

THE INFLUENCE OF CONTEXT ON TEACHERS'
CONCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

BY
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DECLARATION

I, Sathiaveni Duel Moodley, hereby declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my own work.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation, or any part of it, does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced.
 - b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- (iv) Tables that have been copied and pasted from the internet, have been acknowledged and referenced.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the following people:

- (i) My late mum and my late sister, Faith, who always encouraged me and had absolute belief that I was capable of accomplishing great things.
- (ii) My husband, Nad, who has been a tower of strength during my studies. Thank you for your love, assistance and guidance. I could not have accomplished this milestone without your support.
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ABSTRACT

This research involved the contextual influences on teacher professional expertise in the Central Urban area in Durban. It explores what happens to teachers when their context changes and how they cope with a challenging environment. This study documents and describes a particular group of foundation phase teachers' experiences in a specific school and how the context of this school influences their professional expertise. The study draws on Dryfus and Dryfus (1986) five stage typology which describes how and why teachers' abilities, attitudes, capabilities and perspectives change according to the skill levels.

An empirical investigation involving a qualitative research methodology was done using the case study method to present this research. The instruments used in this exploration were individual semi-structured interviews with six foundation phase educators and a focus group interview with a group of five foundation phase teachers. A City centre school was used as a sample. One male teacher and five female teachers were selected. All the participants were Indian. Interviews were used because of the need to observe the teachers facial expressions and emotions during the interview.

The study was able to identify the various challenges that presented itself to both novice and expert teachers in the profession. The findings are organised under eight themes which are: the conceptions of a novice teacher; the conceptions of an expert teacher; novice teachers and school context; expert teachers and school context; novice teachers and change in curriculum; expert teachers and change in curriculum; the role of experience for novice and expert teachers and novice and expert teachers relationships with peers/ leaders and mentors.

Emergent findings suggest that both expert and novice teachers experience difficulties in a complex and challenging context are further presented under seven themes in which the researcher did a cross analysis. Cross theme analysis was used to present the findings of a further seven themes which are; conceptions of expert and novice teachers are different, teaching and school context are experienced differently by novice and expert teachers, curriculum change makes teaching challenging for expert and novice teachers, experience is important for expert and novice teachers, every teacher needs a mentor, all teachers are always a novice and the need for flexibility.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- PCK : Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- CK : Content Knowledge
- CSK : Content Subject Knowledge
- OBE : Outcomes Based Education
- RNCS : Revised National Curriculum Statement
- LOLT : Language of Learning and Teaching
- CAPS : Curriculum Assessments and Policy Statement
- FP : Foundation Phase
- HOD : Head of Department

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

South Africa has gone through a major paradigm shift in the post-1994 era. Teachers are experiencing many challenges due to the complexities that are present in schools resulting from this transformation. Many policy documents, such as The South African Schools Act of (1996); White Paper on Education and Training, (1995); and the Education White Paper (2001), mandate all public schools to provide equal educational opportunities for all learners, and to cater for the diverse needs of diverse learners. These mandates pose a number of problems like language barriers, lack of resources and curriculum changes.

Teachers have no option but to embrace the changes that are taking place in all schools because it is a requirement from the department of education (DoE). Although many challenges are presented, teachers have tried to cope with the challenges and adapt in order to deal with the complexities of continuous curriculum changes, language barriers and lack of resources.

A major challenge has been policy documents that require teachers to teach all learners in the home language in grade one and two. This is a difficult task because there is such a rich diversity present in the classrooms. Statistics of Tulip Primary School, the study site, show the presence of at least seven different languages in just one classroom. According to interviews with teachers in this specific school, teachers have to code switch and teach all learners in their home language. South African public schools are faced with language barriers, which have created more challenges for the teacher in the classroom. Research done by Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005) is about the ever changing curriculum and varying contextual factors that has become more heterogeneous in the post 1994 era is relevant to the South African schooling system.

In this study, the researcher sought to explore teacher moving within the two poles of expert and amateur due to the continuous contextual changes that teachers endure. In this dissertation, the notions of expert and amateur are used synonymously to experienced and novice respectively. By expert is meant the acquisition of skills, knowledge, values and abilities to adequately and appropriately respond to the role function of a teacher. It is

assumed that the acquisition of these competencies takes time and experience. An amateur, on the other hand, is a teacher with less than three years of experience and is still learning all the competencies of teaching. An amateur in this study is a novice.

