IsiXhosa
Ms Ames (St Katherine's)	DE (Diploma in Education)	15 years	English	English
Ms Burt (St Katherine's)	Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA); Higher Diploma in Education (HDE)	6 years	English	IsiXhosa
Ms Relly (St Katherine's)	BA; Higher Primary Teachers Certificate	25 years	Afrikaans	Afrikaans; Social Studies

As Table 5.2 shows, none of the teachers are novices, and half have been teaching for more than 20 years, which suggests a depth of experience. All the teachers are professionally qualified and have more than the statutory minimum requirements to register as educators. Ms Usher is a specialist remedial teacher because Sea View had remedial classes for several years, and specialist teachers like Ms Usher took on other teaching when these classes were phased out in 2002. Ms Nash's specialisation is not the reason that she is employed, though like many remedial teachers she is employed part-time in an SGB post. She is the only teacher in my sample who holds a part-time post. In the last five years all the teachers have participated in in-service courses, mainly related to the introduction of outcomes-based education. The in-service courses were free and compulsory and took the form of "lectures and workshops" conducted by the provincial Department of Education or various NGOs like Read, Educate and Develop (READ). Teachers received no accreditation or certification for these courses. The local Education District Office does not follow-up on official Education

Department courses or workshops, but the READ facilitator does follow-up visits to support or monitor how and whether the course content is taken up in teachers' classroom practice. In addition to the provincial Education Department workshops, the independent school teachers (Ms Ames, Relly and Burt) have participated in a wider range of courses (e.g. Assessment Strategies, Gifted Education, Critical Language Encounters) which they attribute to "[independent] school policy" for teachers to attend "enrichment and professional development" courses. In addition to these short courses, some teachers have also sought to improve their qualifications through formal academic study. Within the last five years, Ms Jawana has completed her BEd, while Mr Payne and Mr Craig are currently registered for a Masters degree and an Advanced Certificate in Education, respectively. Since 1996, teachers are no longer eligible for study leave and they receive no financial incentives for improving their qualifications. Formal study for most is thus part-time and demands a considerable commitment of time and money.

5.2.2 Classroom environment

All the classrooms had electricity, chalkboards and wall displays including charts and/or colourful pictures. Only classrooms at Sea View and St Katherine's had overhead projectors. All the teachers bar two (Ms Nash who does not have her own classroom because she works part-time and Mr Pearson who does not have his own classroom because he is the principal and teaches Afrikaans to two classes) had book corners in their classrooms. Mostly book corners had magazines in Afrikaans, English or isiXhosa, depending on the language the teacher taught, for instance Bona (isiXhosa), Readers' Digest (English), National Geographic (English), Huisgenoot (Afrikaans). At Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, where there is no school library, there were also wooden boxes with various graded READ books in English. Free of charge, READ provides previously disadvantaged schools with packs of books. For learners there are storybooks, fiction and non-fiction, and an accompanying language

and writing book for consolidation work. For the teachers there are teachers' guides with suggested activities and exercises. One set of books that Ms Jawana and Mr Craig were using during the first semester of 2003 with Grade 7 consists of a pack of 17-18 books "divided into four sets of books at progressive levels of difficulty. … Six copies of each book are provided to facilitate group work" (READ 2003:1).

Most teachers' classroom practices have been influenced by current curriculum changes. All the teachers, with the exceptions of Mr Pearson, Ms Ames and Nash, were unanimous that their preferred seating arrangement for learners was in groups. Mr Pearson's was practical while Ms Ames's was more pedagogical:

> The classroom is very small. I am forced to arrange the desks in a row.
> (Mr Pearson)

> Rows – board is visible/less distraction.
> (Ms Ames)

Ms Nash's explanation of why she preferred a teacher-fronted arrangement reflects her experience with hearing-impaired children, and her sensitivity to learners getting all the verbal and non-verbal cues:

> all learners should directly face both the teacher and the chalkboard for the following reasons: to maintain eye-contact while teaching them, awareness of facial expression and body language in conjunction with tone of voice. The chalkboard is my main teaching aid in teaching new vocabulary and pronunciation thereof, by means of syllabification – seeing, hearing, clapping and saying the word. Thereby, also learning by the mistakes of others as well and also learning that it's okay to make a mistake. We all do!
> (Ms Nash)

At all the schools except Enoch Sontonga the teachers designed their own worksheets. Ms Jawana explained the reason, "In my school it is impossible to use worksheets because of funds. Parents do not afford to buy paper … Paper is not provided by any sources". Asked whether

curriculum changes or other considerations had affected their design of worksheets, teachers said:

> Yes, assessment strategies and criteria are included in the worksheets. Course outlines are provided, containing outcomes.
> (Ms Relly)

> I have not yet been able to find a comprehensive, yet suitably graded interactive textbook/workbook. Therefore, since the beginning 2002, have been using a compilation of my own worksheets which seem to lend themselves to more learners involvement, interaction and participation.
> (Ms Nash)

> Yes, OBE teaching and assessment.
> (Ms Burt)

> Yes, questions based on specific outcomes.
> (Mr Payne)

> One make worksheets … that learners can relate to.
> (Mr Craig)

5.2.3 Language practices in classrooms and school generally

The Language Overview document (DoE 2002:18) recommends that 25% total contact time, 27 hours and 30 minutes (1650 minutes) per week in Grade 7, be allocated to Languages. The document does not specify how schools divide the 412 minutes of curriculum time among L1, L2 and L3. Table 5.3, below, shows the curriculum time per week allocated to Languages by the four case study schools.

Table 5.3: Curriculum time for languages

Schools	Afrikaans	English	IsiXhosa	Total
Enoch Sontonga	0	150 minutes (L2)	150 minutes (L1)	300 minutes
John Bishop	225 minutes (L1&2)	225 minutes (L1&2)	0	450 minutes
Sea View	225 minutes (L1&2)	180 minutes (L1&2)	45 minutes (L3)	450 minutes
St Katherine's	150 minutes (L2)	240 minutes (L1)	120 minutes (L2)	510 minutes

There is no mechanism at district, provincial or national level to monitor whether school timetables meet curriculum policy stipulations. To date, neither Enoch Sontonga's 112-minute shortfall nor St Katherine's 98 minute over-allocation have been queried by the Education Department District Office. Further, whether a Language is taught as L1 or L2 or L3 seems to have no role in determining the amount of time it is allocated. Thus, the same amount of time is allocated to isiXhosa L1 and English L2 at Enoch Sontonga in contrast to St Katherine's, where English L1 has double the time of isiXhosa L2. Afrikaans L1/L2 and English L1/L2 at John Bishop are allocated the same amount of time, while at Sea View, Afrikaans L1/L2 has more time than English L1/L2. These differences in curriculum time affect the amount that learners write, as is shown in the chapters which follow.

In their classroom practice, all the teachers said that they use mainly the Language that they teach. I was interested in code-switching because, especially when teaching and learning additional language(s), I believe that incidences of code-switching and attitudes towards it are revealing of how teachers and learners feel about their own home languages and those of others, whether they regard it as a resource that can be used in learning other languages or as a hindrance. The questions specified different initiators for code-switching (teacher to learners, among learners, and learner to teacher) and also different reasons (to ask or answer questions, in group discussions and whole-class reportbacks, for issues of conceptual clarification). Ms Ames and Usher, both English L1-speakers, teaching English L1 and L1/L2 respectively to classes with many English L1 speakers and Ms Burt, the isiXhosa teacher at St Katherine's, said that they did not code-switch. The rest of the teachers code-switched, for varying reasons:

> … in order to compare similarities and differences in languages.
> (Ms Relly)

> Yes, especially with new vocabulary/definitions … [and] with the grammar or other assignments.
> (Mr Craig)

> Yes, almost everyday.
> (Mr Pearson)

> … at this stage instructions and explanations would have to be given mainly in English or Afrikaans as the learners do not know enough Xhosa for this to be done in Xhosa only.
> (Ms Nash)

> Most of the time they do not understand the instructions put before them but when the instructions are explained in their mother-tongue they cope very well.
> (Ms Jawana)

At schools with linguistically diverse learners (John Bishop, Sea View and St Katherine's) only two teachers (Mr Craig and Mr Payne) said that their code-switching included Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa, rather than only Afrikaans and English. A pattern of Afrikaans/English assimilation of isiXhosa-speakers emerged at John Bishop, Sea View and St Katherine's.

> English, Afrikaans, Xhosa (with the help of a capable learner).
> (Mr Craig)

> It is quite a challenge as most of the learners are English-speaking [not the case in 2003 because 20 out of 38 in Grade 7i and 18 out of 35 in Grade 7ii were isiXhosa- or Afrikaans-speaking]. You also have to switch between the two languages [Afrikaans and English] all the time. I sometimes use basic Xhosa terms to help Xhosa learners to understand basic concepts.
> (Mr Payne)

Taking their cue from the teachers, learners asked teachers questions in either Afrikaans or English at all the schools except Enoch Sontonga, where they used English or isiXhosa. During group work, however, teachers reported that learners used their home languages, including isiXhosa, for small group discussions, but reverted to Afrikaans or English for the more formal whole-class reportbacks.

As already mentioned, at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, which had no library, teachers had book corners with magazines in Afrikaans or English, depending on the Language the teacher taught, and READ books in English. At both schools with libraries, Sea View and St Katherine's, teachers had similar reports: that they had mainly English books, some Afrikaans books and less than one shelf of isiXhosa books. What emerges is a general picture of more printed materials in schools in English than in either Afrikaans or isiXhosa.

At all the schools, according to teachers, learners use a variety of languages, and their preferred language, in the playground during break times and also during sport. There are no school rules restricting or encouraging particular languages for leisure activities. Yet, for the more formal school assembly at all the schools, English was the most commonly used language. In communication with parents, however, the patterns of language use were more varied than English dominance would suggest.

Patterns of language use for speaking with and writing to parents were different from those for communicating with learners, but reflect a privileging of the former official languages, Afrikaans and English. At Enoch Sontonga and St Katherine's the norm was monolingual: only isiXhosa and English, respectively, were used for parent meetings and interviews, as well as notices and official letters. John Bishop and Sea View were more multilingual when dealing with parents. At John Bishop Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa were used for oral and written communication with parents. In the case of Sea View, only Afrikaans and English were used.

5.3 Grade 7 learners' language backgrounds at home

Despite repeated school visits and requests, not all the learners returned the questionnaires about their home language(s), the languages they used socially, and print and information resources at home. There was a return

rate of 8 out of 10 at St Katherine's, 27 out of 33 at Enoch Sontonga, 44 out of 46 at John Bishop, and 40 out of 43 at Sea View.

5.3.1 Learners' home language(s)

Table 5.4, below, shows the breakdown of learners' home languages. I asked the teachers and learners about the home languages of the 11 learners with missing questionnaires (six from Enoch Sontonga, two from John Bishop, and three from Sea View). Interestingly, teachers are not necessarily a reliable source of information about learners' home languages. Most teachers told me that learners' names were a good indicator of an African home Language, which is a reliable rule of thumb, but three learners at John Bishop proved to be the exceptions. When I checked with them about the accuracy of their questionnaire information, two girls with Afrikaans/English sounding names (Ursula Schoeman and Shirley Heathcote) confirmed that their home Languages were isiXhosa while a boy with an isiXhosa name (Sizwe Maku) spoke Afrikaans at home. These learners' home languages are evidence of language shift, already documented in research in the Eastern Cape (De Klerk 2000). The shift among these learners from Afrikaans to isiXhosa is in contrast to De Klerk's (2000) main finding of a shift from isiXhosa to English, while the shift from isiXhosa to Afrikaans shows that the process is more complicated than a simple shift straight for English. Also noteworthy as further evidence of language shift, and the power of English, were the four learners (one at Enoch Sontonga and three at Sea View) who stated that they had two joint home languages, one of which, in each case, was English.

Table 5.4: Learners' home languages[22] and questionnaire return rates

[22] The missing questionnaires are from six isiXhosa-speakers at Enoch Sontonga; an Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaker at John Bishop; and two isiXhosa- and one Afrikaans-speaker at Sea View.

School	Afrikaans	English	IsiXhosa	Other
Enoch Sontonga (33 participated, 27 Qs returned)	0	0	31	1 (Eng/isiXhosa) 1 (isiZulu)
John Bishop (46 participated, 44 Qs returned)	11	0	34	1 (seSotho)
Sea View (43 participated, 40 Qs returned)	6	16	17	2 (Afr/Eng) 1 (German) 1 (Eng/Afr)
St Katherine's (10 participated, 8 Qs returned)	0	7	0	1 seTswana

The commonest L2 spoken at home was English: reported by 16 at Enoch Sontonga, 30 at John Bishop, and 16 at Sea View. Afrikaans L2 was second: three at Enoch Sontonga, 10 at John Bishop, 13 at Sea View, and three at St Katherine's. IsiXhosa trailed way behind as an additional language: the one isiZulu learner in my sample at Enoch Sontonga reported that he spoke isiXhosa L2 at home, as well as three learners each at John Bishop, Sea View and St Katherine's. These figures demonstrate the power of English in relation to Afrikaans and isiXhosa, and how little support there is in learners' social settings for their learning isiXhosa as an additional language at school. All the learners who had two joint home languages did not speak any other language in addition to those two. The L1 seSotho-speaker at John Bishop spoke English and isiXhosa L2 at home, while the L1 German-speaker at Sea View spoke English L2 at home.

The variations in the proportion of learners who spoke only their L1 at home confirm the dominance of English as an L2, and further, suggest that English-speakers recognise the power of English, as evidenced in the relatively high proportion of monolingual English homes.

5.3.2 Languages used socially

I categorised the social use of languages into (1) religious, traditional and sports events and family mealtimes, where language usage is mainly oral; (2) leisure activities like reading newspapers, magazines or books, where

languages are printed; (3) activities like watching television and listening to the radio, where language usage is mainly oral since SATV so rarely uses subtitles to translate programmes or make them bi/multilingual.

One of the shortcomings of the questionnaire was that it was too general to provide detail about learners' access to and sources of information in their homes. With regard to radio and television, for instance, the choice of programme dictates whether it counts as a source of entertainment or information. My questionnaire did not ask learners to itemise their programme choices, so it is impossible to separate out radio listening and/or television viewing as a leisure activity or as a source of information. Similarly, the question about printed materials in learners' homes specified newspapers, books and magazines, but not whether a newspaper, for instance, is available in learners' homes once a month, or daily. Responses therefore provide an indication of the availability of printed resources in learners' homes, but not whether these are up-to-date or current. Also, even though the question asked respondents to indicate the language of the magazine, book or newspaper, many respondents did not do so.

Table 5.5 summarises the languages used socially for different activities in learners' homes across the spoken and written modes, and shows how printed resources are distributed in their homes.

Table 5.5: Social use of languages in learners' homes

SCHOOL	ORAL Religious, traditional, sport, meals	PRINT Newspapers, magazines, books	ORAL Radio and television
Enoch Sontonga 27/33 completed Qs	All use mainly isiX L1. 5: L1 & Eng L2 for religious activities. 1: isiZulu L1 during meals.	16 newspapers 23 magazines 23 books (11 no newspapers & 4 no print materials)	TV: 25 Radio: 24 (2 no TV & 3 no radio)
John Bishop 44/46 completed Qs	L1 match for religious, sports, traditional events and meals. Mainly Afr/IsiX mix for	34 newspapers 40 magazines 42 books (10 no newspapers &	TV: 44 Radio: 44

SCHOOL	ORAL Religious, traditional, sport, meals	PRINT Newspapers, magazines, books	ORAL Radio and television
	sport.	2 no print materials)	
Sea View 40/43 completed Qs	L1 match for religious, traditional, sports events and meals.	31 newspapers 38 magazines 39 books (9 no newspapers & 1 no print materials)	TV: 40 Radio: 40
St Katherine's 8/10 completed Qs	L1 match for religious, traditional, sports events and meals.	All 8 had newspapers, magazines, and books at home in Eng.	TV: 8, all Eng Radio: 8 all Eng, and 1 also listened to Hindi radio programmes

The patterns of language use in learners' homes show that L1s dominate in the spoken domain, for inter-personal communication (as in religious ceremonies and at mealtimes). As regards languages in the broadcast media, almost all the learners in this sample have radio and television at home, with marginally more learners watching television than listening to the radio. It is reasonable to infer that most learners hear mainly English since the bulk of television airtime is devoted to programmes in English (70%), with Afrikaans getting a bigger proportion of the remaining 30% than do the nine official African languages (Suntimes 2002). There are national radio stations for each of the 11 official languages, as well as regional and local radio stations in a variety of languages including heritage languages (e.g. Portuguese, Hindi, Urdu). Where respondents indicated the language(s) in which they watch television and listen to the radio, a more detailed analysis indicated that more families listen to radio programmes in their L1 than in the combination of languages (L1 and L2) that they do on television.

A very small number of respondents indicated that there was no printed material available at all in their homes (7 out of 132). 95% had books (some titles showed that these were school text books and others said that they were library books), so that the number of learners with their own personal books is probably significantly smaller than the simple 'yes' on the questionnaire indicates. A smaller percentage (76,5%) had magazines in their homes and an even smaller percentage (61,4%) had newspapers,

even though magazines cost more than newspapers. As mentioned in Chapter Two, there are no newspapers or supplements available in isiXhosa in the Grahamstown district, so it is reasonable to assume that where newspapers are indicated they are in either Afrikaans or English. Overall, there are fewer print materials available in Afrikaans and even fewer in isiXhosa, than in English.

Unsurprisingly, among all learners and their families, the L1 was the dominant language for social activities in the spoken domain. What the patterns of language usage of print media reveal is that, where English and Afrikaans are L1, there is some correspondence between L1 usage in the spoken and written domains in the home. But where isiXhosa is L1, there is a breakdown in L1 usage in the spoken and written domains in the home. IsiXhosa is used almost exclusively in the spoken domain, and is all but non-existent in writing in learners' homes besides in religious texts, a situation unchanged since the start of missionary evangelism and education. The print poverty in isiXhosa means that there is little home-based support for isiXhosa-speakers' literacy in their L1 and it is therefore vital that isiXhosa-speaking children become literate in their L1 at school.

5.3.3 Information resources at home

Newspapers are the least available printed resource in learners' homes, especially poorer learners' homes. In this context, internet information and news could play a role in redressing the poverty of print and news in poorer communities. Instead, the opposite occurs: computers and internet access in particular seem to be the preserve of the well-off, as Table 5.6 shows. Re-inforcing the bias of print news media towards English already noted, most information on the internet is in English.

Table 5.6: Computers and internet access

Name of school	Computers at home	Computers and internet at school
Enoch Sontonga 27/33 completed	1 learner, at his home. 26 none	0

Name of school	Computers at home	Computers and internet at school
Qs		
John Bishop 44/46 completed Qs	1 at home, 6 access at homes of friends and family. 37 none	0
Sea View 40/43 completed Qs	26 access at home 14 none	38 none with internet, shared by primary and high school learners
St Katherine's 8/10 completed Qs	8 at home	27 all with internet, for primary school learners only

The fact that most information on the internet is in English compounds the problem of inequity of access to information. Most learners with little or no internet access are also those for whom English is an additional language, who already have limited information and news in their home languages.

In the next chapter, I preview my data analysis of learners' writing in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa.

CHAPTER SIX

Analysis of one Grade 7 learner's writing in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an analysis of how language curriculum policy is instantiated in the writing of a Grade 7 learner in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa at St Katherine's. I chose St Katherine's for two reasons. It was the only school in my sample in which all three languages were taught to all the Grade 7 learners. Because it is a well-resourced school with diverse multilingual learners and well-qualified teachers, I could examine how language curriculum policy is realised in favourable circumstances. Research has pointed to poor school resources and teacher content knowledge (Taylor and Vinjevold 1999) as reasons for the problematic implementation of the new curriculum.

The only learner in my sample of ten from St Katherine's for whom Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa are additional languages was Palesa. Though English is taught as L1 and Afrikaans and isiXhosa as L2 at St Katherine's, all are additional languages for Palesa as she is a seTswana home language speaker.

In this chapter I bring together my translation and analysis of Palesa's Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa writing in order to demonstrate the consistency of my analysis as well as the patterns apparent in the topics and genres of texts across the three languages. First, I compare the total amount Palesa wrote in all three languages and the different sorts of texts. Second, I analyse and discuss one piece of extended writing in each of the three languages. Third, I measure her level of written competence in all three languages against the assessment standards of the RNCS (DoE 2002).

6.1 Amount and sort of writing

6.1.1 Afrikaans

The learners did all their Afrikaans writing on separate pages, which they filed. The worksheets for grammar and comprehension exercises were based on Ms Relly's own collection of textbooks (Interview, 20 February 2004), but she personalised the grammar exercises by inserting learners' names in sentences and examples. Learners read two prescribed books, *Woorde is soos wors* and *Wie se hart kan dit dan hou?,* as well as magazine and newspaper articles, school library books and plays.

Table 6.1 (Appendix 4) shows that in Afrikaans learners wrote mainly grammar exercises and did guided and independent writing. Ms Relly integrated the teaching and practice of grammatical structures with learners' own writing as she consistently indicated learners' errors in the comprehension exercise and the self-description. Ms Relly also followed up learners' errors in a systematic way so that learners could develop the ability to monitor their own errors.

The comprehension passage consists of four short snippets laid out like items of information on a notice board, covering about half of the A4 worksheet (Appendix 5). These passages are in a fairly small 10-point font and explain unfamiliar naming practices of people in far-away places, for example American Indians, Canadian Indians, Chinese and Eskimos. These are the names used in the text, which is either dated or simply ignores the preferred, politically correct terms like Native American or First Nation's People and Inuit. The use of these names and the presentation of naming practices in a quaint, ahistorical way represents the societies as 'curiosities' and positions the reader as distant from the societies described. The layout and presentation of the comprehension passage suggest an authentic 'feel' to the text similar to what the writers of the Sea View Afrikaans comprehension exercise (Appendix 20) intend.

The other half of the worksheet had questions about the passages and lines for learners to fill in their answers. The comprehension questions required learners to retrieve information from the text; none were inferential or interpretive. The questions exemplify the purely textual view of reading that underpins comprehension teaching in South Africa (Granville 2001). The ten learners answered all but two comprehension questions correctly, indicating that they understood the content of the passages and questions. The teacher allocated two marks per question and deducted marks for errors. Palesa's mark, of 9, was the highest, Carol got 6.5 and Clive 7.

In her follow-up lesson, Ms Relly pointed out common errors in the comprehension exercise. Learners had to copy her corrections, written directly on their comprehension texts. For example, learners used English word order (S-V-O), instead of Afrikaans word order (S-O-V):

(1) Sodat Eskimo's kon onthou die mense wat dood is.
S V O

Or, incorrect forms of the verb

(2) Die Amerikaanse noem [instead of *vernoem*] hulle babas na 'n droom van die ma of pa.

In the follow-up grammar exercise on learners' self-descriptions, Ms Relly honed in on errors of word order, especially in complex clauses (e.g. sentence 1). Learners had to rectify the grammar errors they had made in their self-descriptions thereby developing their understanding of how the use of conjunctions (and complex clauses) changed the word order, especially of the verb phrase, in Afrikaans. This is the only example of an independently written grammar exercise that addresses and remediates learners' errors in an extended text (the self-description).

6.1.2 English

The learners did all their English writing on separate pages, which they filed. Ms Ames said that her focus for the first term was on vocabulary

building and understanding the origin and meanings of words. She used worksheets extensively, for grammar and comprehensions, mostly copied from her own collection of textbooks from the UK, South Africa and Australia. Learners did not have their own grammar textbooks since, according to Ms Ames (Interview, 9 December 2003), as a "privileged school" St Katherine's had the resources for extensive photocopying and learners benefited from the range of materials that she was able to use in the classroom. Each learner had a prescribed literary text, *Bridge to Terabithia*, a novel which they read in class during the course of the year.

As Table 6.2 (Appendix 6) shows, learners' writing in English L1 was more evenly-spread than in either Afrikaans L2 or isiXhosa L2. Learners' comprehensions and extended texts were a combination of guided and independent writing. Though Ms Ames introduced a variety of genres, none were factual. Part of the reason that there is a balanced spread of text types is the number of comprehension exercises. When I asked why she had set so many of these, Ms Ames explained (Interview, 9 December 2003) that she considered reading with comprehension to be a "life skill" and that she found that, while learners coped well with information-retrieval questions, they struggled with "inferential questions" and needed more practice at getting "below the surface" of a text. She also believed that comprehension passages could extend learners' "general knowledge" and introduce them to canonical texts. She added that school should expose learners immersed in popular "youth culture" to "high culture".

Ms Ames's distinction between 'youth' culture (also called popular culture) and 'high culture' is derived from Matthew Arnold's 1869 definition of culture as 'the best that has been thought and said in the world'. This elitist understanding of culture "led to a valorization of so-called high culture as opposed to the culture of the common or working class … [and] a paradigm that accepted as natural and commonsense the division between popular (or low) and high culture" (Dolby 2003:260). Ms Ames

invokes the Cultural Heritage model, in which the paradigmatic acceptance of the distinction between 'low' and 'high' culture and the privileging of 'high' culture is naturalised. Her further statement, that learners should be educated to be "interesting dinner party guests", confirms an elite valorisation of 'high culture'.

The comprehension 'Romeo meets Juliet' is taken from one of Ms Ames's textbooks. The title of the book from which the passage is taken identifies it as an unaltered extract from a children's version of the works of Shakespeare. Ms Ames photocopied the passage with its two illustrations and 13 questions without reducing the font size, so that each learner had the entire exercise of five pages (Appendix 7). In an effort to make Shakespearean language accessible, the narrative is a blend of contemporary language ("They were at it again!") and many of the metaphors, words and archaic formulations of the original ("If ever you disturb our streets again, your lives shall pay the forfeit"). Ms Ames chose this text as part of her focus on love, around Valentine's Day, and because of her belief that comprehensions could introduce learners to canonical texts. The first paragraph of the passage situates the story in "old Verona" and introduces the central dynamic of the plot, the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets. Most of the extract deals with Romeo's infatuation with Rosaline and ends with his first sight of Juliet.

The combination of contemporary and Shakespearean language made the lexis and syntax of the passage challenging. The 13 questions include inferential and explanatory questions, but all the questions, except for question 2 (which asks for an explanation of a metaphor), are closed. Five are vocabulary questions (questions 1, 4, 6, 8, 11), mainly requiring learners to explain archaic language (e.g. question 6, "Put these words spoken by Lady Montague into clear, modern English: 'O where is Romeo, saw you him today? Right glad am I he was not at this fray"'). The six inferential questions asked learners to explain how (questions 3, 9, 13)

and why (questions 7, 10, 12) characters behaved as they did. The absence of interpretive and open questions militates against learners' independent interpretation of the text.

Palesa had four wrong answers (questions 4, 7, 10, 12) and she made one grammar and one spelling error; too few errors to assess whether the grammar tasks served a remedial purpose. Certainly there was a consistent focus on vocabulary in the mundane grammar writing and the comprehension, which may be the reason that Palesa answered all except one of the vocabulary questions correctly. Her other wrong answers were in response to the three 'why' questions, (e.g. "Why did Benvolio suggest to Romeo's parents that they leave him alone with Romeo for a while?" question 7). While Palesa managed the 'how' questions, she had struggled with the more challenging 'why' inferential questions. It seems learners need more practice at reading and responding to inferential and interpretive questions.