1.2 Rationale for the study

This study was inspired by the researcher's own experiences: "I started my career as an amateur and over the years acquired skills and knowledge to the point that I regarded myself as an expert. Now, once again, I feel like an amateur. Initially I taught in a school where all the learners' home language was English and it was a school where language barriers did not exist. Parents participated in school structures and guided their children's homework.

I currently teach in a school which is multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-racial. The school is not only surrounded by homes of parents but by businesses as well. There is little participation by parents in the life of the school. Learners come from all walks of life and they travel long distances in order to get to school. In this school, where the language of teaching and learning is English, only a 10th of the learners speak English at home. Language barriers are the greatest challenge that teachers are faced with in many of the schools.

These changes have left me feeling like an amateur and I wonder what and how teachers in similar situations experience these changes. Do they have a different conception of their expertise or is this experience peculiar to me? It is unreasonable to expect teacher preparatory programs to produce excellent teachers when the teachers have little to no classroom experience."

1.3 Context of this study

In this section, this researcher provides some basic information and description of the study's context. Tulip Primary School lies on the outskirts of the city of Durban, in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal. The residents who live in close proximity to this school do not send their children here as they opt for many of the independent schools in the area. Thus, Tulip Primary School admits learners who live a distance away from the school. Some learners are transported to school daily via the bus, trains, and mini-bus taxi services that are available as well as via private vehicles, whilst others walk.

Tulip Primary School was once known as Pinewood Primary School. The admission policy excluded all other race groups due to apartheid. Since 1996, the new principal of the school changed the admission policy to include all race groups. Hence, there has been transformation with the learner and staff racial and language composition.

The racial composition of the staff has also changed and now includes three isiZulu speaking educators who have been appointed as permanent staff. The school governing body has also changed; it is now made up primarily of male and female isiZulu parents due to an increasing isiZulu learner population.

There are 621 learners at Tulip Primary School. This comprises of 320 boys and 301 girls. The members of staff consist of 18 members. The school management team consists of 4 males and 1 female. The principal, deputy principal, senior phase head of department, intermediate phase head of department are all male and the foundation phase head of department is female. There are 5 female teachers and 3 male teachers in the intermediate and senior phase departments. There are five female and 1 male teacher in the foundation phase department.

There are seven grades; with two units in each of the grades from one to seven. This is a total of 14 classes. The school does not presently have a grade "R" but are in the process of enrolling learners for grade "R" in 2013. The 621 learners come from many suburbs and townships in and around Durban.

The language of learning and teaching is English. The learners' home languages vary. There are 412 learners who speak isiZulu, 73 learners who speak isiXhosa, 42 who speak Lingala, 2 who speak Afrikaans, 70 who speak English, 3 who speak Siswati, 2 who speak Setswana and 9 who speak Sesotho, 8 learners speak other languages which includes French.

1.4 The focus of the study

The focus of this study was on trained teachers with a substantive number of years of teaching experience who work in an unfamiliar educational context and one teacher who is a novice.

The context was unfamiliar to the teachers who participated in this study because of taking a transfer from another school, relocating from another province or district, or a change within

the context in which they teach. In each case, the context is different to the one in which they previously experienced successful teaching. The conditions that enabled success do not exist anymore, and although teaching is familiar, the context has made it unfamiliar.

The study focused on interviews of expert and novice teachers experiencing difficulties in challenging contexts and concerning teachers who feel despondent, discouraged and suffer from 'burn out' when they cannot cope with the ever changing context. Based on the researcher's own experiences it was noticed that they tend to feel like novice teachers when aspects of teaching or the school context changes. If expert teachers go through these feelings, one could presume that novice teachers share the same feelings. According to Ryan (1986) a novice teacher entering into the teaching profession may have gone through stages that include the fantasy stage, survival stage, mastery stage, and the impact stage.

1.5 Significance of the study

The paradigm shifts related to education and schooling since 1994 has created frustration, confusion and, in the view of some, a drop in the standard of education. The education system is continuously being questioned when the grade twelve results are released each year. Teachers are accused of not producing results. The challenging contexts which teachers are faced with on a daily basis are not taken into consideration. Novice teachers' challenges and inadequacies are researched and discussed on a continuous basis. According to Glickman (1985), it is important to remember that people do not just fall neatly into simple categories of development. The teacher may face complexities within him or herself. He or she may be an unfocused worker when teaching one subject and a professional when teaching another subject.

The purpose of the study was to fathom out teachers' thinking about their expertise. In particular the study explored whether the skills, and knowledge that teachers acquired through many years of teaching, sustained them in the new situation of diversity, and what those experiences were. There was a sense that changing the context resulted in a change of experience and this study intended to delve into the changed experiences of both expert and novice teachers. This study provided insight on how expert teachers also experienced feelings of inadequacies due to the continuous challenges that they encountered. These issues were important in understanding the problems that were experienced by both novice and expert teachers alike.

1.6 Key research questions

This study was underpinned by the following research question:

What are teachers' conceptions of their professional expertise?

This question sought to explore whether the change in context influenced their conceptions of their expertise. From the interviews, the challenges that both expert and novice teachers experienced were gauged. According to Maclellan & Soden (2003) experts, by definition, 'are able to think more effectively about problems'. Bransford, et al, (2000) states that 'by viewing teachers as experts in the promotion of learning, it would be reasonable to expect them to have acquired a large, integrated knowledge base which reflected deep understanding and which allowed the deep retrieval of pertinent information'.

Huberman (1993) defines a novice teacher 'as one with less than 3 years of teaching experience and one whose teaching tends to focus on "survival",' and 'establishing basic classroom routines' (Sherin & Drake, 2000).

The responses that were inherent in their interviews were examined for elements that made them feel either as an expert or a novice in difficult teaching environments. It explored whether novice teachers were the only ones feeling inadequate in the ever changing school contexts or were the expert teachers sharing the similar feelings of inadequacies as well?

1.7 Research design, methodology and paradigm

In order to acquire a better understanding of how context influences teacher's professional expertise, this researcher chose an approach that sought to go in-depth into understanding both expert and novice teachers' experiences in challenging school contexts. In keeping within the genre of qualitative research method, this study made use of interviews and focus group interviews for data production. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), the qualitative method involves the case study method approach which provides a specific perspective of the world.

This study also embraced the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm was aimed at understanding teachers' experiences in a challenging context. It was the most appropriate choice because it supports the belief that reality was constructed by the participants'

experiences. In the interpretive view, the ontological stance is that the world is complicated and dynamic, and was created, interpreted and experienced by people in their relationships with each other (Creswell, 2009)

1.8 Organisation of the dissertation

Chapter one focuses on a brief summary of the research study. It discusses the background, the focus and purpose of the study. The rationale and the context of the study are also outlined.

Chapter two of this study deals with the different theories of categorising teachers which are broken down into different phases of teacher development and how teachers move through the continuum of novice and expert. It also focuses on the stages of development which focuses on the different knowledge's teachers require in order to become more expert in the field. Finally, the study shows expert teachers' contextual challenges in developed and undeveloped countries. The study uses Dreyfus and Dreyfus five stage typology in the theoretical framework to show the different developmental stages of teachers.

Chapter three discusses the research design and methodology of this study. The criteria for the selection of the research participants and a description of the participants are provided. There is also a data collection plan inserted.

Chapter four deals with a detailed analysis of the data gathered from six interviews from expert and novice teachers. There were eight themes that were identified in this chapter, namely; the conceptions of a novice teacher, the conceptions of an expert teacher, novice teachers and school context, expert teachers and school context, novice teachers and change in curriculum, expert teachers and change in curriculum, the role of experience for novice and expert teachers and novice and expert teachers relationships with peers/ leaders and mentors.

In chapter five the findings of the study are discussed through a cross theme analysis. A further seven themes are discussed, namely; conceptions of expert and novice teachers are different, teaching and school context are experienced differently by novice and expert teachers, curriculum change makes teaching challenging for expert and novice teachers, experience is important for expert and novice teachers, every teacher needs a mentor, all teachers are always a novice and the need for flexibility.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the journey undertaken during the study was outlined. A brief background to the study was provided. The researcher's personal motivation and rationale for embarking on this study was described. The context of the study was highlighted and explained a brief history of the school and the area in which the school was located. The focus of the study, significance of the study, key research question, and a brief overview of the research design, methods and paradigm and, finally, an organisation of the dissertation has been included.