6.1.3 isiXhosa

In isiXhosa L2 the pattern of learners writing mostly grammar texts is even more marked than in Afrikaans L2, as Table 6.3 (Appendix 8) shows. Unlike Afrikaans, many of the isiXhosa grammar exercises practise the imperative form, suggesting that isiXhosa was taught as a Language in which learners would give orders rather than converse. This Language practice assumes that learners occupy a controlling powerful position *vis-à-vis* the isiXhosa-speaking majority in the province and that they are unlikely to speak as social equals to isiXhosa-speakers in isiXhosa. In the four-week period under review, no comprehensions or extended texts were written; the isiXhosa paragraph analysed below was written during the first week of the term. The reason that learners' isiXhosa writing resembles L3 more than L2 may be due to the fact that isiXhosa was only taught as L2 from 2002. At the start of 2003, the Grade 7 learners had

only had one year of isiXhosa L2 and five years of L3 (Interview, 19 March 2003).

All three tables (6.1, 6.2 and 6.3; Appendices 4, 5 and 6) show a consistent pattern across the three Languages in which learners do mainly single-word and gap-filling grammar exercises. Most of this writing is controlled or guided and the resultant texts exemplify a grammar translation approach. The three tables demonstrate the extent to which language teachers' literacy practices privilege grammar exercises which entail controlled or guided writing, rather than independent writing and a wide range of genres. The main purpose of Afrikaans and isiXhosa L2 writing is to practise grammar rather than to use Language meaningfully. In English L1, the number of comprehension exercises means learners did more independent writing, but of limited genres. However, the focus of Language learning in all three classrooms is on grammatical accuracy, far from current curriculum outcomes that writing should develop learners' critical, evaluative and problem-solving abilities.

6.2 Complexity and variation in selected texts

With respect to quality in writing, the pattern across all three languages is a preponderance of routine grammar tasks, mostly controlled or guided. The anomalous result is that learners are guided in the easier grammar tasks while they write the more cognitively demanding comprehension exercises and extended texts independently. Very similar self-descriptive, autobiographical writing is set so that the same genre is repeated to a point of boredom and monotony. Autobiographical writing is possibly such a common choice for Grade 7 learners because it is "located at the interface between orality and writing, autobiography … [and] appears as a tool to trace a difficult personal voyage from popular culture to scholarly culture" (Lusebrink 2003:8). Despite the similarity of the genre (autobiographical writing), the analysis below demonstrates the differences in Palesa' texts in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa stemming from the

three language teachers' structuring of the task, as well as Palesa's own varying language competencies.

Included in the chapter are Palesa's texts, my translation of her Afrikaans and isiXhosa, analysis of the English text and the English versions of her Afrikaans and isiXhosa texts. I focus on two aspects of the richness and complexity of her writing: sentence structure, particularly her use of co-ordinate and subordinate clauses since increasing use of subordination is regarded as a significant feature of writing development (Allison *et al.* 2002, Kress 1994) and secondly, how her Theme choices influence the coherence of her writing. In my analysis of learners' writing I also examine the traces of teachers' assessment practices evident on learners' texts. Teachers' written feedback, as well as whether they used explicit or relied on implicit assessment criteria, are evidence of their pedagogical practices with regard to writing.

6.2.1 Afrikaans

Below is Palesa's text in the original Afrikaans as she paragraphed it, with my English translation alongside it. Palesa's self-description is headed *Wie is ek?* (Who am I?).

Ek het kort hare en ek mollig is. My vel is bruin en so is my oë. Ek het nie bak ore nie.	*I have short hair and I'm plump. My skin is brown and so are my eyes. I don't have big ears.*
My skool se naam is St Katherine's en die omgewing is wonderlik. Ek hou van my skool want die onderwys is fantasties. St Katherine's is beroemd vir sy goeie maniere. Ek dink dat my skool om die kinders saamtrek.	*My school is called St Katherine's and the setting is wonderful. I like my school because the teaching is fantastic. St Katherine's is famous for its good manners. I think that my school cares about the children.*
Ek hou van ontspannende vakansie waar daar is 'n strand. My beste vakansie sal wees ek Amerika toe gaan. Die lekkerste vakansie was ek Mauritius toe gegaan.	*I like relaxing holidays at the beach. My best holiday will be when I go to America. The nicest holiday was when we went to Mauritius.*
Ek het twee troeteldiere. Hulle is honde en hulle is baie speels.	*I have two pets. They are dogs and they are very playful.*
As iemand vir my R100 gee, ek sal dit	*If someone gave me R100, I would save it*

bewaring totdat ek dit genodig.	*until I needed it.*
Ek hou van flieke op die televisie. Ek hou nie daarvan sportprente nie.	*I like television movies. I don't like sport programmes.*
Ek hou van R.L. Stine boeke en Francine Pascal boeke. Hierdie boeke maak my lag en sommige bang is.	*I like R.L. Stine books and Francine Pascal books. These books make me laugh and some are scary.*
My geliefkoosde kos is hamburgers en roomys. My beste sport is al die sporte en my geliefkoosde musiek is Hip Hop en R+B. My geliefkoosde kleure is pers en blou en groen en geel. Al die dinge maak my gelukkig.	*My favourite food is hamburgers and ice-cream. My best sport is all sports and my favourite misic is Hip Hop and R&B. My favourite colours are purple and blue and green and yellow. All these things make me happy.*
Ek het baie vriende, maar my beste vriend is Abigail want sy is altyd daar vir my. Ek is baie lief vir haar.	*I have many friends, but my best friend is Abigail because she is always there for me. I love her very much.*

Ms Relly's guidelines for learners to write their self-descriptions (Appendix 9) are a classic example of what the RNCS (DoE 2002) describes as a writing 'frame'. There was no other instance of a teacher using a writing frame, even though curriculum policy advocates such guidance for teaching different genres. One of the results of the frame was that most texts had similar organisational and sentence structure and lexis as learners tended to 'answer' the questions in the frame and borrow words from the questions. Carol and Clive's Afrikaans texts, attached as appendices (Appendices 10 and 11), show the same correspondence to the 'boxes' of the writing frame as Palesa's. The one difference was that Palesa did not respond to the box about her weekend activities at home presumably because, as a boarder, she is not at home most weekends.

Analysis of Palesa's Afrikaans self-description

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1. and		I I	have short hair// 'm plump.//
2. and so		My skin	Is brown// are my eyes.//
3.		I	don't have big ears.//
4. and		My school the setting	is called St Katherine's// is wonderful.//
5. because		I the teaching	like my school// is fantastic.//

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
6.		St Katherine's	is famous for its good manners.//
7. that		I my school	think// cares about the children.//
8.		I	like relaxing holidays at the beach.//
9. when		My best holiday I	will be// go to America.//
10. when		The nicest holiday we	was// went to Mauritius.//
11.		I	have two pets.//
12. and		They they	are dogs// are very playful.//
13. If until		someone I I	gave me R100,// would save it// needed it.//
14.		I	like television movies.//
15.		I	don't like sport programmes.//
16.		I	like R.L. Stine books and Francine Pascal books.//
17. and		These books some	make me laugh// are scary.//
18.		My favourite food	is hamburgers and ice-cream.//
19. and		My best sport my favourite music	is all sports// is Hip Hop and R&B.//
20.		My favourite colours	are purple and blue and green and yellow.//
21.		All these things	make me happy.//
22. but because		I my best friend she	have many friends// is Abigail// is always there for me.//
23.		I	love her very much.//

There are 23 sentences, with 37 clauses containing finite verbs – 30 independent clauses and 7 dependent clauses (3 temporal, 2 causal, 1 projected noun[23] and 1 conditional). The level of subordination, or hypotaxis is 18,9%. A transitivity analysis[24] shows that, of the verb processes, 21 are Relational, 9 are Mental, 6 are Material, and 1 is Verbal. The Agent is mainly a first person narration of self, "I" (16/37 clauses).

[23] Projected clauses include the indirect speech of traditional grammar, i.e. verbal processes or things that can be said, as well as thoughts or mental processes, according to Collerson 1995:114).

[24] It may not be clear why a transitivity analysis is useful from Palesa's texts because they are so similar in genre. However, a transitivity analysis shows whether there are different patterns in learners' choice of verbs when writing different genres. In later chapters other genres besides autobiographical writing are analysed.

Ms Relly used explicit criteria to assess learners' extended texts. The assessment sheet had five criteria and rubrics that explained a five-point grading scale (Appendix 12). The criteria were: vlotheid (coherence), taalstudie (grammar), woordeskat (vocabulary), spelling en punktuasie (spelling and punctuation) and inhoud (content). I translate only the rubric about coherence because it is especially relevant to my focus and demonstrates Ms Relly's recognition of the importance of subordination as a significant feature of writing development:

Coherence:

5. coherent: easy to understand; simple and complex sentences; very effective
4. fairly coherent: a few complex sentences; effective
3. reasonably coherent style: not too difficult to understand; mainly simple sentences; reasonably effective
2. jerky style: requires an effort to be understood and enjoyed; complex sentences are scrambled; mainly simple sentences
1. very jerky: difficult to understand; only simple sentences; over-use of 'and/then'

Ms Relly awarded Palesa's text four on the five-point scale for all five criteria, wrote an encouraging comment "Baie goed" [Very good] and gave her a mark of 24 out of 30.

6.2.2 English

Palesa was the only learner at St Katherine's who indicated in Appendix 2 that her home language was not English. Thus, though English is taught as L1, it is an additional language for her. Ms Ames confirmed that Palesa had done all the work set for the semester and described Palesa as a girl with "leadership qualities".

Palesa wrote two extended texts independently: a love poem and an autobiography. The love poem was written immediately after the 'Romeo meets Juliet' comprehension passage while the autobiography was written in May. The texts were written in English, so there was no need for translation before analysis.

Analysis of Palesa's English autobiography

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1.		Palesa	was a fortunate child to have been born in the 21st century.//
2. which		She	attended a co-educational private college// had a population of about 700 children.//
3.		Her school	had a beautiful attractive campus.//
4.		St Katherine's	had a pre-primary, a junior school and a senior school.//
5.		She	was in the junior school.//
6. that so as		She her school she she	appreciated the fact// had a variety of sports// tried to participate in as many// could fit into her busy daily routine.//
7. which		School	took place in a double story brick building// consisted of many classrooms.//
8.		Palesa	had a very strict routine at her school.//
9. Every morning and and		 she	 would wake up at 6:10 am// get dressed in her tie and stockings// rush off to breakfast.//
10. and		Meals there	were different everyday// was a variety of food to choose from.//
11. After a wholesome meal where because		 she she she	 went to school// worked very hard// wanted to make her parents proud.//
12.		School	was followed by an entertaining game of sport.//
13.		Shower time, supper, homework time and bedtime	followed.//
14. and though when		Palesa she she never it	was very dedicated to her school work// was confident// let anything get in her way// came to her school work.//
15. and		She	wanted to be something really big in life// set very high goals for herself.//
16.		She	worked hard to achieve these.//
17.		She	wanted to be a lawyer.//
18. that If		She you you you	believe// 's// want something// 've never had// 've gotta do something// 've never done.//

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
19. where	Hopefully	she she	is going// wants to go.//

There are 19 sentences, with 38 clauses containing finite verbs – 24 independent clauses and 14 dependent clauses (2 relative, 4 projected noun, 3 adverbial, 2 causal and 1 each conditional, temporal and concession). I excluded the "'s" in sentence 18 as a verb when doing my count of clauses. The level of hypotaxis is, therefore, 36,8%. In addition to a higher level of hypotaxis in English than Afrikaans, Palesa also uses relative and projected clauses, considered by Kress (1994) to be significant indicators of written competence. A transitivity analysis shows that, of the verb processes, 19 are Material, 12 are Relational and 7 are Mental. The agent in Theme position is mainly a third person narrator, 'She' or 'Palesa' (20/38 clauses).

Palesa's choice of a third person narrator gives her autobiography a more objective quality than if she had used the first person. From her opening sentence in which she claims (mistakenly) to have been born in the 21st century, Palesa describes herself as a person making rational choices, aware of how privileged her experiences are. Only in the penultimate sentence, where she reveals her more vulnerable dreams for the future, does Palesa switch to the second person and slang (and make her first grammar errors). In the following, final sentence she reverts to third person.

The Theme and Rheme analysis points to additional reasons for the greater sophistication of her writing in English than in Afrikaans or isiXhosa: one of only two instances of an interpersonal Theme (in the entire data set) in sentence 19. The combination of a third person narrative and an Interpersonal Theme enables her to comment, as an author, on her own unfolding autobiography, and to achieve, textually, a measure of self-awareness and introspection.

Her teacher, Ms Ames, responded to the part of Palesa's text where she switches to the second person with an encouragement to dream even bigger dreams. Ms Ames makes a general comment applicable to narrative: "*Excellent. Remember to keep in the past tense. Why not make yourself the President in your last sentence.*" She identified, and rectified all the grammar errors; for instance she wrote "*Slang!*" in the margin next to the second last sentence, and "*got to"* above "*gotta*". She also changed Palesa's faulty syntax: *"She believe that's if want …*" to "*She believed that if you want"*. There were no assessment criteria to explain how Ms Ames arrived at the mark of 9 out of 10.

The prompt for the love poem was a 'bag' of words: beauty, passion, lovestruck, arrows, hearts, starlight, smooch, kiss, cupid's arrow, obsession, romance, roses, bells, confetti, chemistry, clouds, snog, dreams, hugs, glamour, marriage, commitment, wedding, caress, church. Palesa's untitled poem read:

> This bag contains love,
> the passion of a kiss,
> the commitment of a marriage,
> the romance under the starlight,
> the caress of the moon,
> the adventurous feeling of freedom,
> the confetti of a wedding,
> the feeling of loving company,
> the penetrating touch of a partner,
> togetherness at last

It was impossible to compare the Theme development or hypotaxis levels of the autobiography and the poem as there is only one finite verb in the poem. Generically, the only poetic device that Palesa's poem uses is repetition of parallel grammatical structures, repeated noun phrases. As in her Afrikaans text, it may be the effect of the prompt, which consisted of nouns. The phrases strung together convey a vivid sensuousness,

despite containing only three adjectives, and the absence of any verbs after line 1 creates a sense of anticipation.

6.2.3 isiXhosa

Below is Palesa's single paragraph in the original isiXhosa, with my English translation alongside it.

Igama lam nguPalesa. Ndivela eBotswana. Kushushu phaya. Ndineminyaka emi12. Ndithanda ukutya iilekesi neetshipsi. Ndithanda ukudlala imidlalo esikolweni sam. Ndifunda eSt. Katherine's. Abahlobo bam banintsi. Ndithanda ukukhwela ihashe kodwa sine izinja ekhaya. Ndithanda abazali bam. Ndithanda ukuya ukuthenga impahla.	*My name is Palesa. I live in Botswana. It is hot there. I am twelve years old. I like to eat sweets and chips. I also like to play games at school. I am studying at St Katherine's. I have many friends. I like to go horse-riding but we have dogs at home. I love my parents. I like to go shopping for clothes.*

Analysis of Palesa's isiXhosa introductory paragraph

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1.		My name	is Palesa.//
2.		I	come from Botswana.//
3.		It	is hot there.//
4.		I	am twelve years old.//
5.		I	like to eat sweets and chips.//
6.		I	like to play games at my school.//
7.		I	am studying at St Katherine's.//
8.		I	have many friends.//
9. but		I we	like to go horse-riding// have dogs at home.//
10.		I	love my parents.//
11.		I	like to go shopping for clothes.//

There are 11 sentences, with 12 clauses containing finite verbs. All the clauses are independent and there is no hypotaxis. A transitivity analysis shows that of the verb processes, 6 are Mental, 4 are Relational and 1 each is Material and Existential. The Agent in Theme position is mainly a first person narrator, 'I' or 'we' (10/12 clauses). The teacher had written no comments or mark on Palesa's text neither had she indicated errors on other learners' work.

6.3 Palesa's written competence

Because Grade 7 is the start of the senior phase of schooling it is vital that learners achieve grade-level competence in learning outcome five which states that "the learner will be able to use language to think and reason, as well as access, process and use information for learning" (DoE 2002). Compared to the other schools in this study, St Katherine's has the lowest learner-teacher ratio, the best learner-classroom ratio, excellent material resources and well-qualified teachers with a cosmopolitan mix of learners who have both cultural as well as economic capital. Despite this optimal context, learners' opportunities for extended writing are limited to the personal and expressive and they have no say in topic choice. These classroom practices constrain learners' classroom Language writing and experiences of control of topic choice or sense of ownership of meaning-making, all of which Datta (2000) and Norton (2005) claim are crucial to learners' development of literacy.

In terms of pedagogy, the emphasis on grammar exercises harks back to grammar translation, while the preponderance of personal expressive writing recalls the Personal Growth approach. The former teaching approach dates back to the 18th century, while the latter emerged in Britain in the 1960s (Medway 1990). There is no evidence of writing for communicative purposes (CLT), or the impersonal factual texts advocated by the genre theorists. Decades of Language curriculum development and the incorporation of recent theories like CLA and genre theory are not evident in these teachers' literacy practices which are dominated by decades-old writing pedagogies.

As Table 6.4, below, shows, Palesa employs varying levels of sentence complexity, with English having the highest level of hypotaxis (36,8%) and isiXhosa the lowest, 0.

Table 6.4: Summary of indicators of Palesa's written competence

Language	Number of clauses	Level of hypotaxis	Marked themes
Afrikaans	37	18,9%	1/37
English	38	36,8%	3/38
IsiXhosa	12	0	0/12

Palesa's most developed competency is in English, which she is learning as L1. Even though her level of hypotaxis in English is almost double that of Afrikaans, the few Marked Themes in both languages (and the absence of any in isiXhosa) demonstrates a regular and predictable pattern in terms of sentence structure. The fact that she produces such a predictable textual pattern across the three languages is created by the repetition of the task in all three languages.

None of the written tasks include the range of cognitive demands and contextual support that Cummins (2003:5) claims will develop learners' language competencies from BICS to CALP. Palesa's written competencies in all three languages (most strongly in isiXhosa) are conversational (BICS). The personal expressive texts which predominate in her guided and independent writing across all three languages have done little to develop a formal, impersonal academic register (CALP). Palesa's use of the present tense in her self-descriptive writing is often for stative verbs[25] which is rather different to the universal present of factual genres such as procedure or explanation. None of the three grammatical features important for the development of formal objective scientific writing, the universal present tense, the general pronoun 'you' and agentless passives (Kress 1994:114), occur often in Palesa's writing. In all the texts analysed, there is only one instance of 'you' as a general pronoun and it occurs in sentence 18 of the English text. This is exactly the point where Palesa makes her only grammar errors; possibly indicative of a lack of practice with impersonal grammatical forms. Only one of the

[25] Stative verbs show qualities not capable of change, which would include many of the physical attributes in a self-description.

two examples of passives, '*is called*' (sentence 4 in the Afrikaans text) is an agentless passive, while '*was followed*' (sentence 12 of the English text) has an Agent. Palesa needs to become familiar with the more abstract impersonal factual genres associated with disciplinary-based knowledge in secondary school.

Of the total of 21 dependent clauses in the three extended texts analysed, two thirds (14) were adverbial clauses, all perfectly grammatical, while the rest were projected noun clauses (5) and relative clauses (2). Projected clauses, according to Kress (1994), are significant for factual writing because they are a means by which learners can include the words (and thoughts) of others in their texts. It is especially interesting that the projecting[26] clauses are Mental not Verbal processes *think* (sentence 7 in the Afrikaans text) and *appreciate* (sentence 6) and *believe* (sentence 18) in the English text.

It is difficult to assess whether Palesa's level of hypotaxis in Afrikaans (18,9%) meets RNCS (DoE 2002) requirements for an L2, or whether 36,8% in English meets RNCS requirements for an L1 since there is no comparable South African research documented. Certainly her zero level of hypotaxis in isiXhosa is closer to L3 than L2. However, in the texts analysed in all three languages there were no instances of nominalisation, a key indicator of formal written language (Halliday 1994). Even in English her writing shows traces of 'speech on paper' (e.g. sentence 18).

The absence of multimodal texts is an indication that the teachers prioritise alphabetic literacy, still the preferred form of literacy in the school. Ms Ames's view that school should expose learners to 'high culture' clearly has currency among other language teachers at St Katherine's and

[26] The clause containing a verbal or mental process is the **projecting** clause while the other is the **projected** message (Butt, Fahey, Spinks and Yallop 1995).

explains why teachers exclude multimodal tasks, which are seen as part of popular culture and similar to comics, perhaps.

Teachers' control of topic choices for writing and learners' limited amount of independent writing are likely to be exacerbated by the shift to genre pedagogy advocated in the RNCS (DoE 2002). Genre pedagogy is thorough, but the early stages all involve controlled and guided writing. Similar concerns have been reported about the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in England, in a context where there are more resources for teacher education and classroom materials, and only one language as the focus of the curriculum campaign. Bailey (2002:27) coins the term "simplified pedagogy" to refer to the "reductionist and over-simplified approach to the teaching of writing [which can occur] when teachers lack confidence due to low motivation and/or inadequate understanding of literacy development … [and] the content of training in a new policy initiative becomes simplified due to the rush to implement policy".

Palesa, like many elite African children, is developing her primary literacy in an additional language, English. She is also literate in Afrikaans, and in isiXhosa she has a lower level of literacy since it was offered mainly as L3 for the duration of her primary schooling. Her lowest level of competence is in an African language. A real cause for concern, however, is that as a seTswana-speaker, Palesa's schooling is leaving her illiterate (or at best, with a low level of literacy) in her home language.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Analysis of Grade 7 learners' Afrikaans writing

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I examine the amount and variety of learners' classroom writing in Afrikaans L2. Since Afrikaans is not taught in Grade 7 at Enoch Sontonga, I collected learners' writing from the other three schools (John Bishop, Sea View and St Katherine's). As indicated in Table 5.3 in Chapter Five, the social and timetable space of Afrikaans differs from school to school. The total curriculum time allocated for Languages was split two ways at schools like Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop where two Languages were offered, while at schools like Sea View and St Katherine's, where three Languages were offered, the same amount of time had to be split three ways.

John Bishop and Sea View are dual-medium Afrikaans/English schools. This means that in the same class both Afrikaans and English are taught as L1 and L2 and used as media of instruction: English L1 to isiXhosa- and English-speakers, and Afrikaans L1 to Afrikaans-speakers, while English L2 is taught to Afrikaans-speakers and Afrikaans L2 to isiXhosa- and English-speakers. Both the Afrikaans and English teachers have the choice whether the L1 and L2 learners in the same class do exactly the same work, or whether the L1 learners do the same core work as the L2 learners as well as extra more advanced reading and writing. Teachers of content subjects use both Languages as media of instruction, write notes on the board or supply handouts in both Languages (see Appendix 13, a photograph of parallel-medium chalkboard notes in Afrikaans and English at Sea View), set examinations in both languages and learners write their own notes, assignnments and examinations in either Afrikaans or English.

Teaching both L1 and L2 in the same class creates challenges for a teacher: the main one being whether the teacher separates the L1 and L2

levels of work to avoid what is taught and done being pitched at the lowest common denominator, the level of the L2. The question is, how well do the Language assessment standards enable teachers to differentiate between L1 and L2 levels of written work, for instance, when the learners are in the same class? As a secondary issue, is it possible for researchers to use the Language assessment standards to measure learners' literacy levels from their classroom writing?

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of what Grade 7 L2 learners wrote in Afrikaans in four weeks of the first term of 2003, school by school. First, I compare the amount and variety that the L2 learners wrote. I also analyse and contrast selected comprehension exercises and learners' errors in response to the comprehension questions, and consider the extent to which the grammar exercises addressed and remediated the common errors. Second, I describe the level of complexity and variation in selected learners' independent writing. For reasons of space, I include only my analysis of learners' texts and the translations are attached as appendices. Third, I measure learners' level of written competence in Afrikaans L2 against the assessment standards of the RNCS (DoE 2002).

7.1 The amount and variety in Grade 7 learners' writing in Afrikaans

7.1.1 John Bishop

Learners wrote all their grammar in an A-4 hardcover book and did letters, compositions and comprehensions in a smaller soft-cover book. The teacher, Mr Pearson, said that his focus in the first term was on speaking, reading and writing holistically, and the Grade 7 phase organiser for the period under review was '*Wie is ek*?' ('Who am I?'). As already mentioned in Chapter Five, the Grade 7 learners are not academically streamed. However, because of the linguistic differences between the two Grade 7 classes, (Grade 7A was a class of mixed Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers while Grade 7B had exclusively African language speakers), I included writing from both classes. Because my interest was additional

language learning, I excluded Afrikaans-speakers and was left with a total of 35 Afrikaans L2 learners (9 in Grade 7A and 26 in Grade 7B).

Most grammar exercises came from a textbook called *Nuwe Afrikaans sonder grense*, first published in 1998. Mr Pearson was issued with 40 copies of the textbook for both classes of Grade 7 learners. Learners could therefore not take the Afrikaans textbook home to read or work from it. There was one prescribed literary text, a novel called *Om 'n kierie te keer*, which the Afrikaans L1 and L2 learners read for the year. As with the grammar textbook, there were 40 copies for the two classes, so that none of the learners could take the book home to read. As a result, according to Mr Pearson (Interview, 3 February 2004), neither class had finished the novel by the end of 2003, and there was no additional reading material for any Afrikaans L1 speakers who may have completed the book.

Table 7.1 (Appendix 14) shows the total amount written by the two classes, but it does not show the marked difference in the amount written between the Grade 7A and B classes. As with their English writing (discussed in Chapter Eight), the mainly isiXhosa-speaking Grade 7B class wrote a great deal more than Grade 7A, the class of Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers. There is little balance in learners' writing across the three text types, with mundane grammar exercises dominating the Grade 7 Bs' writing, while the Grade 7As did no grammar tasks at all. The lack of comprehension exercises is cause for concern, not only because of the implied neglect of language comprehension, but also because it compounds the paucity of reading in learners' Afrikaans literacy development.

While collecting the data I copied the writing of the Afrikaans-speakers in Grade 7A even though I could not include it for analysis in this data set because they are Afrikaans L1 learners. A cursory look at their writing showed that the Afrikaans-speakers in Grade 7A wrote exactly the same

amount on the same topics as the L2 Afrikaans-speakers in the class. Mr Pearson confirmed (Interview, 3 February 2004) that he did not differentiate between the Afrikaans L1 and L2 learners and gave them exactly the same work. Because of the differences in pace of work between Grade 7A and B, this meant that Afrikaans-speakers learning Afrikaans L1 in Grade 7A had written less than isiXhosa-speakers learning Afrikaans L2 in Grade 7B.

Both classes wrote two similar extended texts – a self-description, first guided and then independently. No other genres were introduced and none of the self-descriptions were written in paragraphs. The descriptions varied in length from 8 to 34 sentences (both in Grade 7B). Many Grade 7Bs used English words occasionally (a common example being English 'like' instead of Afrikaans '*hou van'*) and one Grade 7A learner wrote his whole paragraph in English. Mr Pearson commented "Not in English in Afrikaans", and translated the first two sentences into Afrikaans. In section 7.2 I analyse a selection of the independently written self-descriptions. I tried as far as possible to select the same learners' writing for Afrikaans and English.

7.1.2 Sea View

The learners at Sea View had two books for their Afrikaans writing, one for grammar and another for creative writing. In Grade 7i there were 11 isiXhosa- and 8 English-speakers, making a total of 19 Afrikaans L2 learners. In Grade 7ii there were 16 Afrikaans L2 learners, whose home languages were: English (8), isiXhosa (6), German (1) and one English/Afrikaans bilingual. I included the English/Afrikaans bilingual as an Afrikaans L2 learner because he indicated English primacy through placing English first in his description of his own bilingualism and completing the English section of the trilingual questionnaire in English.