The next chapter reviews the literature and the theoretical framework that has informed this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with an overview of the study. This chapter reviews the literature and theoretical framework that are relevant to the study. The focus in this literature deals with teachers' experiences as expert and novice at any given time in their teaching profession and how their teaching context influences this change. One can assume that teachers have been educated and trained to be effective in the classroom and that teachers also gain experience which enables them to deal with difficulties in the classroom. According to Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005) "the problem arises when previously segregated groups come together in classrooms with teachers who feel inadequately prepared to teach students from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CLCC)" (p. 205).

2.2 Theories of categorising teachers

Two theorists are discussed in this section. The first is Ryan (1986), who describes a novice teacher entering into the teaching profession as going through the following phases. These stages include the fantasy stage, survival stage, mastery stage, and the impact stage. The second is Glickman's (1985) development descriptions. I begin with Ryan's stages.

The Fantasy Stage is called the ideal stage. This is a period before a novice teacher goes into the classroom for the first time. The new teacher feels that he or she is going to become an amazing teacher because of various reasons including that they can change the lives and impact on the children's lives, and that every school day will be exciting. The new teacher might say that, "Certainly, teaching will be hard." but, the teacher believes that it will be manageable.

The Survival Stage usually starts sometime during the first day of teaching. The fantasy stage meets the reality of real personalities in the form of a class of 20-40 children all with their own wants, needs, and demands.

Survival stage teachers use practices that they observe other teachers use, irrespective if it is effective or not, simply to survive the day. Teaching becomes a matter of surviving one day at a time. Many survival stage teachers begin to find fault, make excuses; they mock

professional development meetings and never actually develop as a professional, because the survival stage teachers do not put any effort in teaching their students. They will try to convince the teachers around them that it's an impossible task and make fun of teachers who are working hard. Sadly, many teachers stay in this stage.

The Mastery Stage begins when teachers become responsible for their actions in their classroom and feel accountable for their students' learning. The "Master teacher" makes use of effective teaching methods, has high expectations, and works towards advancing professionally at all times. The "Master teacher" finds it easy to ask for help or "How did you do that?" The teacher feels true enjoyment of teaching. The survival teacher feels very intimidated by the "Master teacher" because they have proved that all children can learn, therefore, the survival teacher realises that their excuses are only excuses. The "Master teacher" may not yet be the model teacher, but will soon become the ideal teacher due to the positive and professional attitude that he employs.

The Impact Stage is the ideal teacher, the award winning teacher who makes a difference in the lives of his or her students. Every day is focused on learning effectively, rigorously, and in a constructive manner. The students may enjoy this approach. The impact stage teacher has accomplished the beliefs of the fantasy teacher. The teacher has come full circle and teaching is an everyday joy.

I now turn to Glickman's descriptions. Glickman (1985) identifies that teacher development occurs on a continuum that includes the teacher drop-out, unfocused worker, analytic observer, and the professional. The teacher drop-out is matched with the directive control approach, the unfocused worker is matched with the directive informational approach on presenting leader ideas, the analytic observer is matched with the collaborative approach with emphasis on negotiating, and the professional is best matched with most collaborative and non-directive approaches. According to Glickman (1985), it is important to remember that people do not just fall neatly into simple categories. The teacher may face complexities within him or herself. He or she may be an unfocused worker when teaching subject and a professional when teaching science.

The drop-out teacher would need directive supervision. This would be used when either the teacher is a novice and needs extra guidance, or when the new teacher is experiencing

difficulties and needs supervision and guidance. In some instances, the mentor teacher is considered to be more knowledgeable than the novice or struggling teacher.

When the mentor takes on a direct style of supervision, which means that he/she accepts responsibility for the problem and solution. The role of the mentor is very prescriptive and very active. The mentor is the first to make contact with the novice teacher and controls the focus of all subsequent meetings. The mentor would use such supervisory behaviours as reinforcing, standardizing, and directing.

All mentors would hope that their mentor colleagues are professionally on par with themselves, but there are times when direct messages must be given in order to prevent confusion about what is expected of the faculty member concerning mentorship. Novice teachers who fall into the category requiring directive control supervision are truly struggling teachers and new teachers with no or little experience in teaching. The goal of the mentor is to help the novice teacher move out of this supervision mode into one that places the onus more directly onto the teacher.

The unfocused worker would need the direct informational approach. The mentor is often the mode appropriate for many novice teachers, at least for their first and second year at the school. Once they gain confidence in their teaching, they will most likely become more independent and self-reliant and will need less supervision. The directive informational approach is used to help build novice teachers as they become more confident in developing their teaching styles and strategies. In this case, the mentor maintains his active role in terms of giving direction to the novice and is still responsible for all aspects of mentoring.