In contrast to Mr Pearson at John Bishop, the Afrikaans teacher at Sea View, Mr Payne, distinguished between L1 and L2 Afrikaans learners in terms of the amount and topics for writing, as well as textbooks. For most of their grammar and writing exercises, Afrikaans L2 learners used mainly *Nuwe Afrikaans sonder grense*, the same textbook used by both L1 and L2 learners at John Bishop. L1 Afrikaans learners used a textbook called *Afrikaans my Taal*. Similarly to John Bishop, learners at Sea View did not each have a copy of the textbook, and Mr Payne made copious photocopies of the exercises, which learners pasted into their books. The policy of the school was that learners should buy their own textbooks, and where this was not possible (for financial reasons or because the book was out of print), the school hired out its limited stock of books for an annual fee of R20 per book (Interview, 17 February 2004). There were no prescribed literary texts for either L1 or L2 learners, so that both read the same amount and sort of material in class, mainly newspaper articles and poetry.

Table 7.2 (Appendix 15) shows a remarkable amount of written work done in four weeks, bearing out Mr Payne's claim that he focused on writing in the first term. Given the fact that Afrikaans has the same amount of curriculum time at both Sea View and John Bishop, I sought some explanation for the difference in volume between what Sea View learners wrote compared to what John Bishop learners wrote. Mr Pearson (Interview, 3 February 2004) claimed that the administrative demands on his time as principal meant that he was "seldom in the classroom [*amper nooit daar nie*]". Another contrast between Sea View and John Bishop was that there were few differences in the amount written between the two Sea View Grade 7 classes, and these were all controlled writing of word-length exercises. Only the Grade 7i class did the exercise about greetings, while only the Grade 7ii class did the exercise on diminutives. Grammar exercises predominated, and most of them were gap-filling single-word rather than sentence-length. The emphasis on single-word

answers extended to the two comprehension exercises and one of the two extended texts also required short answers. Despite the volume of writing, most of what the learners did was controlled or guided and very little (including the comprehensions) was sentence-length or independently written.

I collected the writing of the Afrikaans- and Afrikaans/English-speakers (as I had done at John Bishop), even though it could not be included for analysis. An examination of their writing showed that Afrikaans L1 speakers wrote different amounts and on different topics to the Afrikaans L2 learners, supporting Mr Payne's claim (Interview, 17 February 2004) that he drew a distinction between L1 and L2 learners. For instance, L1 learners did fewer grammar exercises and wrote a letter to their parents explaining why they felt entitled to more personal freedom and independence, a rather more demanding task than the diary entry done by the L2 learners. Neither L1 nor L2 learners wrote impersonal factual genres in the period under review.

In section 7.2, I analyse the diary entry, the longest piece of sustained independent writing, and the second comprehension passage, called '*Kind (6) sing toe hy 10 uur in gat vassit*' [Child (6) sang while stuck in a hole for 10 hours]. I chose this one because it was longer than the first comprehension passage and it tried to teach learners to skim read, unlike other comprehension exercises which mostly required learners to read line-for-line and retrieve information.

7.1.3 St Katherine's

The 13 Afrikaans L1 speakers reflected in the EMIS data (in Chapter Five, Table 5.1) are not catered for as L1 learners at St Katherine's; Afrikaans is only taught as L2. As indicated in Chapter Six, Afrikaans L2 learners at St Katherine's did all their writing on loose pages which they filed in a lever-arch file. Learners' files began with an Afrikaans course outline, which did

not indicate whether the level of Afrikaans is L1, 2 or 3, unlike the isiXhosa documents which do, as will be shown in Chapter Nine.

Consistent with the school's policy that Afrikaans and isiXhosa are both taught as L2, the four learning outcomes (Grade 7 Afrikaans Course Outline 2003:1) for Afrikaans are identical with those for isiXhosa. Learners should be able to:

- Follow oral and written instructions, and to act on these instructions.
- Speak Afrikaans with reasonable confidence and fluency.
- Read Afrikaans with comprehension and insight, at your developmental level.
- Write Afrikaans correctly, being able to apply the language, spelling and punctuation skills which you have developed.

A variety of genres such as "advertisements, information leaflets, notices, informal letters, announcements, dialogues and conversations, information, stories, descriptions" are listed in the Afrikaans Course Outline (2003:2). Ms Relly (Interview, 20 February 2004) explained that 'information leaflets' and 'information' as two separate items was a typographical error and that only the first was intended. Information leaflets denoted factual writing and could include genres like recount, report and explanation. This inclusion of factual writing is the one difference between the Afrikaans and isiXhosa course outlines. Of these genres, as Table 6.3 (Appendix 8) shows, learners had written a self-description, like the one at John Bishop. Similarly to learners at the other two schools, learners at St Katherine's had not written any impersonal factual genres.

The amount of written work at St Katherine's (Table 6.3, Appendix 8) is mid-way between the volume at Sea View and the scarcity at John Bishop, especially in the Grade 7A class. When one takes into account that Afrikaans had less curriculum time at St Katherine's than at John Bishop

(see Table 5.3 in Chapter Five), this is another measure of the small amount of writing John Bishop learners did. Like that of Sea View, most of the writing at St Katherine's is of grammar tasks and is either controlled or guided. Interestingly, however, in contrast to Afrikaans writing at John Bishop and Sea View, at St Katherine's some grammar and comprehensions were independently written and learners' writing of an extended text was guided.

7.2 The level of complexity and variation in selected texts

To measure the complexity and variation in learners' writing I analyse a selection of their independent writing. Learners at the three schools had written different genres on related topics: at John Bishop and St Katherine's an autobiographical self-description and at Sea View a diary entry. I analyse a comprehension exercise of Sea View learners, but not of John Bishop learners as they had not done a comprehension exercise. (The St Katherine's comprehension exercise is analysed in Chapter Six.)

On the one hand, I wanted to compile and compare learners' errors to establish the extent to which the grammar exercises addressed and remediated common errors and, on the other, I was also interested in the richness and complexity of learners' writing. The topics for sustained independent writing required learners to describe and explore themselves and their own lives. For reasons of space and since I included Palesa's original texts together with my translations and analyses in Chapter Six, my translations of each learner's Afrikaans text and nine of the 14 text analyses are attached as appendices. I include in this chapter four texts and analyses from John Bishop and Sea View learners that illustrate particularly interesting clause development. I have not included any St Katherine's learners' texts in this chapter because Palesa's writing was analysed in Chapter Six and the writing frame (Appendix 9) had the effect of producing similar self-descriptions from all three learners. Carol and Clive's texts are attached as Appendices 10 and 11.

7.2.1 John Bishop

The Afrikaans writing of six isiXhosa-speakers out of the total of 35 was missing, leaving 29 pieces. I selected learners who had a complete set of written work and, as far as possible, the same learners in all three Languages. All but one of the six isiXhosa-speakers whose English writing I analyse in Chapter Eight handed in their Afrikaans writing for me to copy. As Babalwa's Afrikaans writing is missing, I analyse the writing of five isiXhosa-speakers (Mandla, Nandi, Nosisa, Sizwe and Thabo). Only one text, Thabo's self-description, is included in this chapter. The rest are attached as Appendices 16, 17, 18, 19.

In the middle of the page, Thabo had a photograph, presumably of himself as a little boy at a pre-school 'graduation', a common end-of-year ceremony to mark children's completion of pre-primary school. He did not label or refer to the photograph at all in his written text.

Analysis of Thabo's self-description

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1.		My name	Is Thabo.//
2.		I house number	live there in the location// is 121 A Street.//
3.		I	* 12 years old.//
4. and		I I	am a tall boy with brown eyes and black hair// like to play rugby with my friend here at school.//
5.		I	like the tuckshop.//
6.		My best subjects	are LO, Technology, LLC English.//
7.		My favourite food	Is fish and chips.//
8.		I	don't like samp.//
9.		I Dikomo Movetloane	stay with my mom, Nondumiso, my sisters is the oldest one// is the youngest sister.//
10.		My grandmother Luleka, my sister's child, Lefa and my aunt's child Ludiva	*//
11. When or		I I	come to school// listen to the radio// watch television//

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
at five o' clock		I	do my homework.//
12. Then and		I I	go to my brother at Nombulelo School// play television games.//
13.		My best friends here at school	are Ayanda, Sibusiso and Simphiwe.//
14. and		Ayanda and I	play together// like him.//
15. because because and because		She I he he I also	is a good friend// help him// helps me// helps// help his help.//
16. and		My other friends we he	is Sibusiso// say// is west of cephe what about the teaspoon.//
17. but		He he	is short// is old.//
18. but and		My best friend she she she she	is Simphiwe// can't read// can write// likes to play with us// is very tall// has a sister.//
19.		My favourite sport	is cricket, chess, touch-rugby and rugby.//
20. but when		I I it	like to play// stay at home// is very hot or cold.//
21. or		I	listen to the radio// play with my sister's computer.//
22. who		I	don't like person// play in class.//
23. and		I	like my work// help other people in the class.//
24.		I	have two dog.//
25. but		Their name Lion	is Kimber// is the small dog// is the biggest dog.//
26. when but		She she Kimber	eat a lot of food// is hungry// doesn't eat a lot of food.//
27.		My sister	has a small baby.//
28. and		His name he he	is Ketsidis// doesn't like purit porridge// likes milk and yoghurt.//
29.		My dad she	is dead// * very sick.//
30. that		My mom I	says// mustn't think about him.//
31.		My brother	is also dead.//
32.		She	drowned in the sea.//
33. but		My father's mother	is also dead// don't * from what//

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
		I	didn't see him.//
34.		I I	look after my sister's small child// don't get paid.//

The 34 sentences consist of 71 clauses containing finite verbs, including 4 with missing verbs indicated by *. Two sentences (9 and 25) read like attempted relative clauses with missing conjunctions. Because verbs are central elements of clauses, I counted sentence 9 as having two relative clauses and 25, one. There are 59 independent and 12 dependent (4 relative, 3 temporal, 3 causal and 2 noun) clauses, producing a hypotaxis level of 17%. Thabo used a variety of dependent clauses and was the only John Bishop learner whose text had relative and projected (noun) clauses.

All the John Bishop learners with the exception of Mandla (Appendix 16) formed complex sentences. Nandi (Appendix 17), Sizwe (Appendix 19) and Thabo's texts contain perfectly grammatical temporal clauses, for instance. However, all the learners avoided or struggled with relative clauses: Nosisa's (Appendix 18) only attempt at a dependent clause (sentence 15) was a poorly-formed relative clause while Sizwe (Appendix 19, sentence 15) and Thabo's texts (sentences 9 and 25) contain versions of failed relative clauses. These problems with relative clauses confirm Kress's (1994:95) contention that the ability to form relative clauses signifies a developmental step in children's writing competence. This evidence would suggest that relative clauses pose more of a hurdle for learners than other forms of hypotaxis. In contrast to his problematic relative clauses, Thabo accurately formed two projected clauses (sentences 16 and 30), which Kress (1994) also regards as significant indicators of learners' written competence.

Together with focusing on how learners' writing becomes increasing complex, I am also interested in how children develop an understanding of

the structure of the sentence as a constituent unit of text and of the relation between sentences and paragraphs; in a word, punctuation. Mandla's text (Appendix 16), which consists entirely of single-clause simple sentences, is perfectly punctuated. All the other John Bishop learners have trouble demarcating sentence boundaries, at various points in their texts. Thabo has run-on sentences where a co-ordinating conjunction like 'and' or a full stop are omitted (2, 18, 28, 29). In sentences 33 and 34 sub-ordinating conjunctions like 'because' or 'although', which add meaning, are missing. Despite these omissions, throughout his text Thabo demonstrates a basic understanding of a sentence as a unit of meaning about one topic. He chains two or more clauses that belong together as a unit of sense and ends each 'sentence' when he switches to another topic. Sentence 15 is correctly structured and punctuated, on the surface, as it has a conjunction linking each clause, yet Thabo gets tripped up in explaining the complex reciprocal relationship between himself and a friend, Ayanda. A likely reason for his confusion is that in Afrikaans there are two separate but similar words for 'help' as a noun (*hulp*) and a verb (*help*).

Though most John Bishop learners achieve sentence-level coherence, their self-descriptions lack overall textual coherence, demonstrated in the complete absence of paragraphing. Even though Afrikaans is taught as L2 to isiXhosa-speakers at John Bishop, it is a third language for most isiXhosa-speaking learners. It will, therefore, be interesting to compare their use of paragraphing in English, which is their second language, even though it is taught as L1.

Mr Pearson marked the self-descriptions by underlining errors, often whole sentences. There was no evidence of assessment criteria in learners' books or of the teacher responding to the content of learners' writing; for instance, there is no comment on the (completely mysterious) slang "we say he is west of cephe what about the teaspoon" in Thabo's sentence 16.

The texts were not assigned a mark and Mr Pearson made no mention of assessment criteria during the interview (3 February 2004).

7.2.2 Sea View

All 35 Afrikaans L2 learners handed in their books for me to copy their writing. I analyse a comprehension passage and the diary entries of three isiXhosa- and three English-speakers. Anna, the German-speaker, had not done the diary entry. The isiXhosa-speakers were the same three whose English writing I also analyse (Tenji, Xolo and Zoleka). Because the three isiXhosa-speakers were from Grade 7i, I chose two English-speakers from Grade 7ii (Amy and Karen) and one from Grade 7i (Kevin).

Analysis of the comprehension passage

The comprehension passage, '*Kind (6) sing toe hy 10 uur in gat vassit*' states that it is from a South African newspaper. It is presented in the textbook as an authentic text, like a 'torn out' article pasted on the page (Appendix 20). It tells of a six-year old boy who was convinced by two older friends to follow a porcupine down a hole and was stuck for ten hours in the narrow bottom part of the hole. This comprehension exercise was unlike any of the others in Afrikaans or English because it models skim reading and tries to show learners that they can grasp the gist of the passage in this way. Comprehension exercises usually instruct learners to read the whole passage word for word before they answer the questions meant to test their understanding of the passage. In this case, learners were asked first to skim read certain key words in the text that were highlighted with a dot. Underneath the comprehension passage, some of the highlighted words were repeated in a bigger font and arranged to form a wave. Learners had to read the words, use them as a guide and write their own version of the story without having read the whole story. After writing their own story, they were then asked to read the entire text to check their version against the original. The next exercise asked learners to match certain words from the passage with their meanings. The task of

rewriting the story tested skim reading rather than learners' comprehension of the entire passage. The second task, matching words to their meanings, tested how well learners could work out meanings in context. None of the questions were inferential or interpretive.

Though I did not analyse learners' comprehension answers because the task was guided writing, I was interested to compare how learners had handled this departure from the 'norm' of comprehension reading and writing. Only one learner, Karen, had written her own version of the story based on the key words, which Mr Payne confirmed he had set as a task (Interview, 17 February 2004). Seemingly, the learners found it difficult to contruct a story after skim reading key words and so they did not attempt it.

Analysis of learners' diary entries

I include my analysis of the diary entries of Karen, Kevin and Xolo and the others Amy's (Appendix 21), Tenji's (Appendix 22) and Zoleka's (Appendix 23) are attached as appendices.

Analysis of Karen's diary

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1.		Today	was an interesting day.//
2.		I I	decided to do something big// 'm giving up my soapie Days!//
3. that but		Everyone I I	knows// can't do it// must try.//
4. because that		I I it	finished a book today// was very scared// is about a cat// 's a ghost.//
5. that if but		I most of my family I I	know// would laugh// told them// don't mind.//
6.		School today we	was not to bad// had flexi, Guidance, PT.
7.		We I	didn't have too much homework// 've done.//
8.		I	'm so angry with my friends//

		I they	thought// were friends.//
9.		They	‘re all busy planning behind my back.//
10. that but		They I they	think// don’t know// know nothing.//
11.		I	am furious.//

The 11 sentences consist of 26 clauses containing finite verbs Possibly 19 independent and 7 dependent (4 noun, I each causal, conditional and relative) clauses. The level of hypotaxis is 26,9%. The Transitivity analysis shows a balanced use of verbs: 9 Relational, 8 Mental and 7 Material process verbs. First person is Agent in 16 out of 26 clauses, unsurprising in the genre of diary. Karen’s written competence is apparent not only in her level of hypotaxis but also from the four perfectly grammatical projected noun clauses, a significant indicator of learners’ written competence (Kress 1994).

Analysis of Kevin’s diary

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Circumstantial	Topical	
1. and who that and so	Today	I the girl I I I almost it I	went to school// sits next to me// irritates me so much// can jump out of my skin// got my mathematics Afrikaans and English for homework// forgot to do it// is so late// must sleep now.//

Kevin’s single sentence consists of 8 clauses – 5 independent and 3 dependent (1 relative, noun and causal) clauses. The level of hypotaxis is 37,5%. His diary entry has two unusual features: there are no Relational process verbs but instead mainly (6) Material process verbs and he uses minimal punctuation. Despite the lack of sentence boundaries, the text conveys an effective vivid message. It is not the lack of punctuation, like the missing full stops at the end of clauses 5 and 6, that impedes meaning. Instead, his choice of conjunction, ‘and’ at the start of clause 5,

obscures the implied causal link between the distracting girl next to him and his mountain of homework.

The breakdown of punctuation in Kevin's text is profound because his mega-'sentence' strings together different topics (most clearly between clause 6 and 7) with little understanding of a sentence as a unit of sense. Thabo, unlike Kevin, wrote as a single 'sentence' two or more clauses that belong together as one unit of sense (most clearly in sentence 18), but he consistently demarcated separate sentences when he switched from one topic to another (for example, sentences 18 to 19 and 33 to 34).

Analysis of Xolo's diary

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1. because and		My day I I	was very nice// got an 85% in maths// was very happy.//
2. and		Mr K that I	said very good, Xolo// 's a nice test// keep up the good work// do you hear Xolo// said Yes // thank you sir.//

Xolo's text has two sentences consisting of 9 clauses – 8 independent and 1 dependent, causal clause. The level of hypotaxis is 11,1%. Xolo's diary entry differs from any of the others in that he incorporates his teachers' and his own words directly into his text, rather than through subordinate clauses. This reduces the level of hypotaxis in his writing, but means that he needs to use the complicated punctuation of direct speech. As can be seen, there are no inverted commas, the defining punctuation feature of direct speech and several missing full stops or commas in the run-on clauses of the teacher's words in the second 'sentence'. However by using the conjunction 'and' to preface his own words in the second 'sentence', Xolo shows that he has a basic understanding of a sentence as a unit of meaning. Despite a relatively low hypotaxis level, Xolo's

attempt to include his own words as well as the words of another is a sign of his developing written competence, according to Kress (1994).

The Sea View learners, besides Kevin, understand sentence-level coherence but their diary entries are so short that they have no paragraphs, and it is not possible to use this basic measure to assess the textual coherence of their texts. Even though Afrikaans is taught as L2 to English- and isiXhosa-speakers at Sea View, it is in fact a third language for most isiXhosa-speaking learners. It is, therefore, not surprising that isiXhosa-speakers have lower hypotaxis levels than English-speakers in Afrikaans.

None of the learners' written work had been marked by the time I copied it. Mr Payne claimed that he "caught up" with his marking, including the diary entry, before the June examination. He explained that his practice was that learners marked their own grammar and comprehension exercises but that he marked the creative writing. During class marking, he wrote the answers on the board and discussed learners' alternatives so that learners "had the opportunity to check their own answers and better answers could be shared" (Interview, 17 February 2004).

7.3 Learners' written competence in Afrikaans

The pattern across these schools is that routine grammar tasks constitute the bulk of what learners write and most of these mundane texts entail controlled or guided writing, but learners' extended writing is done independently without the support of writing frames or guidelines, except at St Katherine's. The result is the anomaly that learners are guided in the easier tasks while they do their more demanding writing independently.

My analysis has compared learners' level of hypotaxis, which Allison *et al.* (2002) and Halliday (1994) regard as an important measure of writing development. A clause count of the 14 Afrikaans texts analysed can

establish the commonest dependent clauses in the data set. Logically, one would expect the relative and projected clauses identified by Kress (1994) as indicators of written competence to be rarer and more difficult for learners. A breakdown of the total of 59 dependent clauses shows that causal (23), temporal (16) and conditional (4) were the commonest types of dependent clauses, and in the main soundly formed grammatically. The relative (8), noun (7) and projected clauses (1) were the ones where learners made errors and struggled with word order, pronoun referrents and punctuation, which provides supporting evidence for Kress's (1994) contention that relative and projected clauses are more difficult and therefore indicate a higher level of written competence.

The longest clause complex in this Afrikaans data, with necessary punctuation inserted, is Kevin's first sentence (3 independent and 2 dependent clauses):

> I went to school and the girl who sits next to me iritates me so much that I can jump out of my skin and I got my mathematics, Afrikaans and English for homework.

Despite varying levels of hypotaxis there are no instances of nominalisation, a key indicator of formal written language (Halliday 1994) in any of the texts. Most of the texts contain strings of simple sentences and use mainly co-ordinating conjunctions, characteristic of spoken language. The short conversation in Xolo's text is a literal, unpunctuated example of 'speech on paper'.

The table below summarises indicators of quality of learners' texts in Afrikaans. Generally, learners use Unmarked Themes (367/395), suggesting that the emphasis on personal expressive writing does not develop learners' ability to vary their sentence structure. Most marked Themes (22/28) are temporal and Topical, and only one is Interpersonal.

Table 7.3: Summary of indicators of quality in learners' texts in Afrikaans

Learners and schools	L1	Genres/No. of clauses	Level of hypotaxis	Marked themes
John Bishop		**Autobiography**		
Mandla	IsiX	22	0%	1/22
Nandi	IsiX	23	8,8%	5/23
Nosisa	IsiX	34	2,9%	3/34
Sizwe	IsiX	46	8,7%	4/46
Thabo	SeSo	71	17%	2/71
Sea View		**Diary**		
Amy	Eng	14	14,3%	3/14
Karen	Eng	26	26,9%	0/26
Kevin	Eng	8	37,9%	1/8
Tenji	IsiX	7	14,3%	2/7
Xolo	IsiX	9	11,1%	0/9
Zoleka	IsiX	13	7,7%	1/13
St Katherine's		**Autobiography**		
Carol	Eng	49	24,5%	2/49
Clive	Eng	36	16,7%	2/36
Palesa	seTs	37	18,9%	1/37
Total	14	395	-	27/395

Afrikaans teachers' pedagogical practices at John Bishop and Sea View privilege grammar tasks and personal texts to the virtual exclusion of factual, impersonal genres and multimodal texts. The dominance of grammar and personal texts means that learners are developing BICS (Cummins 1984). As Afrikaans is most learners' L2 or L3 and it is unlikely to be a language of learning (MOI), they may have little incentive to develop formal academic written competence (CALP) in Afrikaans. The emphasis on grammatical accuracy and personal genres means that there is no evidence of teachers moving from language accuracy to appropriacy in the tasks set for learners, and thus there is little possibility of learners developing critical awareness, or a sense of ownership of their writing, in Afrikaans.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Analysis of Grade 7 learners' English writing

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I examine the amount, variety and complexity of learners' classroom writing in English in 19 weeks. My methodological decision to treat children's home language as primary and the official level at which a language is offered at school as secondary, means that though English was taught at all four schools, there is no data from St Katherine's included in this chapter. This is because I analyse the writing of Palesa, the only learner in my sample at St Katherine's for whom English was an additional language, in Chapter Six. Also, English was taught as L1 at St Katherine's, whereas at the other three schools it was taught either as L1/L2 or as L2.

The task of analysing Grade 7 learners' writing was complicated by the varying amounts and sorts of writing as well as the different language learning contexts of the four schools. At both St Katherine's and Sea View the Grade 7 classes and English teachers are linguistically similar: a combination of English-, Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaking learners with English-speaking teachers. The difference is that at St Katherine's, English is taught as L1 while at Sea View, it is taught as L1/L2. In contrast, at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop there are no English-speaking learners and the teachers are non-native English speakers teaching English as L2 to isiXhosa-speakers at Enoch Sontonga, and as L1/L2 combined to the mixed Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers at John Bishop. At John Bishop and Sea View, the teacher has to decide how and whether to separate the L1 and L2 levels of work to avoid what is taught and done being pitched at the lowest common denominator, the level of L2.

The amount of curriculum time available to English at the four schools also differed, as detailed in Table 5.3. The 25% of total curriculum time allocated for languages (DoE 2002), was split two ways at schools like Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop where two languages were offered, while at schools like Sea View and St Katherine's, where three languages were offered, the same amount of time had to be split three ways.

Another complicating factor is the different purposes that English fulfils for Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaking (more generally, African language speaking) learners: for isiXhosa-speaking learners, by Grade 7 English is the language of instruction and assessment at school, while for Afrikaans-speaking learners at John Bishop and Sea View, their L1, Afrikaans, serves as the language of instruction and assessment and could continue to do so for the rest of their schooling. They could also study in Afrikaans at tertiary level as there are two Afrikaans-medium universities in South Africa. English for Afrikaans-speaking learners is primarily a language of wider communication, not a language through which they must learn, as it is for isiXhosa-speakers. What levels of literacy in English should schooling develop for these different learners?

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of what Grade 7 L2 learners wrote in English in the first semester of the school year in 2003, from 22 January to 27 June. My data collection period of 19 weeks excludes the Easter holiday and the mid-year, June, examination, which lasted two and a half weeks. First, I compare the amount and variety that L2 learners wrote. I analyse and contrast selected comprehension exercises and learners' errors in response to the comprehension questions, and consider the extent to which the grammar exercises addressed and remediated the common errors. The comprehensions selected for analysis were those that had the most questions, and entailed the most writing, not necessarily the longest passages. All were done in the first few weeks of school, between February and March 2003.

Second, I describe the level of complexity and variation in selected learners' independently written extended texts. Third, I measure learners' level of written competence in English against the assessment standards of the RNCS (DoE 2002).

8.1 The amount and variety in Grade 7 learners' writing in English

8.1.1 Enoch Sontonga

Learners wrote all their English in one A-4 hard cover book or on loose pages supplied by the teacher, Ms Jawana. Ms Jawana said that her main focus in the first term was on speaking, rather than writing, while the second term focused more holistically on all the language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. Because the Grade 7 classes at Enoch Sontonga are not streamed, I randomly chose one class, Grade 7E, and a total of 33 out of 37 learners agreed to participate in my study. As already mentioned in Chapter Five, the limited school funds meant that there was seldom paper available for Ms Jawana to make and photocopy her own worksheets. Ms Jawana had about 35 copies of the grammar textbook, *World class: Grade 7* published in 1998, for seven classes of Grade 7 learners with an average of 35 learners in each class. Learners had no prescribed literary text and read the READ books and other materials in the class library. This means that each class can work from a READ or grammar book in class but it is difficult for learners to take either book home because it has to stay at school so that it is available for other classes.

In the main, language exercises were written on the board from the READ Teacher's Guide or designed by Ms Jawana. READ books were the major resource that Ms Jawana used in her teaching. Learners read three READ books (*The Magic Rocks*, *All the King's Men* and *Crooked Pine*), all narratives for the first semester. *The Magic Rocks*, a story about coal, was the basis of most of the first term's work, including the first

comprehension. The second comprehension exercise was taken from *All the King's Men*. The grammar exercises were taken from all three books.

Table 8.1 (Appendix 24) categorises the sorts of writing and whether tasks were copied, controlled, guided, or independently written. In addition to what is shown in Table 8.1, learners also wrote two language tests in March and June, besides the June examination. There is little balance in the kinds of texts and tasks learners did, or in whether their writing was controlled or independent. The pattern is that the grammar tasks were mainly controlled, while the comprehensions were independently written. Of the two extended texts, neither the poster nor the poem was individually done because the poster was a group project and learners had help from parents and others at home with the poem, according to Ms Jawana (Interview, 25 November 2003).

Learners at Enoch Sontonga in the first half of 2003 did little independent writing overall, no independent individual sustained writing and learnt no factual genres. They had no say in topics or genres for their writing and the poem and poster were on the same topic, coal. The reason for this is that most of their English work for the first term was based on *The Magic Rocks,* a Stage Four READ book about coal. A READ facilitator (Interview, 22 October 2003) considered Stage Four appropriate for Grade 7 English L2 learners, but I argue (below) that *The Magic Rocks* is too short (20 pages containing 62 sentences) and limited in scope to be the basis of class reading for an entire term. The way in which reading only one book limited topics for learners' writing is a particular cause for concern, given Krashen's (1982) finding that reading extensively supports writing acquisition.

Stage Four READ books have a storybook appearance with large 16-point font, wide margins and colourful illustrations and borders. *The Magic Rocks* was locally written and its pages have a stylised border with writing

on the right hand page and drawings on the adjacent left page. The syntax and vocabulary are simple. Sentences are mostly simple clauses and co-ordinate clause strings joined by 'and' or 'but', and the vocabulary is well within the 5000 word lexicon expected in the Intermediate Phase (DoE 2002:67). The title and opening of *The Magic Rocks*, "A long time ago; somewhere in Africa …", suggest that it is a folk tale/narrative, but in fact it is a more complex genre mix. The initial, bigger part of the story is a fable with an implicit moral message (generosity pays) written in the third person, while the last part is a very short factual account about coal. The setting, in a timeless generalised African past, and the traditional stock-type characterisation are a bland (and sexist) way to meet the challenge of being relevant and interesting for poor South African learners in a variety of rural and urban settings. The main characters, who are not named, are a poor family with meagre food (porridge) struggling to find wood for a fire, and a mysterious old man. The kind mother shares their evening meal with the hungry old man who gives her black magic rocks and disappears without explaining their magical properties. When her husband and two children return, there is too little wood left to cook the rest of the porridge and he angrily throws the rocks on the embers of the fire. The cold hungry family huddles together to sleep. But, in the morning, their generosity is rewarded: their porridge is cooked, the fire is blazing, the father works out that the magic rocks are coal and they set out to find more. The brief factual second part tells how coal has fueled development and also caused pollution. It ends with a problem statement and question that switch from the third person past tense of the narrative to address the reader directly, "One day it [coal] may harm the earth. Will we let that happen?" The comprehension was based on the first part of the story.

According to Ms Jawana, the learners struggled with the level of vocabulary, and words like 'enough', 'ancient', 'guessed', 'cheated', 'already' were included in the spelling and sentence-building vocabulary exercises that accompanied their reading of the story and preceded the

comprehension. Of the 33 participants, 27 learners did the comprehension exercise.

The 14 comprehension questions, taken from the READ Teachers' Guide (Appendix 25), were constructed as simple sentences. All were closed 'wh' questions leading learners through the story from beginning to end, and asking mainly for information straight from the text. There were no interpretive questions and only one inferential question, unchanged from the narrowly textual view of reading Granville (2001) identifies in her research in the mid-1990s. The learners all completed the comprehension and their answers show that most were able to find the required information. I do an error analysis of all the answers, even of sentences that contained the correct factual information, for two reasons. Firstly, to probe learners' writing ability in more detail and, secondly, to better understand whether the large amount of formal grammar remediated the commonest learner errors. Because sentence structure is central to writing, I concentrate on learners' grammatical errors. In a word-order language like English, an understanding of the rules of syntax is vital in forming grammatically accurate sentences, whereas in an agglutinative language like isiXhosa, morphological rules are important. The question that learners most commonly misunderstood and answered incorrectly was the sole inferential question, 12, "What secret did the husband discover about the magic rocks?"

It touches on the turning point in the story: how the husband worked out the secret of the rocks when all the old man had told the woman was that the rocks could turn into gold. When the woman saw the rocks glowing in the fire, she thought that they were gold and tried to take them out of the fire, but they were too hot to touch. Once the fire had cooled, the woman was disappointed to find that all that was left of the 'gold' was a pile of ash. The husband consoled her by explaining that he had worked out the

secret of the rocks – that they could produce heat and light for the whole night.

Four learners correctly deduced the secret the husband had discovered, that the rocks could burn. Some wrong answers missed the point completely “He wanted collect more rocks”. Most wrong answers reformulated the question, that he discovered that the rocks were special, or quoted from the passage, “I’ve guessed the old man’s secret”, without explaining what the secret was. The four factually correct answers, below, contained several errors that proved to be quite common: omission of the apostrophe and determiners; problems with pronouns and with the verb phrase.

(1) The woman husband the was surprise because the magic rocks turn into fire.

(2) Becous the magic rocks than into fire.

(3) The woman husband he was surprise because the magic rocks turn into fire.

(4) the husband surprised becaus fire burnt all night.

Analysis of all the learners’ comprehension answers showed that most errors were around the verb phrase. It was not always easy to classify the different types of error, but I believe that it would be useful for remedial purposes to specify three types. The commonest (67 instances) were errors related to tense. Both the narrative and the comprehension questions were in the past tense. Yet many learners struggled to write their answers in the past tense, and the commonest error was the use of the present instead of the past tense, e.g. ‘turn’ in 1 and 2.

The next type of error (15 instances) was an incomplete form of the verb phrase. Often this involved the verb ‘to be’, e.g. ‘was surprise’ in 1 and 2, or omission of the auxiliary, (5) “The woman kind to the old man.” They

also involved many different verbs forming the progressive tense, (6) “The old man carrying a sack”.

There were 13 instances of problematic sentence structure, seven of which were similar and occurred in response to question 10, “Why was the woman’s husband unhappy?” I quote five:
(7) The is no food
(8) The was no food
(9) The was know food
(10) The are has no food
(11) The is no food for to eat
Clearly, these learners struggled with the structure ‘there was ..’

There were six other examples of problematic sentence structure, and all of the sentences are quoted in full. The first three came from the same learner:
(12) The woman went returned cooked porridge
(13) The old man came up stopped
(14) The husband want to do next
(15) The old man his need food
(16) The woman husband unhappy wonderful
(17) The hasdend next magic rocks

Possibly these learners are at a pre-conjunction stage (Kress 1994:155) where their understanding and command of conjunctions and connectives impedes their ability to sequence (sentences 12, 13, 14, and 17) and show causality (sentences 15, and 16).

As has been found before in error analysis of Nguni-language speakers’ writing (Jessop 1994), there were many errors (26) involving determiners. In most cases learners placed an article before an uncount noun, e.g.:
(18) The old man wanted a food

(19) The woman collected a firewood

More rarely, articles were omitted, e.g. (20) “The woman found handful of sticks” and sentence 4, “the husband surprised becaus fire burnt all night”.

Other common errors involved personal pronouns and the apostrophe. There were ten errors where the apostrophe for possession was omitted. Five learners made the same error as noted in 1 and 2 above, and there were five who wrote “the earth crust”. Then there were 11 instances where learners switched the gender of the third person singular (s/he in isiXhosa is one gender-neutral word similar to the single gender-neutral word for third person plural, ‘they’, in English), or repeated the pronoun in the noun phrase.

(21) She [the old man] wanted food

(22) He [the old man] gave him [the woman] sam magic rocks

(23) She [the husband] want to find the magic rocks

Error analysis can illuminate the relationship between the different sorts of learner writing: whether the language exercises (the mundane texts that make up the bulk of learners’ writing at Enoch Sontonga) remediate their errors and support their independent writing (of culturally salient and aesthetically valued texts). In fact, there was little correlation between the language exercises and learners’ errors. What has been noted elsewhere, that “teachers need better diagnostic skills so that their curriculum planning can be based on a more objective understanding of their pupils’ capabilities” (Allison *et al.* 2002:97), is equally true here. Though problems with verbs (present, past and progressive tenses) accounted for the largest number of errors in the comprehension, there was only one exercise on verbs, which required learners to choose between commonly confused pairs (e.g. lend/borrow; win/beat). There were no exercises on personal pronouns, on count/uncount nouns and articles, or apostrophes. However, analysis of learners’ other independent writing (the poems and

posters) showed markedly fewer errors than their comprehension answers.

8.1.2 John Bishop

At John Bishop, as at Enoch Sontonga, learners wrote all their English in one A-4 hard cover book or on loose pages supplied by the teacher, Mr Craig. Mr Craig said that his primary focus in the first term was not on writing but on reading, and in the second term he spent more time on writing. Classes are not streamed but there were linguistic differences between the two Grade 7 classes: Grade 7A was a class of mixed Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaking learners, while the learners in Grade 7B was almost exclusively isiXhosa-speaking. Because of this, I included both classes in my study. In Grade 7A, 20 out of a total of 30 learners agreed to participate, and in Grade 7B all 26 agreed.

Learning materials were a combination of worksheets designed by Mr Craig (like the first comprehension exercise) or copied from books, exercises written on the board, and from READ books (like the second and third comprehension exercises). Mr Craig used several different books for grammar texts, had 40 copies of the textbook, *Day by day English for Grade 7* published in 1998, for three classes of Grade 7 learners, averaging about 35 learners each. This meant that, as at Enoch Sontonga, learners could not take the books home. There was no prescribed literary text and learners read mainly from the READ books and the newspapers in the class library corner.

Table 8.2 (Appendix 26) shows that learners' writing at John Bishop was more evenly-spread across the text types than at Enoch Sontonga. Also, their writing included a balance of controlled, guided, copied and independent writing, with the teacher guiding, especially, learners' genre writing. The teacher introduced a variety of texts, including some factual genres, but learners wrote relatively few of these independently, and

played no part in choosing topics for their writing. At both Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop the learners do not reach the final crucial stage of independent writing.

What was most striking was the difference in the amount read and written between the Grade 7A and B classes. Grade 7B, with mainly isiXhosa-speaking learners, wrote a great deal more, and more independently, than Grade 7A, the mixed class of Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers. In Grade 7A, four learners wrote one summary each and of the four learners, three were isiXhosa-speakers. In Grade 7B, all the learners wrote at least four summaries and 20 out of 27 wrote between five and seven. Their summaries, of READ stories, were sustained independent writing. In addition to the summaries, the Grade 7Bs also wrote a recount of the school Big Walk, another independent text, which the Grade 7As did not. Why did isiXhosa-speakers write so much more than their Afrikaans-speaking peers? Is it because they realise that since English is their language of learning it is worth becoming competent at summarising? In an interview (2 December 2003) Mr Craig said that the Afrikaans-speakers were “not on the same level as the isiXhosa-speakers” and that it was difficult to “find the right level” when teaching a mixed class like Grade 7A. He was unsurprised at the amount of extra writing that the isiXhosa-speakers had done, but was unable to explain why they had done more. He mentioned Afrikaans-speaking learners’ lack of interest in school work or remedial exercises, their unpunctuality and their parents’ general absence from quarterly meetings, compared to isiXhosa-speakers’ keenness about school and education generally. His only explanation was that apartheid policy, which had provided books for Afrikaans-speakers (including coloureds) historically, but not for isiXhosa-speakers (and other black South Africans), had led his Afrikaans-speaking learners to “take education for granted”.

Mr Craig wrote ‘Argosy Artero’, the first comprehension passage, and set the 13 accompanying questions (Appendix 27). ‘Argosy Artero’ is a description of a fictitious city, Capytown, in Argentina and some ordinary inhabitants (like a school boy, Argosy, and a teacher) and important people (like the president, and the mayor) all of whom are given unlikely, comical names. The only character described in any detail is Argosy whose appearance, age, and habits are given (and are likely to be similar to those of many learners). Several details of the main town, Capytown, also resemble Grahamstown. ‘Argosy Artero’ is written in the present tense typical of description and, with 28 clauses, is by far the shortest of the four comprehension passages. The passage was handwritten in block letters on one A4 page without any illustrations with the 13 questions copied on the back of the passage. The syntax and vocabulary are simple. Sentences are mostly simple clauses, and the vocabulary is within the 5000 word lexicon expected in the Intermediate Phase (DoE 2002:67).

The questions are all closed ‘wh’ questions asking for straight from-the-text information, disturbingly consistent with Granville’s (2001) research findings. There are no inferential or interpretive questions. Most of the learners (42 out of 46) completed the comprehension, and their answers show that most were able to find the required information. I did an error analysis of all the answers, even of sentences that contained the correct factual information. Firstly, to probe learners’ writing ability in more detail and, secondly, to better understand whether the formal grammar addressed and remediated the commonest learner errors. Since there was more independent and guided writing at John Bishop than at Enoch Sontonga, I was also interested in the balance between these different forms of writing and how it developed learners’ writing and literacy. I started by identifying the question that learners most commonly misunderstood and answered incorrectly, question 7, “In which possible 2 years was he born?” The awkward formulation of the question may be part of the reason that only 12 learners got it right. All the correct answers

came from isiXhosa-speakers. It does not explain why none of the Afrikaans-speakers attempted the question and left a blank space, whereas most isiXhosa-speakers made an attempt to answer it.

As at Enoch Sontonga, analysis showed that most errors involved the verb phrase. There were fewer verb errors (43 in total) in the 42 comprehensions done by learners at John Bishop, than in the 27 comprehensions at Enoch Sontonga, where there were 67 verb errors. Because it was descriptive, the 'Argosy Artero' passage was mainly in the present tense as were most of the questions. Perhaps learners made no tense errors, because the tense of the passage, most questions and answers was the same. But, because the dominant tense was present, there were 38 errors of subject-verb concord, with Afrikaans-speakers making a greater proportion of the errors (16 errors among 10 learners) than isiXhosa-speakers (22 errors among 32 learners). Two examples of concord errors were "The dance festival last for five days" and "He like chiken".

The remaining five errors, making the total of 43 verb errors, were in answer to question 5, "How many children are at Maradonna Primary?" They involved problems with the formulation 'there are …'. Three were very similar to errors at Enoch Sontonga: "The are 520 children" and two were different, "They are 520 children at Maradonna Primary". All these errors occurred among isiXhosa-speakers only.

The other instance of problematic sentence formulation occurred in response to question 9, "How long does the national Dance Festival last?" Fourteen learners, a fairly equal number of Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers, wrote "The national dance festival last 5 days long".

Further confirming Jessop's (1994) research, isiXhosa-speakers made 17 errors involving the article, while Afrikaans-speakers made none. Unlike

the errors of the Enoch Sontonga learners, these errors did not involve count/uncount nouns. Instead there were ten sentences involving the distinction between the general and the particular, which articles also signal: “Mr Zono is the very friendly man”; six were omitted articles “Argosy is twelve year old boy”; and one was an extra article “Golella is the capital of the Diego province”.

There were 41 punctuation errors involving capital letters, a relatively simple aspect of punctuation. The fact that the passage was written in block capitals may have confused some learners. Many used a capital letter for common nouns in the middle of a sentence, as in “Argosy’s Favourite Food was Chicken”, or they omitted to capitalise a proper noun, as in “Mrs flower power is the mayor”. The latter error may be partly due to the contrived name given to the mayor.

Error analysis can show whether the language exercises remediate learners’ errors and support their independent sustained writing. The language exercise on capital letters addressed aspects of learners’ punctuation errors in the comprehension. However, the more complex linguistic problems that showed in learners’ independent writing were not addressed in language exercises: understanding concord between subject-verb, the relationship between count/uncount nouns or particular/general and articles. Analysis of learners’ other independent writing (the ‘Family and feelings’ illustrated text and ‘Big Walk’) showed different errors from those that emerged in their comprehension answers.

8.1.3 Sea View

The learners at Sea View did most of their English writing in a book and some tasks on separate lined pages supplied by the teacher, Ms Usher. However, these learners, unlike those at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, also used coloured paper and card that they brought from home in some of their work. At Sea View classes were not streamed, but I decided

to include both Grade 7 classes because learners' linguistic composition was different in the two classes. In Grade 7i and 7ii there was a mix of Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaking learners, in addition to English home-language speakers. The 18 English L2 learners in Grade 7i were five Afrikaans-, 11 isiXhosa-, and two Afrikaans/English-speakers. I included the two Afrikaans/English bilinguals as English L2 learners because they indicated Afrikaans primacy by placing Afrikaans first in describing their own bilingualism and also because they (or their parents) completed the Afrikaans questionnaire in Afrikaans. The eight English L2 learners in Grade 7ii comprised one Afrikaans-, one German-, and six isiXhosa-speakers.

Ms Usher used worksheets quite extensively, for grammar as well as comprehension exercises, and most were copied from her personal collection of textbooks. She had six fairly current textbooks, ranging from one published in 1993 to two published in 1999. Learners did not have their own grammar textbook. Learners read three prescribed literary texts for the year, *Midnight Fox* in term one, *Goalkeeper's Revenge* in term two, and *Island of Blue Dolphins* in term three. There were sufficient books for learners to have a copy each or to share with a classmate who lived nearby, so that they could read at home as well as in class. According to Ms Usher, and borne out in the amount of written work, writing was prioritised from early in the year.

Table 8.3 (Appendix 28) shows that learners' writing at Sea View was more evenly-spread across the text types than at Enoch Sontonga. Similarly to writing at John Bishop, Ms Usher introduced a variety of texts but no impersonal factual genres. However, Sea View learners' writing differed from writing at John Bishop in that there were fewer summaries, no copying of texts and no guided writing of genres. Sea View learners wrote all their culturally salient and aesthetically valued texts

independently, without any guidance from their teacher in the form of genre-specific assessment criteria or writing frames.

Learners' written work was mainly sentence-length decontextualised grammar tasks; with learners doing far more grammar exercises than at any other school in my sample. As at Enoch Sontonga, these mundane texts were typical of a formal grammar teaching classroom. In contrast, to Enoch Sontonga, there was a balance between controlled and guided writing of the mundane texts, with the reported speech exercises being guided while the rest was controlled. Unlike the position at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, at Sea View the teacher and learners reached the stage of independent writing. Also, there was one instance ('How I feel when …') where learners had some choice about the topic of their independent writing.

The comprehension passage 'Bees in the jam' is an authentic text, an unaltered extract from the autobiography of a South African writer and academic, Guy Butler (Appendix 29). The title of the autobiography and an introductory sentence explain the setting, the Karoo, and indicate the time period of the narrative, 1918-1935. Althought the textbook is modern (1999), it uses dated texts. Ms Usher photocopied the passage and 15 questions on one A4 page, so that the text seems print-dense, despite three illustrations, because of the small 9-point font and narrow margins. The narrative is first person past tense with named characters and a distinct South African context, unlike the featureless characters of *The Magic Rocks* (the source for the Enoch Sontonga comprehension passage) or the contrived setting of 'Argosy Artero' (the John Bishop comprehension passage). The passage is an account of what happened when bees got into a tin of jam left in a tent while the author and friends were camping. The author, who had forgotten the jam in the tent, decided to remove the tin. To protect himself from the bees he put on thick clothing and cut eye slits in a brown paper bag to cover his head. Despite

these precautions, however, the bees stung him when the packet came adrift because he sneezed as he threw the tin.

Only a close reading revealed why the humorous self-mocking tone of the passage (for instance in the conclusion: “My upper lip was protruding like a giraffe’s, and my right eye was almost closed. Arthur began to laugh”) fell rather flat for me. I was uncomfortable with the way that privilege was taken for granted in the narrative, with the naturalised acceptance of a black male servant, Isaiah, mentioned casually in the beginning, who does the boys’ laundry while they ‘rough it’. The passage is not overtly racist – there is merely a quiet assumption of racialised privilege that I missed in my first quick reading. It could be argued that the narrative exemplifies the assumptions of its time, and could be used critically to examine the changed reality of the present. This depends on a sensitive teacher picking up the cues, however. If a teacher did not highlight the underlying assumptions of the passage, how would learners of different colours and socio-economic status in the same classroom respond to the exercise? The comprehension questions accompanying the passage certainly did not encourage divergent readings of the passage.

The language of the passage is archaic in places (‘leather gauntlets’ rather than gloves) and the vocabulary and syntax are far more demanding than the comprehensions of Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop. Throughout the exercise, there were questions that focused on ‘the meaning of’ the language of the passage:
“Finding one’s way through thorn scrub by braille” (question 10, Section B), and
“I had a premonition that disaster was upon me” (question 14, Section C).

Besides the language of the passage being more challenging, the form of the comprehension questions was more varied than those of Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop. The total of 15 questions was divided into

sections A, B, C. The first five questions in Section A are closed questions requiring learners to retrieve information from the text, e.g. “What caused the author to sneeze?” (question 5). The next five, Section B, are mainly inferential questions, e.g. “Why was it a mistake to have thrown the tin away so forcefully?” (question 6). The last five, Section C, are mainly interpretive questions but not open questions, as one might expect. Two questions, 11 and 15, use a multiple-choice format to guide learners’ interpretation of the text, “Would you say that the author acted *rashly*, *instinctively*, or *deliberately* when he decided to remove the bees from the tent? Give reasons for your answer” and, “Would you say that the style in which the story is told is *dramatic*, *serious* or *humorous*? Explain your answer”. As can be seen, many of the interpretive questions use difficult words likely to complicate learners’ understanding of the passage. The options in the questions determine and constrain learners’ independent interpretation of the text and militate against a subversive reading of the text. Though these comprehension questions include a wider range of question types than those of Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop, the multiple-choice form of many of the inferential and interpretive questions typify Granville’s (2001:14) criticism of questions which “actually stop [learners] from understanding and responding to texts”. There are no ‘wide’ open questions among the 15.

A total of 19 learners completed the comprehension, seven of the eight Afrikaans- and Afrikaans/English-speakers, 11 of the 17 isiXhosa-speakers, and one German-speaker, and all completed it except for one isiXhosa-speaker. Ms Usher allocated one mark per question to make a total of 15 marks. Afrikaans-speakers achieved the highest mark of 9,5 and the lowest mark of 0,5. There were no striking differences between the answers of the Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers in the two classes. Generally the marks were low, and the majority of learners (9/11 isiXhosa-speakers and 5/7 Afrikaans-speakers) got 5 marks, and below. Even though these marks are considerably lower than what learners scored at

either Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop, the Sea View learners made fewer grammatical errors than those at Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop. That learners struggled with the linguistic complexity of the passage and the more challenging questions is evident in the 45 blank answers and 28 instances where sentences were lifted straight from the passage.

Error analysis showed that isiXhosa-speakers also made fewer errors involving articles (1) or pronouns (2) than at either Enoch Sontonga or John Bishop. The most common (13) were verb phrase errors, with isiXhosa-speakers making six errors all related to the past tense form of irregular verbs (e.g. 24) and Afrikaans-speakers making seven errors of tense, concord (25) and pronunciation (26):

(24) He took a risk of getting stinged by the bees.

(25) He told Guy that there was no bees.

(26) A very big risk because the bees could of killed him.

As error analysis did not ascertain learners' difficulties with the complexity of the passage, I decided to check which questions evoked the most right and wrong answers. All the learners, except an Afrikaans-speaker with the highest mark (Elsa), got question 9 wrong. Question 9 is an inferential question that asks readers to deduce what Arthur had been doing while he was away from the camp. The passage says that Arthur "came down from the mountain with two dassies over his shoulder", implying that he had been hunting. Twelve learners attempted answers, five left it blank, and two copied a sentence directly from the passage.

Question 15 got the most right, or partially right, answers. The reason for this is that Ms Usher accepted two of the multiple choice options as correct, 'serious' and 'humorous'. I believe that this is a mistake and that the style of the passage is (rather labouredly) humorous. But as a result of the teacher and several learners responding to the content rather than the

style of the passage, many learners claimed that being stung by bees was a serious mishap.

The number of blank answers and sentences copied from the comprehension passage are doubtless part of the reason that there were fewer errors in the Sea View learners' writing than that of learners at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop. It is likely that the teacher may be aware of other sorts of errors that did not show in these comprehension answers. Thus, one cannot infer that there is little correlation between the language exercises and learners' errors. A comparison of the grammar exercises at Sea View with those at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, shows commonalities and differences: like the teachers at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, Ms Usher also set regular spelling tests and punctuation exercises. But while the punctuation exercises at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop did not get beyond the surface-level mechanics of capital letters, at Sea View the focus on direct speech and commas engaged learners with how punctuation can change the meaning of sentences, and shape paragraphs. Changing direct speech to indirect/reported speech, which Sea View learners did a great deal of, is a particularly complex grammatical transformation. It teaches learners how to include others' words in their own writing, a cognitively and conceptually significant step, according to Kress (1994:118).

8.2 Complexity and variation in selected texts

8.2.1 Enoch Sontonga

At all the schools besides Enoch Sontonga, the children had written extended texts on their own in the first semester. It was the only school where learners produced no individual, independent texts whatsoever before the mid-year examination, not even the self-descriptive autobiographical genre which other learners did across all three languages, in a variety of textual forms. The comparable self-introductory text of the Enoch Sontonga learners, their first piece of writing for the year,

was so limited and limiting that it could not be considered as an extended text. It was a gap-filling exercise, below, in which the teacher supplied the first part of the sentence and learners filled in the missing word. All the learners filled in a fruit to complete the third sentence.

My name is:
My surname is:
I like:

After filling in these three words, learners worked out a code based on the letters of the words, with each letter having a numerical value: a=1, and so on. The focus on letters, not even whole words, is so far from developing learners' understanding of sentence structure or the genre features of a whole text that it is hard to see how such an exercise could be the basis for learning the genre of autobiography. Unsurprisingly, there was no follow-up written task.

Whereas at the other schools I could select two different text types from a range that individual learners had written, at Enoch Sontonga, as Table 8.1 (Appendix 24) shows, learners produced a poster, in groups, and six learners each had a poem in their books. The other learners did not complete the poems that they started in class, according to their teacher, Ms Jawana (Interview, 25 November 2003), and I found no evidence of poems-in-the making in their books.

Analysis of the poster

Ms Jawana's lesson plan (Appendix 30) for the poster did not clarify the details of the task and was potentially confusing. Her intended outcome was that "learners will be able to demonstrate their creativity in writing", which made no mention of the visual aspects of the advertisement contained in the instruction, "to draw in their groups an advertisement on coal". Adding to the complexity of the task for learners is their limited

exposure at home and school to magazines or newspapers (the scarcity of magazines and particularly newspapers was indicated in Chapter Five), and printed advertisements. The way in which the task was structured did not explain the modal complexities of the advertisement genre, and a lack of assessment criteria made it difficult for the teacher to assess the completed group product and what had been learnt. There were five to six learners per group, and the learners participating in my study produced five posters (Appendices 31, 32, 33, 34, 35).

Kress (2003:125) suggests that framing is an important component of design in multimodal texts, which serves to separate or integrate the image and writing. There are two main forms of framing in the design of these advertisements. These are a heading at the top of the page, 'The Magic Rocks (Coal)', and a patterned border (Appendices 31, 32, 33 and 34) or wavy lines (Appendix 35). Both the heading and border are derived from the READ book that learners worked from for the term: the pattern around the edge of the advertisements is similar to the decorative border on the edge of the pages in the READ book, entitled *The Magic Rocks*. In all the advertisements except Appendix 32, the heading and border are like the frame on a painting; they do not intrude on the text, and neither integrate nor separate the image and writing. Unlike the other headings, which are positioned straight across the top of the page separate from the drawing, the heading in Appendix 32 is squeezed into the top right-hand corner and touches the drawing. Though the heading and border are a departure from the generic features of advertisements, because most do not impinge on the advertisements (in the case of Appendices 31, 33 and 35), they can be ignored. The framing devices employed in Appendix 35, however, disqualify it as an advertisement. It is the only text framed by four items: the learners included their group name ('Group aples' (*sic*)) in the top right hand corner, the heading 'Magic Rocks' occurs twice across the middle of the page, and the slogan has its own heading, 'Massage' (*sic*). Also, the border of wavy lines around the drawing of the two boys

separates it from the writing; there is no integration between the verbal and visual elements of Appendix 35.

All the learners grasp the generic necessity of advertisements, a selling point, which takes the form of a written slogan. However, possibly because the teacher's instructions were unclear about the visual and verbal elements in the advertisement, learners' difficulty in designing coherent multimodal texts becomes further apparent in the various ways that they try to integrate the drawing and the slogan.