The analytic observer will require the collaborative approach. According to Gordon (1990) the collaborative approach involves mutual respect and decision making by the mentor and the teacher. Collaborative supervision is an excellent mode for the majority of non-tenured teachers, especially if they already have some experience teaching and are very strong in their areas of expertise. Likewise, this approach is often used when the mentor and the teacher have roughly the equivalent expertise. The mentor helps the colleague to explore all possible alternatives, yet decisions lie within the responsibility of the teacher, not the mentor.

The mentor helps and guides the teacher, but the ultimate authority and decision rests with the teacher and cannot be over-ruled by the mentor. As Glickman et al. (1998) posited “The purpose of collaboration is to solve problems through a meeting of the minds of equals and,

therefore, true equality is the core of collaboration” (p. 72). The mentor would utilize such supervisory skills as negotiating.

The professional will adhere to the collaborative and non-directive approach. This is the method that is created for the outstanding teacher. In most instances, the mentor develops the teacher sufficiently to ask the correct questions. While both the teachers and the mentor are still considered equals and colleagues, the individual teaching member is considered more of an expert in that particular area than the mentor. In non-directive mentoring, the self-directed teacher often makes contact with the mentor. The mentor may be asked for a non-conventional viewpoint, perspective or a suggestion concerning a specific issue or problem to be solved. The non-directive approach is not necessarily a hands-off approach. The mentor plays an active role, but much of that role is defined by the teacher. The mentor would use such mentoring behaviours as reflecting, encouraging, clarifying, and listening.

From the aforementioned discussion, one can conclude that Ryan discusses a hierarchical movement of teacher expertise whilst Glickman descriptions are about moving towards professional development. Both theorists suggest that professionalism is acquired over time.

2.3 Prerequisite knowledge's for teacher professionalism

This researcher selected this literature to show the different knowledge that a teacher may require in order to be considered an expert teacher and wants to go further to show that no matter how much of an expert a teacher may be, there may come a time in his/her career that he/she may experience feelings of inadequacies due to the changing context or lack of resources. Readings have been chosen from Shuman (1985); Grossman (1990); Knight (2002); Ball, Thames and Phelms (2008); Leinhardt and Smith (1985) and Ball (1999) to show how different knowledge can aid in teacher development towards expert. Every teacher has to be developed on a regular basis in order to equip themselves to be effective in the classroom. Knowledge will be discussed in great detail because it is one of the intangibles that influence teacher professionalism and expertise to a great extent. There are two major divisions that have been identified by Shulman (1986) as necessary for expert teachers; he mentions knowledge of what to teach (content knowledge) and knowledge of how to teach (pedagogical content knowledge - PCK).

2.3.1 Content knowledge of expert teachers

According to Knight (2002, p.231) content knowledge would be the subjects that are taught. Examples of this are English, Maths and Life Skills. Learners find difficulty in reading and understanding due to the difference in home language. Berliner's (2001) reasoning shows that experts are opportunists and flexible, sensitive to task demands and to social situations surrounding them while solving problems.

Experts also represent problems in a qualitatively rich and deep ways, and they are capable of fast and accurate pattern recognition. They are also able to bring rich, personal, sources of information (content) in order to solve problems. Experts are challenged to reinterpret and reorganise their thinking when they experience inconsistencies.

In contrast, novices' reasoning is characterised by rigidity, by their need to adopt a single, homogeneous perspective on a problem. They lack sensitivity on how different contexts call for different kinds of solutions and problem solving strategies.

Grossman (1990) says that there is a fragmentation between professional knowledge and the content of professional education. She says that teachers need to know 'something about their subject matter, educational psychology, teaching methods, and the philosophical and social foundations of education' (p. 4). However, according to her there is little research which alludes to how teachers use this knowledge in classroom practice. Instead of being prescriptive there is a need to be descriptive and explore how teachers plan and make decisions which can lead to effective models of teacher knowledge.

According to Grossman (1990) when research informs teacher education, the relationship has been prescriptive because it focuses on teacher behaviour rather than on teacher knowledge. However, when teacher educators tried to implement these research findings in their programs since it was related to student achievement, they realised that it lacked a theoretical framework. This was due to the fact that it did not take into account the prospective teacher's prior knowledge and beliefs and knowledge of subject matter, students and the general pedagogy teachers need. Although teachers in South Africa are faced with many difficulties, part of the problem of teachers not dealing with context is related to teacher education. Teachers refuse to improve their knowledge because they are not compensated for their studies by the department of education (DoE). This meant that there was an absence of a firm theoretically sound knowledge base for teacher education.