All the slogans contain the word 'coal' and the drawings depict fires, but where the fuel for the fire is visible, it is wood (Appendices 31, 32 and 35). The fires in the braziers of Appendices 33 and 34 may well be burning wood, but all one can see are the flames. Underlining its lack of textual coherence, Appendix 35 depicts a wood-burning fire even though the word 'coal' is repeated thrice ('Coal is special! All the homes in my vicinity use coal. Make fire fire with coa!'). The slogan in Appendix 31, 'We do not use paraffin for cooking if we have coal', even though it is a first person declarative statement, is positioned underneath the border-heading, like a sub-heading. It is not placed inside a speech bubble with an arrow directed to one of the figures, for instance, which would have produced a more coherent text. The slogan of Appendix 32, 'Coal gives us warmth and light', is also a first person statement but it is separated from the drawing because it is written on a piece of white paper pasted onto the blue paper of the text. It is the only text where colour is a framing device that separates the slogan from the drawing. The slogan of Appendix 33 addresses the reader directly, in more usual advertisement fashion, 'You will not feel cold when you have coal'. It is the only text with a selling point that uses wordplay, the similarity of the words 'coal' and 'cold'. It also attempts to integrate verbal and visual as it is positioned near a character looking out at the reader, and inside a frame that looks like a speech bubble. There are two arrows on the bubble, which suggests that learners

are not fully *au fait* with the convention. The design of Appendix 34 attempts to integrate the verbal and visual elements of the text. The sole female character in any of these advertisements 'speaks' a speech bubble with the words 'Is hot'. This speech bubble conforms to the conventions more than the one in Appendix 33, as it has only one arrow. The attempt at conversation (and textual coherence) breaks down because her male companion does not reply. Instead the slogan, 'If you want to save your Electricity you must use coal because coal make warm', is framed by a wavy line, has no arrow pointing to the male figure, and has a heading, 'massage' (*sic*), like Appendix 35.

In all the advertisements besides Appendix 32, the space around the figures and fires is bare. Appendix 34 has dots filling the background, but it is unclear whether they indicate sparks or ash flying around in the air or, equally likely, that they are simply decorative. The braziers (Appendices 33 and 34) and stones (Appendix 35) of the fires themselves and the tree-stumps as seats (Appendices 31, 33 and 35) suggest that the setting is outside, and poor. These four advertisements evoke, in their drawings and words, a spartan world where electricity is scarce, and three (Appendices 31, 33 and 34) depict typically South African elements like a tripod cooking stand and braziers.

The one indoor fire (Appendix 32) is also the only advertisement with a non-South African setting and character – the fireplace looks like a pizza oven and the character resembles Woody in the movie Toy Story[27]. Haas Dyson has explored the significance of children's use of popular images in their school literacy practices. She coined the term "textual toys" to refer to items or characters from popular media (like movies, music, television and radio shows) that young children incorporate in their school activities and emerging literacy practices (Haas Dyson 2003). Like many US

[27] Thanks to my friend Sumaiya and her young son, Salmaan, for recognising Woody.

working class children that Haas Dyson observed, one group of Enoch Sontonga learners appropriated an animated character, Woody, as a 'textual toy' in their advertisement (Appendix 32). Haas Dyson's (1997:7) proposition, that poor children employ characters from popular culture (for instance, superheroes) in their classroom writing and interaction as examples of their imagining and accessing "worlds of pleasure and power", is borne out in these advertisements. None of the Enoch Sontonga learners created recognisably South African characters in a pleasant indoor, or outdoor, setting. In the one exception to these images of deprivation, depicting a comfortable world with a reclining chair, a warm drink and food, hardly a 'world of pleasure', a foreign textual hero, Woody[28], was chosen and an Italian pizza oven serves as the fireplace. Though it is a wood-burning pizza oven, Appendix 32 is the only advertisement where coal is visible in the drawing. There is a coal scuttle on the floor, with a scoop to lift the coal. Interestingly, in a country where collecting water and wood is female work, the gender relations depicted in the advertisements suggest that fires are a male preserve: four of the five advertisements depict males and in the one text (Appendix 34) which includes a female, she is seated while the male is standing, and he does not respond to her words. The 'streetwise' appearance of the two young men in Appendix 31 suggested by their facial expressions and caps may be at odds with the slogan about cooking and the domesticity of a pot of porridge, but the two are in charge.

As a group effort, the advertisements entailed learners' sharing ideas and jointly designing the text. From the finished product alone there is no way of knowing how the task and text were split among group members. The decorative border around the page of each text may well have arisen as a way of ensuring that each member had a task.

[28] Woody is a toy cowboy.

Analysis of the poems

Learners were asked to write a poem about coal without the teacher reading a poem, as a free unguided task based on their previous knowledge and experience of poems. They started the poem in class individually and completed it at home. Not many learners (6 out of 33) handed in poems (Interview, 25 November 2003), and all six who completed the task were girls. The six poems are attached as Appendix 36. Though I was interested in the level of complexity of learners' writing and in their understanding of the generic features of poetry, 'poetic licence' freed them to play with sentence structure, making a Theme/Rheme analysis pointless. Furthermore, Ms Jawana (Interview, 25 November 2003) was convinced that family members had assisted learners with the poems.

The poems all have titles, two of which (*JOB OPPORTUNITIES* and *FUEL FOR CARS*), display more originality than the posters in that they do not use the words 'coal' or 'magic rocks'. Like the posters, four poems (by Busi, Norma, Ntombi and Olwethu), situate the topic of coal in a local domestic context. Only the two poems with more imaginative titles relate coal to a bigger context and concern (national unemployment) in the case of Amanda's poem, and a different province and use of coal (KwaZulu-Natal and the manufacture of petrol from coal) in the case of Lihle's poem. All the poems, except Busi's, are arranged in stanzas or sections and several employ generic poetic devices.

Personification occurs in three poems:

> I am proud of my self (Amanda, line 2);
>
> Who is your parents (Norma, line 10);
>
> I am born at the province of KwaZulu Natal/I do not know where my parents are (Lihle, lines 1-2).

Norma uses short phrases and Ntombi short sentences as parallel grammatical structures. The regularity of these parallel structures provides a frame for the stanzas and creates a sense of anticipation, giving the fourth line added impact, as the stanzas from two poems quoted below illustrate:

(Norma) In our homes
In the community
In the society
We need you, Coal

Black as you are
Sticky as you are
Black as the night
We need you, Coal

(Ntombi) Rock, a solid ground
Rock, a firm foundation
Rock, a high shelter
No! not a magic rock

It's black as the night
It's tough as a stove
It's shinny as a mirror
Yes! Its typical magic rock.

There were no guidelines or assessment criteria for either of the tasks. Ms Jawana's assessment practice amounted to writing encouraging comments on learners' work and ignoring their errors. Some of her comments on the poems, for instance, included, "*This is wonderful! This is a good attempt! This is interesting to read*".

It is clear that learners found it difficult to tackle a new genre (poster) or to systematically develop their understanding of a known genre (poem) without guidelines or assessment criteria. The teacher's assumption that learners are familiar with the genre of poems is questionable in view of the small number of learners who attempted and completed the task. Viewed positively, the poems show that learners can produce richer writing when they are assisted by people of their choice at home, than when they worked together with peers in the classroom, as they did with the posters.

Davis and Reed (2003) demonstrate the importance of assessment criteria in scaffolding a task for learners and encouraging innovative responses. Whether the assessment criteria should be given out before or after a task is an open question, but that they assist learning is incontrovertible. They report that learners who had done a multimodal task were almost evenly divided on whether assessment criteria should be given before or negotiated between teacher and learners after a task: "While we recognize that some learners need a guiding framework, we believe that negotiating assessment criteria after a project has been completed assists learners to reflect on their Design experiences and is therefore encouraged" Davis and Reed (2003:111).

The limited amount that these learners wrote, the teacher's choice of the same topic, coal, for genres like a poem and a poster, and the fact that learners did no sustained writing individually and independently for almost half of the school year are deeply problematic for the development of their writing competence. A subject like coal seems particularly unsuited to the personal expressive writing and drawing associated with poetry or posters and would be a more appropriate topic for a factual genre. Genres such as report, explanation or procedure seem far likelier to provide learners with an opportunity to engage meaningfully with the topic of coal. It is difficult to imagine that learners could have any sense of ownership of their

writing, when given so few, and such constraining, opportunities to use English to make meaning.

8.2. 2 John Bishop

As regards independent writing in the period under review, all the learners in Grade 7A and B at John Bishop did a multimodal text, 'Feelings, family and locality', while only the Grade 7Bs did a recount about the school Big Walk. 'Feelings, family and locality' was done on a double A4 sheet of writing paper, and Mr Craig structured the task by providing a heading for each of the four pages. The text as a whole was a mixture of controlled and independent writing, words and pictures, and details about learners' individual feelings juxtaposed with public, political information. The first and last pages were headed 'Things that make me happy' and 'Things that make me unhappy', respectively. This part of the task was independently written: Mr Craig supplied magazines and asked learners to cut out pictures or draw to illustrate their writing. The middle two pages were controlled writing: the second page, misleadingly headed 'Me, myself, I', was a controlled text about the geographic position of South Africa and political leaders, where learners had to fill in the names of the oceans and the names of the provincial premier, the local mayor and the State President. On the third page, learners outlined their right and left hands and wrote the names of family members on each finger and stated the relationship, i.e. mother, aunt, etc. I include one complete task (Appendix 37) as evidence that only two of the four pages contain independent writing, but I append only the first and fourth pages of the other learners' tasks since these are the pages analysed.

Analysis of the 'Feelings, family and locality' text

Because four isiXhosa-speakers out of the total of 46 participants had not done the task, there were 42 texts. I excluded 12 of the 42: 10 (five by Afrikaans- and five by isiXhosa-speakers) that consisted of pictures only and two by Afrikaans-speakers where the writing was entirely in Afrikaans.

Thus, in this task too, Afrikaans-speakers wrote less in English than isiXhosa-speakers; out of the 11 Afrikaans-speakers only four had completed the task as set. From the remaining 30 texts I selected nine for detailed analysis, six with magazine pictures and writing (three by Afrikaans- and three by isiXhosa-speakers), and three with hand-drawn pictures and writing. There were six texts where learners had drawn their own pictures rather than using cut out pictures from magazines; all of them were by isiXhosa-speakers. I chose texts with varying amounts of writing because I wanted to explore how learners integrated writing and images and what difficulties were apparent when the meaning of a text was "spread across" the two modes of writing and images (Kress 2003:35). I analyse the texts of the Afrikaans-speakers (Emile, Candice and Yvonne), then the isiXhosa-speakers (Nosisa, Nandi and Babalwa), and lastly the texts with drawings by Thabo, Sizwe and Mandla (isiXhosa-speakers). All these texts are included as appendices so that they can be read alongside the analysis in the thesis.

Emile's text (Appendix 37), which had the most writing among the Afrikaans-speakers, consisted of an introductory paragraph at the top of the first and fourth pages with pictures and captions filling up the rest of the space. His second page, the controlled writing, consisted of the two paragraphs about the geographic position of South Africa and its political leaders which most learners did, as well as an extra paragraph (which only Emile did) where he rewrote an earlier, guided introductory paragraph about himself. The third page was the controlled text of the 'family member' hand-print. The independently written first and fourth pages, which I analyse below, form two distinct parts: the introductory paragraphs on the one hand, and the pictures and captions on the other.

One of the most striking aspects of Emile's text are the differences in the structure of the sentences in the paragraphs as compared to the captions, as well as the differences in content between the pictures and captions on

the one hand, and the paragraphs on the other. On the first and fourth pages, the main graphic block is the paragraph while the writing accompanying the pictures is reduced to poorly-constructed captions. In terms of page layout, the writing is subsidiary to the pictures, which dominate the space. According to Kress's (2003) quadrants of spatial meaning potential, the 'given' is on the left and the 'new' on the right because of the reading path of 'Western' languages, and the 'ideal' at the top spatially because, in countless 'Western' linguistic metaphors, the top is the best, the ideal. Yet, Kress's spatial meaning potentials do not seem to explain the position of the written and image blocks on Emile's first or fourth pages. My interpretation is that page one of Appendix 37, for instance, demonstrates the inverse of Kress's ideal/real pole; Emile's written block at the top conveys empirical reality while the image block represents his notion of the ideal.

Because I was interested to compare the complexity of learners' writing, I analyse the level of hypotaxis in their graphic blocks. Both Emile's introductory paragraphs on his first and fourth pages counted together have a hypotaxis of 41,2%. There are 17 clauses in total: 10 independent and 7 dependent clauses (5 noun and 2 relative). Despite this level of hypotaxis, the paragraphs have the chaining syntax of speech signalled through the repetition of 'and' 11 times. Adding to the sense of speech on paper, the writing is unpunctuated without a single full stop, even at the end of each mega-'sentence'. Most of the Grade 7 grammar exercises and comprehension questions at John Bishop required learners to write single sentences or single words as answers. Once learners wrote a longer text the profound punctuation problem of sentence structure emerged. As Table 8.2 (Appendix 26) indicates, the sole punctuation focus was on capital letters, a mechanical feature of punctuation. Despite this exercise, the words that Emile capitalised consistently in the first page of his text ('Happy' and 'Have') are not subjects of clauses or proper nouns. Instead, as an adjective and verb, they are unlikely to be subjects.

If punctuation gives “a precise indication of how [a writer] parcels up the conceptual world, putting their particular order on it” (Kress 2003:124), then Emile’s lack of punctuation reveals a very limited ability to order the world, textually.

I agree with Kress (2003:66) that “it clearly matters whether the verbal caption is placed *near* to the visual element or more *distantly*, or whether it is placed at the *top*, at the *bottom*, to the *left* or to the *right*, *within* the same frame, *within* the visual element or *outside*”. However, Kress’s (2003:70) quadrants offer little by way of a principled means to understand how captions’ different spatial positions can alter the meaning of a text. In Emile’s text, each of the six captions is framed with a wavy border linking the writing closely to the visual, but the captions are differently positioned. Two of the captions on page one are below the pictures and one is on the left alongside the picture, while on page four, two of the three captions are above the pictures and one is, again, on the left alongside the picture. The framing makes it clear that the picture and caption are meant to be ‘read’ as a single unit of meaning, but I cannot understand how or whether the different positions of the captions alter the meaning potential of these units.

In both Candice’s text (Appendix 38) and Yvonne’s (Appendix 39), writing is secondary to images as pictures dominate their page layout. Candice’s writing on both pages consists of single, mainly simple, sentences. Yvonne’s text, on the other hand, has single-word captions on her ‘happy’ page and sentences or clauses on her ‘unhappy’ page. In both Candice and Yvonne’s texts most captions are below the pictures and serve as an explanation of the pictures, but I am not convinced that Kress’s spatial meaning potential of ideal/real provides an apt or adequate interpretation, whether these captions represent a ‘real’ comment on the ‘idealised’ pictures. Certainly, these texts cannot be understood in terms of Kress’s notion of graphic and image blocks. Arguably the written and visual

elements of the texts are better integrated than those in Emile's text. Both Candice and Yvonne's written texts have such short fragmented sentences that apects of their written competence, like their grasp of punctuation and sentence structure, cannot be assessed. However, I calculated the hypotaxis levels of what they had written. Candice's text has 12 clauses (9 independent and 3 dependent causal clauses) with a hypotaxis level of 25%, while Yvonne's has 11 clauses (10 independent and 1 dependent relative clause) with a hypotaxis level of 9,1%. That Yvone's sole independent clause is an accurately formed relative clause is surprising in the light of Kress's (1994:95) contention that relative clauses are a significant step in clause and sentence development.

Visually, the images that the two girls have chosen, the layout and the different ways in which the pictures have been cut, are similar. In both texts, the pictures are spread out over the entire page with no apparent reading path. Similar objects are depicted: on the 'happy' page, clothes, food, luxury items (sun glasses, a mobile phone, a watch), women working (a female golfer being coached by a man, a singer and reporter) and, on the 'unhappy' page, a couple kissing, alcohol and a sad child. Yvonne's text is more crowded than Candice's. Yvonne has eight pictures on her 'happy' page compared to Candice's five, and seven on her 'unhappy' page compared to Candice's four. Often single objects have been carefully cut out of bigger photographs so that the images seem sharply outlined, instead of having the standardised, rectangular cropped appearance of magazine pictures. There is one image, of a young boy sitting glumly, that appears on both girls' 'unhappy' pages, which illustrates this difference. Candice has cut out and enlarged the image, while Yvonne has left it small and with a bland rectangular background. The two versions of the same image have a different visual impact. Candice positioned her well-defined image in the top left hand corner with the caption, 'I don't like to be sed [sad] den [then] I am unhappy', (the words in brackets are the teacher's corrections written over Candice's own script).

The visually salient position of the image is called upon to convey a message of personal unhappiness that the circular, non-explanatory caption cannot. Yvonne, on the other hand, placed the picture at the bottom of her page. It is the only picture in Yvonne's text without some accompanying written explanation, even in Afrikaans, to which she resorted in places, e.g. '*vleis*' on her 'happy' page (translated by the teacher [meat]). The quality of the writing in Yvonne's text suggests that the pictures determined, and limited, the amount and spontaneity of her writing. Both Candice and Yvonne struggled unsuccessfully to explain the reasons for their choice of picture and to convey their own thoughts quite as fully, or with the same detail, as Emile.

Several learners (Candice, Yvonne, as well as Babalwa and Nandi, below) wrote clauses or single words as captions for their pictures, which left punctuation and coherent topic development minimal. All the learners who relied on ready-made magazine images struggled to find a balance between the written and visual modes. The arguments for textual diversity (Kress 2003) and the importance of learners' having the opportunity to use pictures, drawings and computer-generated graphics to develop their written and general communicative competence (Nixon 2003) do not provide adequate tools for a teacher or researcher to understand how a multimodal task like this one develops learners' multiliteracy and written competence or what the relationship is between the two modes.

Nosisa's text (Appendix 40) has a similar pattern to Emile's, of introductory paragraphs and unrelated pictures and captions. The only difference being that her introductory paragraph almost filled the top half of the page, while pictures and captions, some of which could be related to the introduction, crowded in the rest of the page. Like Emile, she is capable of sustained writing and seemingly the breakdown in written fluency between the two parts of her text is because of the difficulty of finding pictures to illustrate what made her happy. Nosisa's 'happy' text, in contrast to

Emile's, is perfectly punctuated, indicating an ability to "parcel up and order her conceptual world" (Kress 2003:124). Her paragraphs were long enough to constitute graphic blocks and be analysed as regards their level of hypotaxis. The introductory paragraphs on both Nosisa's 'happy' and 'unhappy' pages counted together have a hyoptaxis level of 10% (there are 20 clauses in total: 18 independent and 2 dependent causal clauses). Kress (1994:95) regards relative clauses as a significant step in clause/sentence development, and it is interesting that the first serious grammatical breakdown (in the second last sentence) is precisely where Nosisa should have a relative clause ('whose' not 'his name is Unathi').

Nosisa's 'unhappy' page shows greater integration and coherence between the written and visual elements than her 'happy' page. The two pictures, of a child standing in front of an open sewer and a plate of mouldy bread, form a centrally positioned salient image block balanced by two graphic blocks in the form of an introductory paragraph on top and fairly lengthy captions below. Both blocks of writing have a similar textual structure: a problem statement followed by a suggestion for improvement. The first two sentences in the paragraph identified two problems, 'I don't like people say wrong things to other people. I don't like to see old or young people living on the streets' and then a suggested solution, 'The president must do something about that'. The last sentence in her paragraph is unrelated to the broad social problems raised in the rest of her writing or the pictures, and is a more personal unhappiness, 'I don't like to see my father going back to Port Elizabeth'. I believe that this sentence is further evidence that even a fluent writer like Nosisa struggled with the two modalities of the task, and that the power of the visual constrained her writing. For many learners, the images created the form and content of the text to a greater extent than the writing did. The initial captions identifying the social problems that make Nosisa unhappy are agent-less clauses, 'need water, houses, food. not good to give to suffering people bread like this'. These subject-less clauses become

statements with suggested solutions, which relate to the concerns of her introductory paragraph: ‘People must stop giving old food to suffering people. The[y] need shelters, fresh water, fresh food, neat places’. The lack of coherence demonstrates that Nosisa was dissatisfied with the impersonal clauses and decided to structure complete sentences with subjects as agents, structurally similar to her introductory paragraph.

In the tension between the written and visual elements of the task, the preceding four texts show that image blocks are more dominant than graphic spatially, and that the subject-matter of the pictures, in the main, informs the content of the writing. Nandi’s text (Appendix 41) resolves the tension differently. The dominant pictures on the first page of her text have captions underneath with arrows pointing up towards the pictures. The arrows create a reading path starting with the caption at the bottom, so that the one small graphic block, three clauses in the bottom left hand corner of the page, occupies a position that seems salient. The fourth page of the text has only writing, an unusual choice of modality in the light of the preceding texts as well as those of the ten learners who produced texts consisting only of pictures, without writing. Nandi uses the progressive incompletely but consistently on page one, and then shifts to present tense for the sentences on page four. It is pointless to calculate the subordination index of Nandi’s writing because of all the participial phrases. What her writing points to, and Babalwa’s confirms, is how limited hypotaxis is as a measure of complexity in these children’s writing.

Babalwa’s text (Appendix 42) is a clear example of a learner’s unsuccessful struggle to find appropriate pictures for her thoughts, and a lack of coherence between pictures and writing. There is no apparent relationship between the numbered list of clauses at the top of the page and the pictures in the middle. On the first page the pictures are positioned close to the writing, as though proximity could create coherence, and the bottom of the page is empty. The layout of the fourth

page is more spread-out and Babalwa attempts to create coherence between the writing at the top and the two pictures below, visually. The writing, as well as some of the words, are framed like 'thought bubbles', and there are 'paw prints' on the left between the framed writing and the picture of a dog, while there are doodles on the right between the writing and the picture of a couple cooking.

Thabo's text (Appendix 43) was one of six that consisted of pencil drawings, instead of cut-out magazine pictures, and writing. Both the 'happy' and 'unhappy' pages convey integrated multimodal meanings without clearly defined graphic or image blocks. The 'happy' page defies the reader to establish a stable reading path; it seems to exemplify the myriad "possibilities of connections across elements, neither given nor constrained by a reading path … [which] provide the space for imagination" (Kress 2003:59). The 'unhappy' page has a clearer reading path, however, as it is dominated by one central image, of a skeletal ghostly figure, with a small caption, 'ghosts in my dreams'. The drawings on both pages are framed with faint looping lines that contain the whole caption (on the fourth page) or leave some words to extend outside the frame (on the first page). The bounded units are clustered (e.g. the VCR/television screen is clustered with the game controls) and linked (the boy on his bicycle is linked to the fist of money). The relative size of the images, rather than their position on the page, indicates salience.

The text demonstrates an understanding of the capacities of the visual and written modes: Thabo uses a complex visual form of metonymy, the book in the bottom left hand corner of the first page symbolises learning and simultaneously, as the cross on its cover signifies, it is a bible, symbolic of religion. In the same meaning unit, Thabo draws a church to represent worship, but he does not draw a school to represent education, instead he draws a boy with a backpack on a bicycle, an active, personalised image (a self-portrait?). Two captions, one above the boy and another below,

present, and relate, two seemingly separate activities, the boy cycling to school and also to do shopping. Two other captions on the first page also elaborate on the drawings: ‘video games takes away boredness’ provides a purpose for playing video games, and ‘family protect me and gives me shelter’ explains why the two adult figures are facing in opposite directions and looking protectively, outward. At the bottom of page four, Thabo plays with the notion of authorship and responsibility: the seriousness and sadness of death, signalled by a coffin and the caption ‘funerals’, is juxtaposed with a small rather nerdy-looking head saying, ‘fuck you’, while the first-person caption, supposedly Thabo’s voice, righteously complains about ‘people swearing at me’.

Sizwe’s text (Appendix 44) was a mixture of drawings on the ‘happy’ page and magazine pictures on the ‘unhappy’ page. On both pages the images and writing are separate and images are dominant. Unlike Thabo’s text, there are no frames that link or define images and writing. A block of writing runs across the bottom of Sizwe’s ‘happy’ page, seemingly subsidiary to the images. Yet the writing, by the order in which it comments on and explains the images, provides a reading path for the images and integrates the two elements of the text. The two textual elements cohere, but offer a single message, rather than the interplay of meanings of Thabo’s more integrated text. Also differently to Thabo’s text, there is no trace of personal or human involvement in any of the activities depicted on the page. The character in the top left hand corner is Goku from the television series *Dragonball Z*. So, Sizwe’s drawing expands on his statement that he likes ‘watching tv’ and indicates a favourite programme. His drawing of an open book in the top right hand corner, on the other hand, simply illustrates that Sizwe likes reading and is less informative and detailed than the caption, ‘I sometimes like reading about science and wars and about the oldendays’.

There is a shift between the ‘happy’ page and the ‘unhappy’ page, in the form of the images (from drawings to magazine pictures), the position and shape of the writing (to the top right in a block), and the content of the text. The writing again provides a reading path for the images on the ‘unhappy’ page, but it differs from that of the ‘happy’ page. The starting point of the reading path on the ‘happy’ page was centre/left of the page and followed a zig-zag pattern across the page, whereas on the ‘unhappy’ page the starting point is in the top left hand corner and the reading path is anti-clockwise. The smooth reading path of the ‘unhappy’ page seems to set up a causal chain, not necessarily implied in the writing. Images dominate both pages, but the side-ways position of the picture of the helicopter and recovery team means that it is the same size and shape as the picture of the burnt boy, which becomes focal. Whereas the ‘happy’ page depicted Sizwe’s individual interests and activities in a socially detached way, the ‘unhappy’ page has two pictures including people, and the writing locates the human figures depicted within social settings, the family (‘abuse their children and their wives’) and community (‘they kill ther people in the community’).

According to Haas Dyson (1997), the term ‘popular’ culture can obscure the relationship between commercial and home-based or community culture. Haas Dyson’s distinction between a child’s participation in the spheres of commerce and community as potential sources of ‘popular’ culture could provide some insight into why Sizwe chose to draw the images that make up his ‘happy’ page but used ready-made magazine images of people for his ‘unhappy’ page. His drawing of Goku shows that Sizwe is able to draw human figures; possibly the emotive violence described in the ‘unhappy’ page is the reason that he found it easier to use ready-made images. Sizwe, like all the learners besides Emile and Nosisa, wrote too little to calculate subordination or measure his written competence in terms of syntax, topic development and punctuation. His

writing, which consists mostly of main clauses joined by ‘and’, resembles speech.

Mandla’s text (Appendix 45) has the same layout and combination of writing and drawings for both ‘happy’ and ‘unhappy’ pages: three drawings with captions underneath, positioned in the centre of the page, so that there is no separation between image blocks and writing as in Sizwe’s text. Mandla does not frame her drawings and one assigns a reading path similar to that of writing, from left to right and top to bottom, very different from the reading paths of Thabo or Sizwe’s texts. Mandla draws what her written statements describe in a more literal way than either Thabo or Sizwe. Her drawings do not expand on her writing (like Sizwe’s picture of Goku) and do not have symbolic meanings (like Thabo’s book/bible which simultaneously represents learning and religion). The central image in her ‘happy’ page, for example, depicts a roast chicken, an ice-cream cone and cake, and the caption reads, ‘I like meat because its nice. I like icecream because its too nice same as cake’. This caption, consisting of two sentences with two causal clauses, is her longest and most complex syntactically. In total her text has 10 clauses (7 independent and 3 dependent causal clauses). The level of hypotaxis of her text is 30%.

Nixon’s (2003) argument for textual diversity and learners’ using visuals to develop their written and general communicative competence, depends on teachers’ knowledge of design, e.g. their understanding the importance of purposeful organisation of the page. For explicit teaching of design to happen, much hinges on how a teacher structures multimodal tasks and whether learners understand the different affordances of writing and image. The curriculum outcome, that learners should be able to design media texts creatively, requires that teachers have an understanding of the written and visual modes which, as these children’s texts show, cannot be assumed. In this case, the teacher’s instruction, that learners should choose from magazines or draw pictures of things that made them happy

and unhappy and explain the pictures in writing, seems to have complicated the learners' task. The teacher's instruction was general and did not give greater weight to either visual or verbal elements in the task. Learners' texts demonstrate that the non-directive instruction did not stimulate integrated multimodal texts.

Mr Craig assessed this task by means of a rubric labeled "Key indicating levels of performance" that was stamped onto learners' texts. It can be seen in several appendices (37, 38, 40, 41, 43 and 44); in the case of appendices 39, 42 and 45, the stamp is on one of the middle pages of the assignment and therefore does not appear on the pages appended. Though the rubric refers to assessment criteria, there are none given anywhere on the task. I believe that the teacher's criteria remained tacit because during the interview (2 December 2003), when I questioned Mr Craig about assessing the task, he did not mention assessment criteria. Without criteria, the four performance indicators ("Exceed the criteria; Meets the criteria; Developing, but needs more opportunities; Needs support") do not give learners even a basic indication of whether they need to develop the written or the visual part of the task, let alone of what the balance should be between these two elements.

Most learners seemed to prioritise the visual and then struggled to represent abstract qualities like feelings or experiences through ready-made pictures. In most of these texts there is a lack of coherence between pictures and writing, and where writing is linked to pictures, it is disjointed and fragmented. For learners who relied on magazine images, the multimodal task had the effect of compromising their alphabetic literacy (crucial to CALP, Cummins 2001) rather than enriching it. Others, like Sizwe, Thabo and Mandla, who drew their own pictures, produced more coherent, nuanced texts than those who relied on ready-made images. It seems, understandably, that when the artist and the author are the same,

the visual and verbal elements of a text are more coherent and these learners' drawing ability may well have enriched their alphabetic literacy.

The two learners who prioritised the verbal element of the task struggled, in the case of Nosisa, or in Emile's case failed, to relate their writing to their pictures. Both Emile and Nosisa, who wrote fluent coherent paragraphs explaining what made them happy and unhappy, had different much shorter clauses, or words, accompanying their pictures. Emile's introductory texts consisted of 11 and 6 clauses compared to the fragmented 3 and 4 clauses accompanying his pictures, while Nosisa's introductory texts of 13 and 7 clauses were reduced to 8 single-word captions and 4 clauses accompanying her pictures. Even for relatively fluent writers like Emile and Nosisa, the attempt to link the visual and verbal elements of the multimodal task compromised their alphabetic literacy.

Analysis of the 'Big Walk' recount

In order to arrive at a better measure of the Grade 7B isiXhosa-speaking learners' written competence, I analysed their 'Big Walk' texts. As already mentioned, the Afrikaans-speakers had not done this task. Two of the six isiXhosa-speakers whose 'Family, feelings and locality' texts I analysed earlier (Nosisa and Sizwe) had not done the 'Big Walk' exercise. I was left with the texts of Babalwa, Mandla, Nandi and Thabo. Nandi and Babalwa demonstrate a writing ability in the 'Big Walk' that is in stark contrast to their halting fragmented writing in the multimodal text. Only Babalwa's text is included in this chapter as it demonstrates the biggest difference in levels of hypotaxis between a multimodal and purely written text (see Table 8.4, below, page 195). The rest of the texts are attached as appendices – Mandla (Appendix 46), Nandi (Appendix 47) and Thabo (Appendix 48).

The ‘Big Walk’ was a genre mix, firstly a recount of previous school big walks, and then suggestions for improvements. According to Derewianka (1990), a recount is organised textually as an orientation, a series of events, and personal comment. The language features include specific participants, in a personal recount, pronouns like ‘I’ and ‘we’; the simple past tense; action verbs; and cohesive items to do with time. Unlike a generic recount which is usually in the simple past tense throughout, the writers of the ‘Big Walk’ had a more complicated task because they could choose between either a timeless historic present, indicating the habitual nature of the walk, or the simple past tense. The suggestions part of the ‘Big Walk’ further required learners to change the tense of the verb phrase to the future, using conditional modals. The conjunction ‘if’ in the conditional clause complex is in bold to highlight where in the second, ‘suggestions’, part of the text it occurs.

Analysis of Babalwa’s Big Walk

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1. During previous big walk		we	were given some collecting papers.//
2. so that		Each person the teachers	collect money for school// can buy for us oranges, apple and drinks.//
3.		Each paper	has 20 numbers and R2 for each number.//
4. When		we we	went there// had 7 teachers with us.//
5.		We	went for 10 km.//
6.		That	was a nice walk.//
7. One day		I	want to go for at list 50 km.//
8.		We	saw many different places like museum air ports and other interesting places.//
9.		The big walk I	Is not boring// like it.//
10. because		To take a walk it you just	‘s part of health// exercise your body and blood.//
11. and but		I I many of the parents	would like to go somewhere else with the big walk// would like us to enjoy that big walk// will not want their children to go there with the big walk.//
12.		I	would like//

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
if that		the teacher they	diceded// must go with us to somewhere else.//
13.		I	would like to go with 7 teachers.//
14.		I	would like the teachers to show us the places.//

There are 14 sentences, with 22 clauses containing finite verbs – 17 independent clauses and 5 dependent clauses (2 causal and 1 each projected, conditional and temporal). The level of hypotaxis, is 22,7%. A transitivity analysis shows that of the verb processes, 8 are Material, 9 are Mental, 4 are Rrelational and 1 is Existential. The Agent in Theme position switches between first person (in 12 clauses) and third person (in 9 clauses). There are also confusing shifts of tense, e.g. in the first three sentences in the second paragraph Babalwa changes from future to past and then to present.

I compare how the John Bishop learners use tense, pronouns and passive forms as indicators of their development towards formal, impersonal factual writing. Babalwa, Thabo (Appendix 48), and Mandla (Appendix 46) shift between the simple past and the universal present for the first part of the recount, while Nandi (Appendix 47) uses the historic present more consistently. Nandi also demonstrates a more developed written competence than her peers in that she is the only one to flag her 'suggestions' paragraph clearly, with a Thematically Marked 'if' clause (sentence 10). Thabo and Mandla start their new paragraphs with an unmarked conditional clause complex while Babalwa uses the temporal connective 'One day' (sentence 7) and places her 'if' clause in the middle of her 'suggestions' paragraph (sentence 12). Nandi's control of punctuation is another indicator of her more fluid written competence, as compared to that of her peers. Her playful double exclamation marks (sentence 9) show her ability to display her disposition not merely in her choice of words but even through punctuation.

While there are several instances of the agentless passive in the 'Big Walk', there is only one example of the general pronoun 'you' as Agent, in sentence 10 of Babalwa's text. All four learners use the agentless passive in their texts and only Mandla (Appendix 46 sentence 1, '*were gaved*') makes an error with the form of verb. In total there are nine examples, but only those using modals are quoted:

Babalwa (sentence 1)

Nandi (Appendix 47 sentences 2, 4 '*must be brought*', and 10)

Thabo (Appendix 48 sentences 2, 4, 8 '*would like to be played'* and 9 '*must be told*').

Compared to the regularity of passive forms in the 'Big Walk', there is only one passive in the John Bishop learners' multimodal texts: Thabo's (Appendix 43) '*being bullied*'. Seemingly the demands of the 'Big Walk', as an entirely verbal text and factual genre, contributed to learners' greater use of passives and their development towards formal, impersonal factual writing.

The John Bishop learners' texts demonstrate the difficulty of comparing the writing of learners in two different classes in the same grade, with the same teacher. While syntactic measures (like hypotaxis and Thematic analysis) make it possible to compare purely written texts, it is much more complicated to analyse and compare multimodal texts. The striking difference in the quantity written between the Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers is discussed in Section 8.3. The 'Big Walk' had not been marked by the time I photocopied learners' writing, so I do not know whether Mr Craig used assessment criteria.

8.2.3 Sea View

I analysed two independently written extended texts: 'How I feel when …', one of the few pieces of writing where learners had some choice about the topic, and their autobiographies. For the first task Ms Usher provided various options, and the learners wrote about how they felt when they

wrote a mathematics test, were wrongly accused, lost a sports match, or were interrupted while watching television. I selected the writing of three Afrikaans-speakers (Elsa, Kobus and Nadia), a German-speaker (Anna), and three isiXhosa-speakers (Xolo, Zoleka and Tenji), all of whom had completed both tasks. One Afrikaans-speaker, Elsa, did her autobiography in the form of a poster, which was rather different from the written ones. For reasons of space I have included in this chapter my analysis of only three texts: Elsa's multimodal autobiographical poster (Appendix 49); Nadia's 'Feelings' text which had the highest hypotaxis level of any text in this data; and Xolo's 'Feelings' text which had the lowest hypotaxis level for a purely written text. The rest are attached as appendices: Elsa's 'Feelings' text is Appendix 49; Kobus's 'Feelings' text is Appendix 51 and his autobiography is 52; Nadia's autobiography is Appendix 53; Anna's texts are Appendix 54 and 55; Tenji's texts are 56 and 57; Xolo's autobiography is 58; Zoleka's texts are 59 and 60.

Analysis of Elsa's autobiographical poster

Elsa's poster (Appendix 49) demonstrates an understanding of design features of the genre, like colour and balance. An orange heading in the centre and four differently coloured A4 pages (red, yellow, blue and green) are glued together to make the poster A2 size, colourful and symmetrical. The quadrants created by the four pages provide a means to structure the writing and images. Elsa uses the quadrants differently for the two modes. She has a photograph in each corner, which enhances the symmetry of the quadrants, and a photograph in the centre of the poster becomes the visual focal point. Her writing, however, runs across the two top quadrants and then separately on each of the lower quadrants, first the left and then the right. While the poster appears to be an integrated text, there is a rupture between the written and visual elements that is similar to most of the multimodal texts of the John Bishop learners. There is a dissonance between the photographs and the writing: the photographs depict fun, family and friends, while the writing foregrounds hardship (experiences of

punishment, disrupted schooling because of relocation, and loneliness). The tendency for family snapshots to be 'happy snappies' which seldom capture sad moments means that it is difficult for Elsa to refer to the photographs in her writing – three of the five photographs have no captions, and the captions for the bottom two photographs underline the lack of integration between the verbal and the visual. With a total of 42 clauses – 33 independent and 9 dependent clauses (7 temporal and 1 each projected and causal), the level of hypotaxis in Elsa's text is 19,1%. Ms Usher gave her a mark of 7/10 for the poster – 3½ each for content and presentation.

Whereas Elsa and Nadia's (Appendix 53) texts struck a balance between their experiences at home and at school, other learners made very different choices about the content of their autobiographies. Most, Kobus (Appendix 52), Anna (Appendix 55), Tenji (Appendix 57) and Xolo (Appendix 58) focused on their homes and families while Zoleka (Appendix 60) focused exclusively on her schooling. Ms Usher's comment on Zoleka's text, the only comment on any learner's autobiography, makes it clear that she had implicit expectations of the content of this genre: *"A pity you only told about your school life or you would have done better."*

Analysis of Nadia's 'Feelings when unfairly blamed'

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1. When then		someone I I	blames me for something// did not do// feel imbarist.//
2. Because that		it just people	Makes me so mad and frustrated// wont even listen to youre side of the story.//
3. but		They always It	Blame you for that,// is not always youre falt.//
4. But that when that or		the feeling I truly you youre friends you	 have// is the feeling// get// blame you for something// did not meen// do.//
5.		It	Makes me feel worthless,//

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
as if and then that and or		no one you they just	wants me,// go home to your mom or dad// came back from a hard days work// scream// shout the hole time.//
6. But than		I all of this shouting, moaning and blaming over my life I	gues// has made me much more stronger// was 'n few years ago.//
7. So that when		this I someone I	is my feelings // feel// blames me for something// didn't do.//

There are 7 sentences with 26 clauses, 11 independent and 15 dependent (7 relative, 3 temporal, 2 adverbial, 2 noun and 1 causal). The level of hypotaxis is 61,5%, making this the only text in the data set where dependent clauses outnumber independent clauses. Nadia used a dense accumulation of clauses to convey her deeply-felt experiences, e.g. sentences 4 and 5. A transitivity analysis of the finite verbs shows a spread of processes: 9 Material, 6 Mental, 6 Verbal, 3 Relational and 2 Existential processes. Nadia is able to convey her feelings clearly in syntactically complicated yet well-structured sentences in which 12/26 processes are Mental and Verbal and first person is Agent in only 7/26 clauses. Ms Usher's assessment was a mark of 7/10 (3 for content and 4 for presentation) and the comment *"Well expressed Nadia. Being able to say how you feel gets everything in the right proportion"*.

In contrast, Anna's text (Appendix 54) has a greater proportion of Mental and Verbal processes (13/25) and first person Agent (16/25 clauses), yet it is as though Anna's control of sentence structure buckles under the number and force of the verbal forms that she employs. Possibly the effort of conveying powerful emotions in writing can result in textual strain: in Anna's writing compare the perfectly formed clauses and complex tenses of a logical argument at the start: W*hy should I trust someone if they don't*

trust me when I say I haven't done it, and, near the end, *I get punished why I feel so unhappy, like pined onto a board, I feel like fire which is burning out or the sun going down, hard, unfair, thinking of it as a joke, like a little stupid bad child.*

With the exception of Tenji and Xolo, Sea View learners' level of hypotaxis was higher in the 'Feelings' text, a more emotionally-charged piece, than in the autobiography (see Table 8.4, below, page 195). The generally higher level of hypotaxis may be due to learners having some choice about the topic and writing more competently because they felt a sense of ownership of their writing. It is also consistent with other research with much younger learners, which found a high degree of subordination in very personal writing (Allison *et al.* 2002:106). Yet, as Xolo's text, below, shows, a high level of hypotaxis *per se* is not necessary for a syntactically sound coherent text, especially in deeply-felt personal writing.

Analysis of Xolo's 'Feelings before a maths test'

Theme			**Rheme**
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1. that and and		I I I "Xolo you I	feel scared, thinking// might fail the test// could hear his voice saying,// must do better in your maths// don't * you to fail maths."//
2.		Something else "Xolo you	comes to my mind saying, could past the maths test."//
3. and and and		My stomach I I	start cremping, wanting to use the toilet// tell myself to not allow this to happen to me// write the test// I pass it.//

There are 3 sentences with 11 clauses, 10 independent and 1 dependent projected noun clause. The level of hypotaxis is 9,1%, the lowest in this data set, along with Yvonne's (Appendix 39). Of the 11 finite verbs, 6 are Material, 4 Mental and 1 Verbal. The Verbal processes are under-represented in this count as, in the third and sixth clauses, there are two projecting verbs ('saying') that are not counted because they are

participles. There is also a Mental process that is not counted for the same reason, in the first clause, 'thinking'. Despite this, what is apparent are the different ways in which Xolo uses grammar (Mental and Verbal processes and punctuation) to project thoughts and words. When it is someone else's voice (clauses 4 and 7), Xolo uses direct speech with its complicated punctuation but syntactic simplicity, and for his own thoughts, he uses indirect speech, which is syntactically far more complex (clauses 2 and 9).

It is possible to compare the ways in which Xolo uses, or avoids, projected clauses in different languages and genres – diary (Afrikaans) and description (English) because he wrote on the same topic, his feelings about mathematics tests, in both languages. In both texts he uses direct speech, but whereas in his English text Mental processes outweigh Verbal, in his Afrikaans text (Chapter 7, Section 7.2), there are no Mental processes and instead only Verbal processes. Also, he uses the syntactically simpler direct speech form in Afrikaans, without the requisite punctuation. For this reason, his Afrikaans text, unlike his English, does not have direct and indirect speech forms used for different purposes. All of these indicate a more developed writing ability in English than in Afrikaans.

Sea View learners' grammar exercises, which focused on direct and reported speech, is one of the few instances in this data of grammar exercises supporting independent writing.

Ms Usher seemed to have one set of assessment criteria for learners' texts, regardless of genre or topic (the 'Feelings' text and the autobiography) or modality (a poster). Her criteria were 'content' and 'presentation', which are so vague that the teacher's intuition would play a big role in the mark assigned. She did not indicate or rectify learners' errors in the 'Feelings' text or the autobiography. Her assessment practice

combined qualitative feedback and a quantitative mark, as in her response to Nadia's text. She made a comment responding to the meaning on all the 'Feelings' texts except Zoleka's, but only some autobiographies and gave a mark to each text (except Xolo's autobiography). Her comments were sympathetic, *"It's sad that you're so scared! I wish I had the time to give you extra help!"* (to Kobus) and *"Sad to hear that you've been upset by friends"* (to Elsa) or encouraging, *"Good expressive language!"* (to Anna), "*Lovely expressive descriptive language*" (to Tenji) and "*Good idea to express your contrasting feelings*" (to Xolo). While the comments are affirming, they give learners little guidance to improve their writing. Interestingly, Ms Usher's marks do not correspond to the hypotaxis levels of learners' writing: the highest mark (8/10) was for Tenji and Zoleka's 'Feelings' texts, both of which were below the highest hypotaxis level, Nadia's 61,5%. Also, the lowest mark, 4½/10, was for Kobus's autobiography, which had a hypotaxis level of 13,3% while the lowest hypotaxis level was 9,1% in Xolo's 'Feelings' text, which got a mark of 5½/10.

The varying levels of hypotaxis of the Sea View learners' texts show that writing competency is not a fixed, discrete ability but that the nature of the task and topic influence how learners write.

8.3 Learners' written competence in English

What we read shapes how and what we write. Since comprehension passages are an important part of what learners read, especially where there are no libraries, I analysed their content and structure to provide insight into one influence on learners' writing. All the comprehensions are narratives, and three are fictional with a lone factual autobiography. The topics and tone of the passages differ, but these matter less than the information-retrieval questions and multiple-choice options, which can encourage a single understanding of the texts and limit the possibility of alternate, critical readings.

Learners at the poorer schools, Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, read comprehensions that were thinner textually than those read by learners at the two better-off schools, Sea View and St Katherines. On the one hand, there was an insubstantial passage like 'Argosy Artero' with its poorly-described setting and characters, and too little detail or plot development to engage learners, and the *Magic Rocks* with its anonymous African setting and stock, poor but hardy, characters. Both passages are accompanied by information-retrieval questions, which together with the moralising tone of the *Magic Rocks*, encourage learners' identification with the story, leaving little space for a critical reading. On the other hand, the 'Bees in the jam' comprehension passage presents Sea View learners with main characters who are privileged individuals in an idealised Eastern Cape rural setting. Yet, the questions achieved similar effects: rather than opening a possibility for alternate readings of the text, they further complicated an already complex passage. The 'Romeo meets Juliet' passage introduces St Katherine's learners to the Shakespearean canon as a necessary and important aspect of a global cultural heritage.

In this section I consider whether learners' actual curriculum outcomes provide evidence of social justice aims being met with regard to literacy in the language of power, English. Because Grade 7 is the start of the senior phase of schooling, it is vital that learners achieve grade-level competence especially in outcome five (DoE 2002), which states that "the learner will be able to use language to think and reason, as well as access, process and use information for learning". The Grade 7 assessment standards (DoE 2002) in the L2 expect learners to write to communicate information, for social purposes, creatively, to design media texts, and to understand the writing process. The assessment standards for the same grade in the L3 are far more limited, both in amount and range of writing, with the focus being on guided writing. In the L3, learners should be able to complete a

simple form, write a simple dialogue, a guided poem, a paragraph, translate short texts, and design a poster.

To test Kress's (1994) claim that relative and projected clauses are conceptually and cognitively more demanding than other dependent clauses and can be taken as indicators of written competence, I counted the dependent clauses in the 24 English texts where hypotaxis was analysed. There is a total of 210 dependent clauses. The breakdown of dependent clause types was temporal (58), followed by relative (39), causal (34), noun (27), projected noun (25), adverbial (16) and conditional (10) clauses. There is a more even spread of clause types than in the Afrikaans data where causal and temporal clauses comprised about two-thirds of the total number of dependent clauses, and projected and relative clauses were fairly rare. The variety and spread of clause types in English indicates that learners form the complicated relative and projected clauses more readily, evidence of their greater written competence in English than in Afrikaans. At the same time, learners with low levels of hypotaxis, like Kobus (Appendices 51 and 52) and Xolo (Appendix 58), avoided relative clauses. Also indicative of learners' greater written competence in English than Afrikaans, 36 of the 39 relative clauses were accurately formed. The three errors were similar those in Afrikaans: two were word order errors (Appendix 55, sentence 5 and Appendix 60, sentence 61) and one (Appendix 47 sentence 4) repeated the pronoun referent.

The ways in which learners formed projected clauses reveal very different levels of sophistication in their written competence. Cartoon-like direct speech was used in two of the five messages on the Enoch Sontonga learners' posters (Appendices 33 and 34, but there is only one conventional speech bubble, in Appendix 34. There are no instances of speech bubbles among the John Bishop learners' multimodal texts and one projected clause in the purely verbal texts. The sole projected clause, in Babalwa's sentence 12 of her 'Big Walk', employs a Mental process

verb, 'decide' in the projecting clause. Palesa, of St Katherine's, has a string of four projected clauses from one Mental process projecting verb 'believe' (sentence 18, Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2). The bulk of the projected clauses, 20 of the 25, occur in the Sea View learners' writing. Projecting verbs in this data are Mental (17) and Verbal (8) processes, suggesting that these learners formed projected clauses with Mental process projecting verbs like 'found out' (Appendix 50 sentence 10, Appendix 57 sentence 15 and Appendix 60 sentence 40) more readily than Verbal process verbs like 'say' (Appendix 56 sentence 2 and Appendix 57 sentence 11). The only examples of direct speech are in the writing of the isiXhosa-speakers at Sea View: in Xolo's (above) and Tenji's 'Feelings' texts (Appendix 56 sentence 7), while Zoleka created a form of 'direct speech' by adding a tag to a statement, e.g. 'She is a strict teacher but not very strict, I assume' (Appendix 60 sentences 39, 58, 59 and 61). Her choice of 'tag' words in these four clauses, 'say' referring to a Verbal process and 'assume' or 'thought' to a Mental process, shows (like Xolo's text) how closely utterances and thoughts are related.

Table 8.4, below, summarises the indicators of quality of learners' writing that I used in my analysis of their texts. The Enoch Sontonga learners' texts could not be included in the table because they were not independently and individually produced and the sentences were so short that they could not be analysed in respect of clause development or hypotaxis, the main indicators I used to gauge quality in learners' texts.

Table 8.4: Summary of indicators of quality in learners' texts in English

School / learners	**L1**	**Genres/Number of clauses**		**Level of hypotaxis**		**Marked themes**	
John Bishop		**Description Multimodal**	**Recount (Big Walk)**	**Descrip-tion**	**Recount**	**Descrip-tion**	**Recount**
Emile	Afr	17 clauses	Not done	41,2%	n/d	n/a	n/d
Candice	Afr	12 clauses	Not done	25%	n/d	0	n/d
Yvonne	Afr	10 clauses	Not done	9,1%	n/d	0	n/d
Nosisa	IsiX	20 clauses	Not done	10%	n/d	1/20	n/d

Nandi	IsiX	3 clauses	28 clauses	0	21,4%	n/a	3/28
Babalwa	IsiX	7 clauses	22 clauses	0	22,7%	n/a	3/22
Thabo	IsiX	5 clauses	15 clauses	0	20%	n/a	2/15
Sizwe	IsiX	9 clauses	Not done	0	n/d	n/a	n/d
Mandla	IsiX	10 clauses	21 clauses	30%	28,6%	0	3/21
Sea View		**Feelings …**	**Autobio.**	**Feel.**	**Auto.**	**Feel.**	**Auto.**
Elsa	Afr	35 clauses	42 (poster)	37,4%	21,4%	0	5/42
Kobus	Afr	15 clauses	15 clauses	33,3%	13,3%	2/15	4/15
Nadia	Afr	26 clauses	46 clauses	61,5%	28,3%	5/26	8/46
Anna	Germ	25 clauses	24 clauses	48%	25%	1/25	3/24
Tenji	IsiX	40 clauses	45 clauses	35%	37,8%	2/40	4/45
Xolo	IsiX	11 clauses	19 clauses	9,1%	15,8%	0	1/19
Zoleka	IsiX	38 clauses	135 cl.	36,8%	26,7%	8/38	19/135
St Kath.		**Poem**	**Autobio.**	**Poem**	**Auto.**	**Poem**	**Auto.**
Palesa	SeTs	n/a	38	n/a	36,8%	n/d	3/38
Total	17	283	450	-	-	20/283	58/450

Key to abbreviations

n/a – not applicable
n/d – not done

The Theme and Rheme analysis revealed, as already mentioned, an almost complete absence of Interpersonal Themes, with Palesa's sentence 19 in her English autobiography (in Chapter 6) and Amy's sentence 3 in her Afrikaans diary entry (Appendix 21) being the only exceptions. The absence of reflective, introspective elements in the Theme gives most texts, even a touching one like Elsa's autobiographical poster (Appendix 49), a deadpan quality. The low proportion of Marked Themes, 67 out of a total of 731 clauses, also shows that learners seldom vary their sentence structure and tend to repeat standard forms.

The reliance on guided genre writing or copying examples of different genres that is prevalent at both Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop corresponds more closely to L3 language assessment standards than L2 assessment standards. At Enoch Sontonga in particular, the amount that learners wrote independently falls way short of the amount written at other schools and it is also problematic that all learners' genre writing was collaborative. It is interesting that Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop were the only schools to set multimodal tasks for the whole class in the first half of the year. The inadequate structuring and scaffolding of the multimodal tasks at both schools appears to have complicated learners' responses, as

well as teachers' assessment. The writing route to literacy proposed in the new curriculum includes writing to communicate information, for social purposes, for personal reflection, and creatively as well as designing media texts. The examples of media texts in the assessment standards for Grade 6 are advertisements and brochures (DoE 2002:104) and it is suggested that learners use a "frame" in designing these texts. It is further specified that (DoE 2002) learners have a frame only when they design multimodal texts. No mention is made of guided writing or teacher support in relation to any of the other genres. It is assumed that teachers can provide a "frame" for learners' design of multimodal "media texts", even though they are unlikely to have done this for purely written texts.

In addition to curriculum policy, teachers' assessment practices can play an important role in shaping learners' writing development. Current curriculum policy emphasis on criterion-referenced assessment is consistent with a genre approach to the teaching of writing, because well-designed assessment criteria that learners understand contribute to making the construct and the task explicit. However, South African teachers (like many others elsewhere) have not adapted easily to opening up the "secret garden" of assessment (Allen 1998:241). Teachers used little in the way of criteria to assess any writing, and designing assessment criteria, especially for the multimodal tasks advocated in C2005, is a particular challenge (Davis and Reed 2003).

At John Bishop, Afrikaans-speakers wrote less than their isiXhosa-speaking peers and, generally, less proficiently, an unexpected finding because English and Afrikaans are cognate languages whereas English and isiXhosa are not. Their teacher's explanation (Interview, 2 December 2003) was that apartheid policy, which had provided schoolbooks for 'coloureds' and Indians but not for other black South Africans, had led to 'coloured' Afrikaans-speaking learners at John Bishop "taking education for granted". Mr Craig also said that it was difficult to "find the right level"

when teaching a mixed class like Grade 7A. He struggled to avoid English being pitched at the level of the lowest common denominator, L2, and a great deal depended on the language mix and resultant motivations in his classes: in the mixed Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speaking class the level and volume of written work is lower, while in the isiXhosa-speaking class, the level is comparable to that of the Sea View learners.

The teacher at Sea View, Ms Usher, did not appear to have a problem 'finding' an English L1 level in her linguistically diverse classes. Some of the reasons are the 'reading' resources at Sea View, like a library and computer laboratory, and the English-speaking learners at Sea View. At both John Bishop and Sea View, Afrikaans-speakers can become literate in their home language, while isiXhosa-speakers' primary literacy is in an additional language, English. This is at odds with the main aims of language in education policy: the promotion of additive multilingualism, the maintenance of a learner's home language(s) and the development of literacy, or at least fluency, in additional languages. The Language choices of parents and learners, which influence children's literacy in English and in their home language, have a direct bearing on the status of African languages. This issue is explored in Chapter Nine.

Despite varying degrees of subordination, there were no instances of nominalisation, a key indicator of formal written language (Halliday 1985). Instead, I compare two instances of 'speech on paper' which demonstrate learners' grappling with the formalities of punctuation to establish their own authorial voice in a text. In Xolo's description of his feelings before a mathematics test, he uses direct speech for the voice of another person and indirect speech for his own thoughts (or what Vygotsky (1986:182) called 'inner speech'). Nadia, on the other hand, uses brackets to indicate her own thoughts and comments in her autobiography (Appendix 53), in sentences 2, 6, 9 and 14. The simple punctuation of brackets works for a statement, as in sentence 6, where she confesses that she was the class

bully, but it serves less successfully in sentence 14, where the more complicated punctuation of direct speech is needed.

The evidence shows that when learners write, they spend most of their time displaying and practising grammar skills, or scribing. At Enoch Sontonga, where English is the MOI, during their English lessons, learners did not write individually and independently, either personal or factual genres, and their opportunity to use writing to develop CALP (Cummins 1984) was minimal. Cummins's (1984) model of BICS and CALP is premised on an ordering of texts in terms of the level of difficulty to understand and produce a text, or the cognitive demand of the text. One of the effects of learners writing so little independently and within such a limited range of text types is that they have few opportunites to develop generalising strategies and the basis for formal objective scientific writing. Though learners at John Bishop, Sea View and St Katherine's were introduced to a variety of genres, most of what they wrote, while factual, was based on their own personal experience, and excluded the more abstract impersonal factual text types (like explanation, response and argument) associated with disciplinary-based knowledge. In short, these learners too had limited opportunities to use writing to develop CALP.

The mainly personal, narrative texts of most of the learners also fall far short of the wider range of purposes envisaged for writing by curriculum policy, "to communicate information, for social purposes and for personal reflection" (DoE 2002). The writing pedagogy of these teachers does not show an understanding of the importance that learners need to communicate their own thoughts and feelings about a topic in writing to develop their writing abilities. Rather, these teachers' pedagogy reflects a heavy emphasis on grammatical accuracy coupled with a Personal Growth approach.

Given the stated aims of the new curriculum (DoE 2002:3) to produce independent learners with critical, evaluative and problem-solving abilities, and the requirements of the language curriculum that learners write and design texts across a range of genres and modalities, it is a matter of concern that learners overall did little independent writing and had such a limited say in the topics for their writing. Without a controlling interest (Datta 2000) in their writing it is hard to see how learners can develop the sense of ownership that Norton (2005) considered so crucial to literacy.

CHAPTER NINE

Analysis of Grade 7 learners' writing in isiXhosa

INTRODUCTION

In 2003, isiXhosa was taught as an additional language in only two of the four schools in my sample: a state school, Sea View and the independent school, St Katherine's. The RNCS (DoE 2002:18) allocates almost seven hours per week in Grade 7 for languages and stipulates that all learners should have at least three years of instruction in an African language by the end of Grade 9. Yet, as already noted (in Chapter Three), in schools and in society the various official languages have unequal status. Despite the fact that isiXhosa is the home language of close to 78% of the population in the Eastern Cape Province (Statistics South Africa 2003), it is used primarily in the informal oral domain. Official status alone does not ensure that it functions in the formal domains of recording and writing required of an official language (Markdata 2000).

There are complex dilemmas embedded in the relationship between English and the other official languages. In the Eastern Cape, isiXhosa-speaking children need access to English for higher education and job opportunities, while Afrikaans- and English-speaking children need access to isiXhosa for social communication and integration. The socio-political reasons for learning isiXhosa as an additional language are different to the mainly economic reasons for learning English as an additional language. The different motives and motivations for learning English and isiXhosa as additional languages, whether as L2 or L3, result in different sorts of proficiency in the languages being developed in school. In general only African languages are taught as L3s. What Moyo (2002:156) notes in Kwazulu-Natal, is also true of the Eastern Cape: multilingual school models are rare and the pattern in linguistically diverse schools is that African languages are "offered as a pastime and given a third position". The stark differences in language status between isiXhosa and English or

Afrikaans are apparent in the curriculum time allocated to these languages at the four schools (Table 5.3 in Chapter Five). For instance, isiXhosa L1 and English L2 have the same amount of curriculum time at Enoch Sontonga. The different time allocated to isiXhosa at Sea View and St Katherine's, discussed below, necessitated an examination of these schools' language policy *vis-à-vis* isiXhosa.

At linguistically diverse schools such as John Bishop, Sea View, and St Katherine's where learners speak Afrikaans and/or English and/or isiXhosa the languages on offer and the MOI vary greatly and often disregard policy requirements. As shown in Chapter Five Table 5.1, although 498 out of a total of 803 learners in 2003 at John Bishop were isiXhosa-speaking, isiXhosa was not offered as a subject, let alone used as the MOI. In linguistically homogeneous township schools, like Enoch Sontonga, where teachers and learners are isiXhosa-speaking, isiXhosa L1 has the same curriculum time (150 minutes) as English L2, and English is the stated medium of instruction from Grade 4 and right through high school, while Afrikaans is not taught at all.

At Sea View, isiXhosa has been taught as L3 in the intermediate phase (Grades 4-6) since 1986. It was allocated one 45-minute period a week and treated like a non-examinable subject, while Afrikaans was taught as L2 to most pupils, and also as L1 to sufficiently proficient pupils. The implicit message in the curriculum was that isiXhosa as an additional language was not taken as seriously as Afrikaans. Thus, isiXhosa appeared on learners' end of term reports with a comment but no mark and was, for a while in the 1990s, not included in their reports (Interview, 12 March 2003). The teacher who initiated isiXhosa lessons at Sea View was a fluent isiXhosa-speaker in a full-time post willing to commit time and effort to designing teaching materials where none existed, but she was not a qualified isiXhosa teacher. She encountered no resistance from parents or staff to introducing an additional language into the curriculum. When

she left the school in the early 1990s, various other teachers, some unfamiliar with isiXhosa and not qualified language teachers took over the teaching of isiXhosa. In 2002 Ms Nash, a fluent isiXhosa-speaker and qualified language teacher, was appointed part-time in a School Governing Body (SGB) post to teach isiXhosa. Her brief was to teach Grades 7-9 (the senior phase) for one 45-minute period a week, with an emphasis on spoken isiXhosa.

At St Katherine's, isiXhosa was taught as L3 from 1980 to 2001. It was allocated 30 minutes per week in Grade 1, and increased to 90 minutes per week by Grade 7. In 2003, Ms Burt, a fluent isiXhosa-speaker and qualified isiXhosa teacher, had held a full-time post dedicated to isiXhosa since 1998. In 2001, at the initiative of Ms Burt and with the support of the senior Afrikaans teacher, the policy for additional languages was changed so that both Afrikaans and isiXhosa could be taught as L2. The curriculum changes came into effect at the start of 2002. According to Ms Burt (Interview, 19 March 2003) parents had not requested the policy change. In fact parents of isiXhosa-speaking learners had not asked for isiXhosa to be taught as L1, and some had even asked that their children not learn isiXhosa at school. Research in the Eastern Cape (De Klerk 2000) suggests that this parental attitude is common.

I examine isiXhosa language policy and practices at the two schools because of the language policy innovations at both schools and also because the policy changes at St Katherine's were documented. I was particularly interested in the results for the status of isiXhosa and in learners' written competence in isiXhosa because written competence has important implications for language status. The status of African languages depends more on their use and development as home languages than as additional languages, but the two are not unrelated. For instance, in Kwa-Zulu Natal, according to Muller (2003), the number of learners writing isiZulu L1 in the matriculation examination has been

declining at a faster rate than the number doing isiZulu L2, so that overall there has been a drop in the number of children developing written competence in isiZulu in school.

Because of the shifting role of isiXhosa in school language policy, in addition to the linguistic analytical tools, I also use De Mejia's (2002) models of bilingual education, which can be applied to a multilingual context. De Mejia (2002) claims that there are three basic models of bilingual education: the transitional, maintenance, and enrichment models. The transitional model "refers to bilingual programmes which are aimed at language shift, cultural assimilation and social incorporation" (De Mejia 2002:44). The maintenance model aims at language maintenance and the strengthening of cultural identity by promoting additive bilingualism. The enrichment model, like the maintenance model, aims at additive bilingualism and also at extending the L1.

The Grade 7 classes were not academically streamed at either St Katherine's or Sea View, so I took a combined sample of Afrikaans- and English-speakers from the two Grade 7 classes at each school. Ten English-speaking learners at St Katherine's and 26 Afrikaans- and English-speaking learners at Sea View agreed to participate in my study.

In order to address my main concern, of learners' written competence in isiXhosa as an additional language, this chapter has three sections. Firstly, I consider the context of teaching and learning isiXhosa L3 at Sea View and, secondly, of isiXhosa L2 at St Katherine's. Thirdly, I compare Grade 7 learners' written output in isiXhosa L2 as compared to L3 and measure their level of written competence in isiXhosa L2 and L3 against the assessment standards of the RNCS (DoE 2002) for Grade 6. I also consider whether these curriculum outcomes provide evidence of national and provincial multilingual policy aims being met in school.

9.1 IsiXhosa L3 at Sea View

Ms Nash (Interview, 12 March 2003) stated that her main focus in isiXhosa L3 was speaking. She identified two major challenges within her first year at Sea View. Firstly, teaching isiXhosa for three years from Grade 7-9 for one 45-minute period a week is unlikely to result in much language learning. This allocation of curriculum time exemplifies a common practice at linguistically diverse schools where an African language may be spoken by a substantial minority of children at the school. In 2003, a typical year at Sea View, over 40% of the learners in two Grade 7 classes were isiXhosa home language speakers: 14 out of 35 and 16 out of 38. Yet, isiXhosa is not offered as L1 and is accorded less curriculum time than a foreign language when it is taught as an additional language. According to Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:129), "Most foreign language education around the world at the present time is structured to be delivered in classes of 50 to 75 at a rate of three 50-minute periods each week". Working with these figures, they find, bearing out Ms Nash's judgment, that "for most students, the rate and duration over which the language is learned means schooling alone is unable to deliver satisfactory learning outcomes" (1997:129).

This curriculum practice of devaluing African languages means that a teacher has to contend with the challenge of teaching isiXhosa L3 to classes with large numbers of isiXhosa home language speakers. There are disciplinary problems as a result: Ms Nash found isiXhosa-speakers to be bored and disruptive in class since there was no value in the lessons for them. The social consequences are at odds with the stated aims of the curriculum to eliminate a racist past[29]. Thus, in the Durban area, McKay and Chick (2001:407-408) found scant evidence of progress in

[29] The stated aim of the new curriculum (DoE 2002:3) is to build "values very different from those that underpinned apartheid education … The curriculum seeks to create a lifelong learner who is confident and independent, literate, numerate, multi-skilled, compassionate, with a respect for the environment and the ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen".

implementing language curriculum policy in linguistically diverse schools, instead they describe school practices “positioning [isiZulu-speaking] learners in English-only, decline-of-standards, and one-at-a-time discourses in order to maintain some measure of power in a changing society”.

Ms Nash suggested several changes within months of her appointment. During the course of 2002 she recommended that the isiXhosa-speaking learners go to the library to read and do extra work in English, rather than attend the isiXhosa lessons from which they were deriving no benefit. This move carried the approval of the English teachers and presumably of isiXhosa-speaking parents keen for their children to improve their English, since there were no objections reported from parents or the SGB. Though motivated by the seemingly benevolent desire to improve isiXhosa-speaking learners’ access to English (and the more pragmatic interest to manage classroom discipline), this practice may have the effect of stigmatising isiXhosa-speakers, since Afrikaans-speakers are deemed not to need extra time in the library to cope with the demands of learning English. Significantly, it also means that isiXhosa-speakers, who constitute 40% of Grade 7 learners, cannot become literate in their home language at school.

Ms Nash’s second suggestion was to start isiXhosa in Grade 4, rather than Grade 7, and to carry it through to Grade 9 so that Afrikaans- and English-speaking learners had a longer period, of six years, to learn isiXhosa than the initially intended three years. Space in the curriculum is an important consideration when adding extra languages to promote multilingualism. Ms Nash succeeded in extending the number of years that isiXhosa L3 is taught from three to six years rather than trying for more timetable slots per week for isiXhosa, within a three-year period.

Though these curriculum changes were implemented, none were documented as policy, and formalised. The other language teachers at Sea View do not necessarily have a shared understanding of Ms Nash's motivation. This means that the school does not have a record of these changes, which language teachers would need to review the policy. Since the isiXhosa language post is contractual and part-time, the lack of a written record militates against the continuity and potential development of isiXhosa policy at the school.

A child's home language affects her experience of learning additional languages, which means that more than one of De Mejia's bilingual models of education can operate in a multilingual school like Sea View at the same time. IsiXhosa-speaking learners experience a transitional model since they are denied literacy in their L1, isiXhosa, and the school language policy promotes "language shift, cultural assimilation and social incorporation" (De Mejia 2002:44). Afrikaans-speaking learners experience a maintenance model, since Afrikaans is maintained and their cultural identity strengthened through the school policy of additive bilingualism in English for Afrikaans-speaking learners. English-speaking learners experience a combination of the maintenance and enrichment models: their L1 is extended and they have the opportunity to develop additive bilingualism in Afrikaans and isiXhosa.

9.2 IsiXhosa L2 at St Katherine's

According to Ms Burt (Interview, 19 March 2003), the curriculum shift from isiXhosa L3 to L2 required a teaching focus on reading as well as speaking. Her biggest challenge was that there were no graded readers or storybooks written in isiXhosa for isiXhosa L2 learners. What was available had been translated, generally from English. Curriculum time for isiXhosa L2 increased to virtual parity with Afrikaans L2 in 2003 when isiXhosa was allocated 120 minutes and Afrikaans 150 minutes per week. Ms Burt gave me school policy documents for isiXhosa, such as a mission

statement, Language Syllabus, Progress Map, and course outlines. The wealth of documents provided evidence of the changed, and changing, status of isiXhosa in the school and curriculum, as well as teachers' formulating and conceptualising these changes.

The general school policy documents for isiXhosa L3 (1999) and L2 (2003) look different at first glance, but this is mainly due to layout, as they have similar outcomes. The first two outcomes are identical (1999/2003:1):

- By the end of the course the pupil should be able to speak Xhosa spontaneously in everyday situations.
- The pupil should be able to understand and respond to everyday Xhosa through the following skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Together with these outcomes for learners, the L2 document also has two aims for teachers. The one urges teachers to ensure that "the pupil's first encounter with Xhosa is of a very high standard", and the other notes that "The importance of Xhosa as an Official Language must be emphasised in order for pupils to realize its importance in our society" (2003:1). The latter aim is an implicit acknowledgement that official status for a language does not guarantee positive societal recognition, or legitimacy in Bourdieu's terms. The assumption is that learners will not spontaneously realise the value of isiXhosa, and it points to the problematic, unequal status of isiXhosa in relation to, especially the formerly official languages, Afrikaans and English. The fact that the school course outline for Afrikaans, the other L2, does not contain similar aims reflects the embattled status of isiXhosa socially. More specifically, it may also signify isiXhosa teachers' awareness that curriculum or timetable shifts alone will not produce isiXhosa parity with Afrikaans, let alone English, in South Africa.

These differences between Afrikaans and isiXhosa school policy documents aside, there is a striking similarity in layout and content between the 2003 course outlines for isiXhosa L2 and Afrikaans L2. While learners seldom read school language policy documents (Interview, 20 February 2004), they do read course outlines. So the impact of similar course outlines and learning outcomes for Afrikaans L2 and isiXhosa L2 would convey a message that the two languages are regarded as equally important within the curriculum. The four outcomes for isiXhosa in 2003 are the same as those quoted in Chapter Seven for Afrikaans, with the word 'Xhosa' substituted in the place of 'Afrikaans'. The St Katherine's outcomes differ from the learning outcomes for an L2, or first additional language in RNCS (DoE 2002) terminology, in a number of ways, as Table 9.1, below, illustrates:

Table 9.1: Comparison of school and national language curriculum learning outcomes

St Katherine's: L2	**RNCS: L1 and L2**	**RNCS:L3**
1. Follow oral and written instructions, and act on these instructions.	1. Listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.	1. Listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.
2. Speak Xhosa with reasonable confidence and fluency.	2. Communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations.	2. Communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations.
3. Read Xhosa with comprehension and insight, at your [grade] developmental level.	3. Read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.	3. Read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.
4. Write Xhosa correctly, being able to apply the language, spelling and punctuation skills which you have developed.	4. Write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes	4. Write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes
	5. Use language to think and reason, as well as access, process and use information for learning.	
	6. Know and be able to use the sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts.	6. Know and be able to use the sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts.

The learning outcomes in the national curriculum (DoE 2002) are the same for L1, 2 or 3, except that the fifth learning outcome applies only to L1 and L2. The stated reason is that the aim of L3 "is not to prepare learners to use this language as a language of learning and teaching" (DoE 2002:6). The reason that the national language curriculum has the same learning outcomes for L1 and L2 is because of an implicit understanding that for most learners, who are African-language speakers, their L2 becomes the language of learning and teaching. By comparison, the language learning outcomes of the St Katherine's L2 policy centre on the four core language skills (of listening, speaking, reading and writing) and implicitly preclude the use of learners' L2 as a language of learning and teaching, on the assumption that all their learners are English-speakers or have English L1 proficiency levels. The St Katherine's outcomes also differ from national policy in that they emphasise appropriate language use ("follow … instructions", "read Xhosa with comprehension and insight", "write Xhosa correctly"), and exclude the explicitly critical language awareness dimensions of national policy, ("listen … and respond appropriately and critically", "read and view … and respond critically"). The learning outcomes of the RNCS (DoE 2002) fore-ground a skills approach and only articulate a critical dimension with regard to the receptive language skills of listening and reading. The approach informing the St Katherine's L2 policy goes even further than the RNCS in reducing the possibility for a critical dimension as it emphasises appropriate language use in all four language skills.

The more detailed distinctions between L2 and L3 are spelled out in the assessment standards of the RNCS (DoE 2002). For instance, the amount and range of writing in the L3 is more limited than in L2, with L3 focusing on guided writing. In Grade 6, L2 learners are expected to write to communicate information, for social purposes, creatively, to design media texts, and to understand the writing process, while L3 learners are

expected to complete a simple form, write a simple dialogue, a guided poem, a paragraph, translate short texts, and write and design a poster.

The St Katherine's Grade 7 isiXhosa Course Outline (2003) specifies the amount and sort of writing. Learners are expected to write a variety of genres such as "advertisements, notices and posters, informal letters, dialogues and conversations, information, stories, descriptions" (2003:3). Of these, learners had written one description of themselves in the first weeks of term. The descriptive paragraph served as an introduction and an appropriate choice to precede the other potentially more difficult factual and imaginative genres.

All but one of the learners in my sample, and the majority of learners at St Katherine's, claim English as their home language, consistent with the assumptions underlying the school's language policy. Though they are multilingual, the learners mainly share a common home language, English, unlike the learners at Sea View. Thus, in terms of De Mejia's bilingual models of education, only the maintenance model, aimed at language maintenance and promoting additive bilingualism, applies. The overtly negative assimilationism of the transitional model does not seem to operate at St Katherine's, possibly because independent schools and learners form a small but already cohesive elite tied by their social status and proficiency in a common high status language, English.

9.3 Analysis of learners' writing in isiXhosa L2 and L3

I measured learners' writing according to the Grade 6 assessment standards because the data was taken from the first half of Grade 7, and teachers and learners had the second half of the grade to reach grade-level assessment standards.

My initial plan was to copy four consecutive weeks of learners' writing in isiXhosa L2 and L3, but (as explained in Chapter Four) what I eventually

did was not as tidy. The isiXhosa L2 teacher at St Katherine's, Ms Burt, photocopied four weeks of learners' written work (mid-February to mid-March). In addition she also gave me copies of learners' first introductory paragraphs. In isiXhosa L3, because learners had one lesson per week, I copied their writing for the entire first term, nine weeks, because I wanted to ensure that I would have enough data to compare variation in the amount written as well as in the type of writing.

Table 9.2 (Appendix 61) shows the total amount written by L3 learners at Sea View in nine weeks and Table 6.3 (Appendix 8), the amount written by L2 learners at St Katherine's in four weeks. As the tables show, the total amounts written in L2 and L3 during this time were very similar. The main purposes for L2 and L3 isiXhosa learners' writing, seemingly, were to practise or test grammar and vocabulary.

In both isiXhosa L2 and L3, learners wrote mainly grammar exercises focused on developing their accuracy and formulaic greetings and introductions, in isiXhosa L3. In the period under review, all the writing was controlled and guided, with learners doing no independent writing or comprehension exercises. An emphasis on guided rather than controlled writing is consistent with L3 assessment standards (DoE 2002). However, L2 assessment standards require learners to be introduced to a range of genres, and a balance between controlled, guided and independent writing. Part of the reason for the absence of extended texts in isiXhosa L2 writing at St Katherine's is that for most of their schooling the Grade 7 learners at St Katherine's had done isiXhosa L3. As noted, isiXhosa shifted from L3 to L2 at the beginning of 2002.

Because there was no independent writing in either L2 or L3, there was also no writing over which learners had any choice about the topic. The sentence-length grammar exercises in L3 were imperatives or formulaic

(greetings and introductions), while the sentences in L2 also included present tense and negative forms of the verb, in addition to imperatives.

To convey some of the differences in learners' isiXhosa written competence, I compare the independently written introductory paragraphs of three isiXhosa L2 learners with the guided paragraphs of three isiXhosa L3 learners. In each case I took the writing of three learners whose Afrikaans and English writing was analysed. The Sea View learners are Amy, Karen and Kevin and the St Katherine's learners are Carol, Clive and Palesa, whose isiXhosa paragraph was analysed in Chapter 6. I include the translations of Amy, Karen and Kevin's texts in this chapter but the translations of Carol and Clive's paragraphs are appended (Appendices 62 and 63).

The Sea View learners' paragraphs, below, exemplify controlled writing in which learners simply inserted their names into pattern sentences. As they are identical single-clause simple sentences, there is no level of hypotaxis and no point in Theme/Rheme analysis.

Amy, Karen and Kevin's introductions

Molo Nkosikazi Nash. Igama lam nguAmy. Iafni yam nguHarris. Ndilala eRhini. Hamba kakuhle.	*Helle Mrs Nash.// My name is Amy.// My surname is Harris.// I live in Grahamstown.// Go well.//*
Molo Nkosikazi Nash. Igama lam nguKaren. Ifani yam nguCross. Ndihlala eRhini. Hamba kakuhle.	*Hello Mrs Nash.// My name is Karen.// My surname is Cross.// I live in Grahamstown.// Go well.//*
Molo Nkosikazi Nash. Igama lam nguKevin. Ifani yam nguPeters. Ndihlala eRhini. Hamba kakuhle.	*Hello Mrs Nash.// My name is Kevin.// My surname is Peters.// I live in Grahamstown./ Go well.//*

The Grade 6 assessment standards accompanying the fourth learning outcome, writing, (DoE 2002) focus on controlled and guided writing. Some of the genres for L3 mentioned in the assessment standards include filling in simple forms, writing dialogues and popular songs. Controlled writing in the first term would not be out of place, provided there was

progression to guided writing, which would mean that the introductions above be developed into self-descriptions like that of the St Katherine's learners, for instance.

St Katherine's learners' L2 texts, below, are analysed even though all the sentences, bar two, are single simple clauses. Clive's concluding sentence is an independent and relative clause complex and his seventh sentence has two co-ordinating clauses. There is no point in calculating the hypotaxis levels.

Analysis of Carol's introductory paragraph

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1.		Your name	is Carol.//
2.		I	live at 2A Lansdowne Rd, Grahamstown.//
3.		I	like sweets, a butterfly and a dress.//
4.		I	don't like carrots, a tie and namafo[30].//
5.		I	'm studying at St Katherine's.//
6.		I	have three dogs.//
7.		I	have two cats.//

Analysis of Clive's introductory paragraph

Theme			Rheme
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
1. Hello		my name	is Clive.//
2.		I	live in Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth.//
3.		I my names	have brothers and a sister// are Calvin, Craig and Kate.//
4. In Port Elizabeth		I	farm dairy.//
5.		I I	like the farm// have a motorbike and two four-wheelers.//
6.		I	like sweets and chocolates.//
7. but		I I	don't like fish// like fishing.//
8.		I	have two dogs// called Sindi and Roxi.//

[30] Namafo does not exist as a word in isiXhosa.

The L2 learners' paragraphs have more developed vocabulary and varied sentence structure than those of the L3 learners. The dominant verbal processes that they employ, mainly Relational ('is' and 'have') and Mental (like), are very similar to those of the John Bishop learners in their Afrikaans texts (Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1). Their introductory paragraphs are examples of independently written descriptions, while the L3 introductions are controlled grammar tasks. This is in line with the assessment standards for writing (DoE 2002), which spell out a wider range of genres for L2, especially when the L2 will also be a medium of instruction, than for L3. Since African languages are the only languages taught as L3, this means that their usage in school writing is likely to be restricted.

Conclusion

The main purposes of isiXhosa writing, both L2 at St Katherine's and L3 at Sea View, are for grammar practice and testing. The common focus on the imperative form at both schools and the underlying assumption, that learners occupy a superior social position in relation to isiXhosa-speakers and that they are unlikely to speak as social equals to isiXhosa-speakers in isiXhosa, would make it difficult, even for L2 learners, to develop critical language awareness. When this is coupled with significant numbers of isiXhosa home-language speakers not learning their L1 in school, the result is at odds with national and educational language policy.

Prevailing language education practices may be reinforcing continuing diglossic patterns of African language use, rather than multilingualism. Diglossia characterises the societal, macro-level functions that language(s) perform and bilingualism the individual, micro-level use of one or more language(s). Diglossia is defined as "a situation where two varieties of a language [or different languages] exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play" (De Mejia 2002:37-38). After ten years of democracy in South Africa, the

pervasive role of African languages is still within the sphere of oral, personal, informal usage. It remains to be seen whether African language speakers will extend the use of African languages in the formal sphere in both speaking and writing, and also as languages of public (and personal) record.

Language learning policies at school are tied to societal language power relations. Language-in-education policy implementation reflects the unequal power between languages. Education policy requires that all learners' home languages are maintained and developed, and that they have at least three years of instruction in an African language by the end of Grade 9. Yet, as this research shows, L2 and L3 isiXhosa learners can end up with low literacy levels in isiXhosa. However, Edelsky's (1991:28) view that school language programmes cannot shift unequal power relations between languages denies the potential for teachers, in this case, to effect actual curriculum change and ensure a greater time allocation (and thereby, higher status) for a subordinated language like isiXhosa.

Further complicating the implementation of education policy is a shortage of qualified teachers. Of the 13 000 under-qualified teachers in the Eastern Cape, almost 20% include language teachers (Zuzile 2003:2).

The South African Schools Act (DoE 1996b) gives parents in SGBs the power to design and implement language-in-education policy in accordance with learners' needs. Yet in countless schools, including those in my study, SGBs have not formulated language policy that promotes African languages or meets the needs of isiXhosa-speaking learners. Thus, teachers who are fluent speakers of isiXhosa, not necessarily qualified isiXhosa teachers, take on the task of teaching isiXhosa. When qualified teachers are appointed, they are often employed on a part-time basis. Their part-time status is likely to compromise their

commitment and capacity to promote African languages in the curriculum.[31] Despite these factors, Ms Burt and Ms Nash negotiated greater space and status for isiXhosa in the school curriculum.

At Sea View, language policy and practice work to the detriment of isiXhosa-speaking learners whose literacy in their home language is not developed at school. It is too early to draw conclusions about Afrikaans- and English-speaking learners' proficiency in isiXhosa L3 from this limited data and after only two years of lessons by a qualified isiXhosa teacher, but certainly their literacy in isiXhosa is rudimentary. At St Katherine's, teachers formulated language policies for each language. While written records reflect the changing relations between additional languages, the empirical data of this study are too limited to show how teachers' classroom practice and learners' literacy levels reflect these curriculum changes. What is needed are longitudinal studies tracking learners' language proficiency and literacy levels in their additional languages, both L2 and L3.

[31] I make this as an experiential observation; it is not prompted by my interaction with the teachers in this research.

CHAPTER TEN
Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the classroom texts of learners at four different schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, all recommended as well-functioning schools by the manager of the local education district office. These four school contexts continue to bear the traces of apartheid social and educational engineering. Enoch Sontonga, a formerly Africans-only school, and John Bishop, a formerly coloureds-only school, are historically disadvantaged state schools. Sea View, a formerly whites-only state school, and St Katherine's, an independent school which has admitted learners regardless of colour since 1982, are well-resourced. There have been some dramatic changes in schooling since the demise of apartheid. The demography of learners in the classrooms of schools formerly reserved for whites and coloureds under apartheid has been irreversibly altered now that African learners have entered these schools in large numbers. However, the migration has been one-way; there has been no parallel movement of non-black learners into formerly Africans-only schools. There has also been a plethora of policies designed to transform the apartheid schooling landscape, especially in respect of the curriculum.

The idealistic aims of the new curriculum (Department of Education 2002:3) are "to create a lifelong learner who is confident and independent, literate, numerate, multi-skilled, compassionate, with a respect for the environment and the ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen". My conviction is that systematic research on actual learning achieved in school is needed to assess the extent to which curriculum reform is achieving its aims.

My study researched regular classroom writing which is crucial to literacy, and underpins learning across all areas of the curriculum. Furthermore,

because writing is not as heavily dependent on material resources as reading, comparing writing competencies can cut across the material differences between schools, which endure despite more than a decade of post-apartheid reform. By this I do not mean to underplay the significance of these material and resource inequalities. Quite the contrary, especially in a society with a rising gini co-efficient and an unemployment rate of 41,8% nationally (Tempest 2004), the ongoing material and resource differences in schools reinforce the gap between the rich and poor precisely where there is some potential to reduce it. Given the growing societal inequality in contemporary South Africa, it is especially important that schooling deliver on the language curriculum policy aims to promote multilingualism through an additive approach and pursue a language policy most supportive of children's L1 and their general cognitive growth. These curriculum intentions reflect a social justice concern that education needs to develop learners' proficiency and literacy in English as an additional language without contributing to the dominance of English and consequent marginalisation of other official languages. In this conclusion, I relate the research findings of my study to the underlying issue of social justice with regard to language.

As the central question of my study concerns how writing practices contribute to the development of learners' writing ability, this chapter brings together my findings across Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. At school, factors which influence learners' writing include the different amounts and availability of textbooks and reading material as well as the languages on offer. In the classroom, the quantity and quality of learners' writing are the primary indicators of learners' opportunities to write and also of their writing ability. In categorising the amount written, I considered the range of genres and modalities of text and whether learners wrote independently or with guidance. Indicators of quality included a Theme and Rheme analysis of sentence structure, the level of hypotaxis, the variety of dependent clauses and the say learners had over topic choice.

10.1 School-level factors

Reading materials, regarded as cognitive resources (Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold 2003), have particular significance for children's literacy and writing development. The prevailing distribution of cognitive resources reflects the persistent divide between the haves and the have-nots. There were no school libraries and too few textbooks for each learner to have his or her own copy at Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop, whereas both Sea View and St Katherine's have school libraries, sufficient textbooks for each learner and the capacity to print worksheets regularly.

The languages taught at the four schools and the ways in which curriculum time is allocated to those languages (Table 5.3 in Chapter 5) also have a profound impact on language learning. Yet, there is no check by the Education District Offices whether schools meet the official national policy requirements that 25% of total curriculum time be spent on language. John Bishop and Sea View, which allocate a total of 450 minutes to languages, come closest to the policy expectation of 412 minutes. However, neither St Katherine's 98 minute over-allocation of curriculum time to language, nor Enoch Sontonga's 112 minute short-changing of language curriculum time has been picked up. Whether a language is taught as L1 or L2 or L3 also seems to have no role in determining its curriculum time: the same amount of time is allocated to isiXhosa L1 and English L2 at Enoch Sontonga in contrast to St Katherine's, where isiXhosa L2 has half the time of English L1, while at Sea View, isiXhosa L3 has one quarter of the time of English L1/2. More seriously in terms of national language policy, the match between the languages on offer at a school and the home languages of learners (and teachers) is not monitored, even though this information is recorded and updated twice a year.

At Enoch Sontonga, John Bishop and Sea View, where most learners speak Afrikaans and/or English and/or isiXhosa, the choice of languages

on offer and the MOI seldom meet language policy requirements of additive multilingualism needed to support children's L1 and general cognitive growth. These findings raise serious doubts about whether English as MOI at Enoch Sontonga is the best way to promote additive bilingualism and children's cognitive growth. However, the policy discrepancy is most stark at John Bishop: in 2003, although 62% of learners were isiXhosa-speaking (Table 5.1 in Chapter 5), isiXhosa was not offered as a subject, let alone used as MOI. At Sea View, where isiXhosa is taught as L3 and Afrikaans as L1 and L2, the situation appears better than at John Bishop, yet with isiXhosa-speaking learners outnumbering Afrikaans-speakers at 142 to 82 in 2003, the *de facto* situation for isiXhosa-speakers is similar to that of John Bishop. St Katherine's is the one school in this sample whose localised school language policy and practice correspond to national and curriculum policy. The majority of South African learners at St Katherine's are English-speaking (95/122), (as are the majority of foreign learners, though this is not recorded in the EMIS survey) and among the South Africans a minority of almost equal numbers speak Afrikaans (13) or isiXhosa (14) as L1. Both Afrikaans and isiXhosa are offered as L2.

The most striking finding with regard to Afrikaans is how its position in school curriculums has shifted since 1997, when it ceased to be compulsory and became one among 11 official languages, any two of which could be included in the curriculum. Afrikaans is no longer taught at Enoch Sontonga, while the formerly Afrikaans-medium John Bishop has become Afrikaans/English dual-medium in response to growing numbers of isiXhosa-speaking learners. Sea View's Afrikaans/English dual-medium policy, unlike that of John Bishop, pre-dates the current demographic shifts resulting from learner migration and is not related to the presence of isiXhosa-speaking learners at the school. Instead the retention of Afrikaans as MOI at Sea View, at a time when isiXhosa-speakers outnumber Afrikaans-speakers, is probably a measure of the power of

Afrikaans-speaking parents and the school's willingness to serve their linguistic interests. At both Sea View and St Katherine's one extra period, of 45 minutes and 30 minutes respectively, was allocated to Afrikaans in 2003. Only a regular follow-up on the time-table would enable one to judge whether this was a tacit promotion of Afrikaans or whether, from one year to the next, the 'extra' period for language shifted to the other languages on offer. Nonetheless, St Katherine's policy of offering both Afrikaans and isiXhosa as L2 demonstrates an expansion of the curriculum space of isiXhosa, since previously it was offered only as L3.

The language policy imperative to promote children's home language is ignored at John Bishop and Sea View as, instead of isiXhosa being offered as L1, it is completely absent at John Bishop and offered as L3 at Sea View. The possibility of isiXhosa as MOI is not even contemplated at either school. What has happened is that English has become increasingly significant in the curriculum offerings of all four schools, largely at the expense of isiXhosa.

10.2 Classroom-level factors

10.2.1 Quantity of writing

With regard to quantity, there remain vast differences and inequalities simply in the amounts that learners write at the different schools across Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa.

The evidence in respect of the quantity of writing in Afrikaans at the three schools where it is taught shows differences in the amounts that learners write as well as teacher support for writing. Decontextualised mundane grammar exercises are common in all three schools. Learners at John Bishop, where Afrikaans is taught as L1 and L2 to different learners in the same class, wrote no comprehension exercises, whereas L2 learners at Sea View did two and at St Katherine's one. One extended text was written at each of the three schools, independently at John Bishop and

Sea View and with teacher guidance at St Katherine's. The evidence is that learners do the same amount and kind of writing in Afrikaans L1 and L2 at John Bishop, whereas at Sea View the teacher sets different sorts of extended writing for the two levels so that L1 learners at Sea View read more and write more challenging texts than the L2 learners in the same class. Comparison with St Katherine's, where Afrikaans is taught as L2, suggests that the prevailing level of Afrikaans at John Bishop, even though supposedly L1 and L2 combined, is in fact L2.

At John Bishop and Sea View, where the same teacher teaches English L1 and L2 to different learners in the same class, learners did very similar amounts and kinds of writing at both levels. In terms of quantity, the only difference was at John Bishop where the isiXhosa-speaking English L1 learners wrote more than the Afrikaans-speaking English L2 learners. However, in terms of quality, the balance tips in favour of Sea View as they did more sentence-length grammar exercises than the John Bishop learners; at both schools learners did three comprehension exercises, but the Sea View comprehensions were richer and more challenging than those at John Bishop, especially the one the teacher at John Bishop wrote. At both schools, the English teachers do not distinguish systematically between L1 and L2 and it is difficult to decide whether the prevailing level of English is clearly L1 or L2. Certainly it is similar at both schools.

A comparison with St Katherine's, where English is taught only as L1, and Enoch Sontonga, where it is taught only as L2, shows that learners did six comprehension exercises from six different sources at St Katherine's (double the number of comprehension exercises at Sea View or John Bishop), while Enoch Sontonga learners did two, with both passages taken from the same book. In every respect, learners at Enoch Sontonga wrote far less than any others. They wrote less in English L2 in 19 weeks than Afrikaans L2 learners at Sea View wrote in four weeks and, like the

Afrikaans L2 learners at John Bishop, they did mainly single-word rather than sentence-length grammar exercises. Very disturbingly, none of the Enoch Sontonga learners, besides six who wrote a poem, did any independent individual extended writing at all. Most wrote their first extended text on their own as part of the mid-year examination. It is all but unavoidable that grammar tasks will have a tenuous connection to children's own writing, with limited possibility to develop the quality of their writing, when they do no independent individual writing, as is the case at Enoch Sontonga. Even in St Katherine's optimal conditions, the bulk of children's extended writing consists of personal expressive texts, which are unlikely to develop a formal, impersonal academic register or cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP, Cummins 1984).

Material conditions alone cannot explain differences in writing outcomes: Enoch Sontonga and John Bishop are both resource-poor, yet learners wrote far less English at the former than at the latter, while learners at better-resourced Sea View wrote a comparable amount to John Bishop learners. Seemingly, at desegregated state schools like John Bishop and Sea View, the new curriculum has gone some way to equalising the amount that learners write. However, there is a gulf between the writing of the small elite at a very privileged school like St Katherine's and that of the majority at a resource-poor exclusively black state school like Enoch Sontonga, with learners at the latter writing too little in total to have a chance to develop CALP (Cummins 1984).

The amount written in isiXhosa L2 at St Katherine's in four weeks is greater than L3 at Sea View in nine weeks, but the bulk of writing in both schools consists of grammar exercises, as was the case in Afrikaans and English, but without a single comprehension exercise, unlike Afrikaans and English. Also, differently to Afrikaans and English, many of the isiXhosa grammar exercises practised the imperative form, which assumes that learners are unlikely to speak as social equals to isiXhosa-speakers in

isiXhosa. At St Katherine's, the isiXhosa L2 tasks tend to translate from isiXhosa to English, while at Sea View, the L3 tasks tend to translate from English to isiXhosa. Even at St Katherine's, which has the closest congruence with language policy requirements, Afrikaans- and African language-speakers' primary literacy is in an additional language, English.

The development of quality in writing depends crucially on the quantity written. Together with regular opportunities to write individually and independently, to develop the fluency of their writing, children also need to receive constructive feedback about the structure and coherence of their texts in order to improve quality. L2 learners in particular require explicit teaching of the linguistic and structural features of different genres and follow-up grammar lessons to remediate the grammatical errors in their own writing. Yet, the only teachers whose grammar lessons picked up on learners' grammatical errors in their own extended writing were the Afrikaans and English teachers at St Katherine's.

10.2.2 Quality of writing

Though for the purposes of this discussion I treat quantity and quality as separate factors in writing development, the two are reciprocal. With respect to quality in writing, the pattern across all three languages at all four schools is a preponderance of routine grammar tasks, mostly controlled or guided. The anomalous result is that learners are guided in the easier tasks while they write the more cognitively demanding comprehension exercises and extended texts independently. Very similar self-descriptive, autobiographical texts are set in all three languages with the same genre being monotonously repeated until learners must find it dull to write, and teachers boring to mark. This emphasis on personal expressive writing is at odds with the stated aims of the RNCS (DoE 2002) that learners write and design texts across a range of genres and modalities, as well as the broader curriculum aims to develop learners' critical, evaluative and problem-solving abilities. Moreover, learners'

limited role in topic choice is problematic in view of Datta's (2000) research and Norton's (2005:14) assertion that "ownership of meaning-making is crucial for the development of literacy".

There is only one example of a factual impersonal genre, the recount by John Bishop learners. Teachers' neglect of impersonal formal and factual genres at all four schools makes it more difficult for learners to experience the benefits of writing these genres – that they set a basis for the development of abstract cognitively-demanding academic writing by freeing learners from considering the needs of a reader and enabling them to foreground the subject matter (Kress 1994:97). These pedagogical practices mean that learners are less likely to develop formal, impersonal context-reduced writing, or CALP (Cummins 1984). As a consequence, the grammatical features that Kress (1994:114) identifies as important generalising strategies towards the development of formal, objective scientific writing such as the universal present tense, the general pronoun 'you' and agentless passives occur rarely in the writing of these learners, in any language at all four schools.

Generally across all the schools the grammatical forms important to formal objective factual writing are scarce. It is particularly marked at Enoch Sontonga where it was impossible to measure individual learner's writing ability in English through indicators like hypotaxis or the grammatical features of clause development because learners simply did not write any extended texts individually or independently. Even in an optimally resourced school like St Katherine's, learners do little formal, impersonal context-reduced writing. Unfortunately, this research provides evidence for the perception that township schools, like Enoch Sontonga, are least able to develop learners' CALP in English. As these Grade 7 learners are at the start of the senior phase of their schooling, it is especially important for them to develop a level of literacy that will give them access to the

abstract disciplinary forms of knowledge taught at high school, and university.

The summary of indicators used to analyse the level of complexity of learners' extended texts in Afrikaans at John Bishop, Sea View and St Katherine's (Table 7.3 in Chapter 7 Section 7.3) shows that learners' levels of hypotaxis were lower overall than in English: 11 out of 14 were below 20%. Learners generally used the standard sentence form, with only 27 Marked Themes in 395 clauses, of which 21 were temporal. Most dependent clauses were also temporal or causal (38/59), rather than the relative or projected clauses identified by Kress (1994) as significant markers of written development.

Several indicators (Table 8.4 in Chapter 8) demonstrate that learners have a greater level of competence in English as an additional language than in Afrikaans or isiXhosa L2. Learners' levels of hypotaxis in English were higher than in Afrikaans, regardless of their home language: only 3 learners out of 17 had levels below 20%. There is more variety in the types of dependent clauses in English than in Afrikaans or isiXhosa, with learners forming the cognitively and developmentally significant relative and projected clauses in English more readily and more accurately than they do in Afrikaans. Though learners have greater written competence in English than in Afrikaans, they seldom vary their sentence structure through Unmarked Themes or Interpersonal Themes. In English, there were 78 Marked Themes in 733 clauses, of which 55 were temporal, the earliest and easiest way of sequencing a text.

The summary of indicators in Table 8.4 provides evidence that writing competence is not a fixed discrete ability, but that the demands of the task and genre influence how individuals write. Among the Sea View learners' texts, there was more variation in hypotaxis levels between the autobiography and the description (of their feelings) of the same individual

than between Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers. Unfortunately it was impossible to make a similar comparison with the English texts of the Afrikaans- and isiXhosa-speakers at John Bishop because Afrikaans-speakers wrote only one genre.

At all three state schools (Enoch Sontonga, John Bishop and Sea View), learners did at least one multimodal text in English. None of the learners produced multimodal texts in either Afrikaans or isiXhosa – possibly due to the lingering influence of the strongly formal grammar base of previous Afrikaans and isiXhosa curriculum documents. That St Katherine's prioritised verbal texts to the seeming exclusion of multimodality demonstrates an emphasis on alphabetic literacy consistent with its elitist ethos. Notwithstanding Nixon's (2003) argument that learners should be encouraged to produce diverse texts and that the affordances of the visual could develop learners' written competence, most learners prioritised the visual above the verbal, so that their alphabetic literacy was compromised.

With regard to isiXhosa, there is no basis for comparing the levels of complexity of learners' writing because of the differences between L2 at St Katherine's and L3 at Sea View. The L3 Sea View learners wrote only controlled texts while the St Katherine's learners wrote a single extended text independently. The analysis of the St Katherine's learners' text revealed only one instance of hypotaxis, in Clive's text (Appendix 63). With regard to isiXhosa, the language choices of (especially isiXhosa-speaking) parents and learners may be reinforcing diglossic patterns of African language use, rather than multilingualism. Isixhosa-speaking learners at John Bishop and Sea View are developing their primary literacy in an additional language, English, and their literacy levels in their L1 are being compromised as parents and learners prioritise literacy in English.

Learners' literacy levels are widely regarded as an important measure of educational quality primarily because they are crucial to intellectual and

affective development. In excellent high-quality literacy practices, writing is used to link personal introspective forms of self-knowledge and learning with abstract content-rich meta-cognitive understanding. Thus, a writing teacher such as Kamler (2001:83) seeks to "disrupt the binary division between personal and factual writing", arguing that to improve a writer's writing a teacher needs to work with the genre and linguistic features of the text as well as the writer's subjectivity.

Kamler's expertise may not be standard practice, even in Australia. Certainly it provides a stark contrast with what prevails in the Language lessons of the nine teachers in my sample and, I would argue, in most South African Language classrooms, where teachers privilege grammar exercises and personal, expressive extended writing. Despite language curriculum reform which includes critical language awareness and multimodality and advocates a genre approach, there is no sign that writing practices have been influenced by these more recent curriculum and pedagogical developments. In terms of pedagogy, the emphasis on grammar exercises harks back to grammar translation, while the preponderance of personal expressive writing recalls the Personal Growth approach. The former teaching approach dates back to the 18th century, while the latter emerged in Britain in the 1960s (Medway 1990). These approaches, which do not begin to grapple with CLA or genre or multiliteracies, characterise teachers' understanding of writing pedagogy and are evidence that a limited understanding of the new curriculum, and of writing pedagogy in particular, is widespread across the system.

As classroom writing requires little beyond a pen and paper, the material resource differences between the schools cannot explain why so little writing takes place or why the sort of writing is so limited, and similar, in all four schools in all three languages. Rather than material factors playing a key role, children's writing from these schools is evidence of teachers' misunderstanding of curriculum policy and limited conceptualistions about

the purposes of writing and how best to teach it. These learners' texts show that teachers' classroom practice with regard to writing consists primarily of engaging learners in grammar translation activities and tasks, 'scribing'. At dual-medium schools such as John Bishop and Sea View where the L1 curriculum influences L2 teaching and learning, there is a strong Personal Growth approach to 'composing', which is even more pronounced at St Katherine's, where English is taught only as L1.

The traces of teachers' assessment practices evident in learners' texts also demonstrate that most teachers (the sole exception being the Afrikaans teacher at St Katherine's) do not have explicit assessment criteria. Teachers generally wrote encouraging comments on texts but their assessment criteria remained implicit or were so broad (e.g. 'Content' and 'Presentation') that they could provide little guidance to learners to develop their writing.

10.2.3 What are the ways forward for pedagogy, for policy and for research?

Pedagogy

My purpose in undertaking a detailed analysis was to better understand how classroom writing practices contribute to the development of learners' writing ability. What I have found instead is that, in the main, writing practices do little to systematically develop learners' cognitive academic language proficiency and, further, that the amount written differs markedly at different schools. The analysis demonstrates that the poverty of learners' writing is not solely attributable to material resource inequalities in schools. A minimal prerequisite to intervene in this problem would be sufficient textbooks for all learners to have a copy to take home to read and work from. Not because learners need textbooks for writing but, if we intend adequacy, a common minimum level of educational resources across the schooling system to be a right for all learners, then sufficient up-to-date textbooks for all subjects are a basic essential. In addition,

learners need sufficient literary texts, a mixture including fiction and poetry as well as factual texts, to serve as models for writing. However, even if all these reading resources were available in every classroom, teachers would determine how such books were used. It is therefore imperative to understand the nature of teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge.

The two main ways in which teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge are developed are through university study and workshops conducted by the Provincial Education Departments and NGOs. The Departmental workshops have a narrow focus on the implementation of the new curriculum and have had little impact on the classroom practices of these teachers, all of whom had participated in Departmental workshops and lectures within the last five years. An oppositional relationship between schools and education district offices dates from the 1970s when classrooms were 'out of bounds' for district-level officials. These historic tensions are compounded by the current serious shortage of district-level staff which makes it difficult for district-level officials to monitor and support teachers' classroom practice.

Currently universities are the only sites for formal teacher education. The model for pre-service as well as in-service teacher education is university- rather than school-based programmes. A form of school-based mentoring, called learnerships, has been introduced in some districts of the Eastern Cape for initial teacher education, but without any preparation for existing teachers to act as mentors, what the learnerships do is to target competent teachers and increase their already heavy professional load. What this research also suggests is that there are few practising teachers who are good models for training aspirant teachers in the area of developing children's writing. The dynamics of such a school-university partnership, in particular how academics and practising mentor teachers complement each other, have not been conceptualised or clearly

formulated. A role for district-level staff such as Subject Advisors has yet to be considered.

However, my experience of teaching on an in-service course for language teachers, which includes visiting teachers in their classrooms to observe them teaching a lesson, is that a form of school-based support for teachers would greatly enhance the effectiveness of university-based in-service courses. One of the consequences of incorporating teacher education colleges into universities was that the closer, local connection with the realities of schooling of the former colleges, which were more decentralised than universities, was lost (Sayed 2004).

The model that all in-service teacher education courses are solely university-based needs to be re-examined. The dimension of classroom-based support in the course in which I am involved develops teachers' own reflective competencies and gives academics first-hand insights into the problems facing teachers. During a classroom visit the lesson is videotaped and briefly discussed with the teacher in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, after which a copy of the video is given to the teacher as a record and for later more detailed self-reflection. The challenge for the visiting academic is to be able to translate the experience of visiting schools and observing lessons so that the course design can better address teachers' pedagogical and subject content needs.

Policy

What needs to happen to actualise the potential of our curriculum reforms? Some of the difficulties result from the divergent directions of education policy. While higher education and teacher education policy have promoted centralisation through mergers, and by shutting down colleges, thus making universities the only sites for formal teacher education, the dominant thrust of schooling policy has been to decentralise. According to Grant Lewis and Motala (2004:116), "the goals of decentralisation for

improved equity, expanded democracy and improved quality have not been met, except in resource-rich contexts". The newly-desegregated schools, mainly well-resourced, have attracted the attention of researchers and policy-makers. Resource-impoverished black urban and rural schools, and the manner in which the ongoing inequality of resources structures the poor quality of schooling for the majority of South African children, have been relatively neglected. As responsibility for appointing teachers, disciplinary matters, language policy as well as overseeing the school's financial management and budget have been devolved to local school communities, it is difficult to know who to hold accountable when children fail to receive the basics, such as adequate numbers of up-to-date textbooks. The lack of coordination between the national education department through to the provincial and district level means that everyone, and no one, is responsible.

If language curriculum policy is to realise its goals to promote additive multilingualism and support children's L1 and cognitive growth, it has to take into account these research findings, and many others (e.g. Howie 2002), that language learning is producing limited literacy levels by the start of the senior phase of schooling. Language teaching as subject is not giving learners CALP and as such parents have no choice but to hope that in going for English as MOI their children will acquire the English they need for the subsequent phases of Further and Higher Education.

Research

The perception that access to quality education has become the preserve of a middle class which includes increasing numbers of people of colour is common (e.g. Soudien 2004). My research findings echo many other studies (reviewed in Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold 2003) that question assumptions about the quality of education in (even) well-resourced schools. Critical questions need to be asked about the **quality** of education systemically in South Africa when, in an optimally resourced

school like St Katherine's, there were few factual impersonal cognitively-demanding genres, which are the basis of abstract, disciplinary-based academic writing. The presence of an enlarged black middle class has had no apparent impact on the quality of education for the majority of children whose parents are working class or unemployed.

On the basis of detailed empirical evidence derived directly from classrooms, this thesis has also sought to generate a wider set of questions for further research. Although I touched on the formation of learner subjectivities in the writing practices of the different schools, this was not a central focus of the thesis. I was also constantly aware of how the underlying cultural orientations of language teachers, which favour certain values and attitudes but disapprove of others, help to shape learners' dispositions to writing, but I did not pursue this line of inquiry. The challenge identified by Kamler (2001) of understanding how teachers' pedagogical choices shape children's writing, on the one hand, and how children's texts stem from and lead to different writing competencies, and create different subjectivities, on the other, is a rich and largely unexplored area of research in the Eastern Cape.

The strength of this thesis is that it is based on a detailed, grounded understanding of classroom literacy practices as well as of learners' writing. This evidence is crucial to begin to change the ongoing patently unequal educational outcomes that our schools produce as it is impossible to intervene realistically and effectively in an evidential vacuum. However, this reliance on learners' actual everyday classroom writing is also a weakness of the research design. It limits the comparability of the data because the writing from each classroom is different and not directly comparable with any other. Also, as happened, in the case of a classroom where little writing is done, learners' writing abilities cannot be measured because there are no extended texts to analyse linguistically. With hindsight, my research design would have been strengthened by having

all the participants write an extended text on the same topic. This would have meant that, in addition to the regular classroom writing, I also had one piece of sustained writing of the same genre on the same topic by all participants to directly compare learners' writing abilities.

Finally, longitudinal studies tracking learners' language proficiency and literacy levels in their home language as well as additional languages, both L2 and L3, are needed. Such research questions and findings, which relate to a broader societal concern with social justice in South Africa, have the potential to develop pedagogical practices for schooling to lay the basis for children's literacy in additional languages and thereby to open up life opportunities for, especially, poor children.

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Interviews

Ms Ames, teacher at St Katherine's, 9 December 2003.

Ms Burt, former teacher at St Katherine's, 19 March 2003.

Mr Craig, teacher at John Bishop, 2 December 2003.

Ms Foley, READ facilitator, 22 October 2003.

Ms Jawana, teacher at Enoch Sontonga, 25 November 2003.

Mr Klein, former Principal of John Bishop, 23 September 2003.

Mr Modiba, Principal of Enoch Sontonga, 10 December 2002.

Mr Naidoo, Manager, Grahamstown Education District, 11 March 2005.

Ms Nash, teacher at Sea View, 12 March 2003.

Mr Payne, teacher at Sea View, 17 February 2004.

Mr Pearson, Principal of John Bishop, 3 February 2004.

Mr Peterson, former Principal of John Bishop, 3 February 2003.

Ms Relly, teacher at St Katherine's, 20 February 2004.

Ms Usher, teacher at Sea View, 12 March 2003.

Ms Warren, former teacher at Sea View, 17 June 2003.