This has led to the modification and expansion of Shulman's (1986) categories of knowledge into four areas which are: subject matter knowledge- changes with curriculum in SA; general pedagogical knowledge – adapt teaching methods to cater for diversity; knowledge of context – the ever changing demographics in South African schools; pedagogical content knowledge– changes according to context.

Palmer (1998) says that expert teachers are able to use curriculum knowledge to their benefit in order to increase teaching and learning in the classroom. They are able to use learners' backgrounds and characteristics and create relevant texts in order to improve understanding and interest. In the courage to teach educator Palmer (1998) identifies four elements, namely; objects of knowledge, experts, amateurs and baffles. He refers to the objects as knowledge, experts are the teachers, amateurs are the students and baffles allow objective knowledge to flow downstream. He speaks about the flow of knowledge from the expert to the amateur through different teaching methods that are used.

A great amount of attention is currently being allocated to the knowledge that is unique to the profession of teaching. According to Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) there has been much discussion and consideration surrounding content and pedagogical knowledge that teachers need, to effectively teach their subject matter.

This study also found that there is no marked difference between prospective teachers and experienced teachers and the learning of more content in and from their practice. In their work, Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) uncover four domains of content knowledge. The first of which is referred to as common content knowledge (CCK). It is defined as the 'subject knowledge and skill used in settings other than teaching' (p.399). This amounts to a teacher knowing the material they teach, being able to distinguish correct from incorrect answers given by their learners and identifying if the right definition is given in textbooks. It also means that a teacher must exercise caution when doing work on the chalkboard.

Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) believe that care must be taken to ensure the teacher writes correctly and has a basic understanding of the concepts taught. However, since this kind of knowledge is not unique to teaching, one refers to it as CCK. The second domain is referred to as specialized content knowledge (SCK). This knowledge covers aspects of effective teaching and learning. It is the 'subject knowledge and skill unique to teaching' (p.400). The third is: knowledge of content and students (KCS).

Other theorists are Becher (1999) and Eraut (2000) who draw attention to other types of teacher knowledge. They speak of explicit knowledge which is the external knowledge that the teacher has, derived from prior experience. This prior knowledge of how to teach is linked to implicit knowledge, which comes from non-formal sources derived from direct instruction and books.

There is also tacit knowledge which is derived from one's own experience or being taught by parents, films, television, faiths and beliefs and through travel. Neither explicit nor tacit knowledge can be of use to teachers in teaching multi-lingual classes because such contexts are new experiences, and are accompanied by problems and difficulties to which one is not accustomed. Experiences of other teachers in similar teaching situations can help to shed some light in the use of helpful teaching strategies that can be implemented in order to improve learning and teaching in the classroom.

2.3.2 Pedagogical content knowledge of expert teachers

Shulman's (1986) theory of teacher knowledge includes general pedagogical knowledge with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter; knowledge of learners and their characteristics and their learning styles; knowledge of educational contexts ranging from workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures – mixed group abilities promotes respect; knowledge of educational ends, purposes, values and their philosophical and historical backgrounds – keeping lessons relevant and interesting will help learners stay focused. This knowledge is vital for both expert and novice teachers teaching in a South African context in order to improve teaching and learning in our diverse classrooms.

Shulman (1986) defines pedagogical content knowledge as:

The most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations- in a word, the most useful ways of representing and formulating the subject that makes it comprehensible to others. It goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching in a diverse context. It refers to the unique nature of the subject matter knowledge required for teaching (p. 9).

This was seen as complementary to general pedagogical and subject matter knowledge. These strategies can become very helpful in a school with language barriers. It would improve understanding and encourage learning.

Learners are able to understand illustrations and diagrams irrespective of what language they speak because pictures will fall under a universal language. Visual learning will benefit the learner with language barriers. This approach will enable teachers to take a piece of text and transform their understanding of it into instruction that their students can comprehend. This would be very useful techniques that could be used in the multi-lingual classrooms in South Africa and other countries with similar problems.

Shulman also makes special reference to the conceptions and misconceptions with which learners come to the classroom as factors that contribute to learning being made easy or difficult. The expert teacher is able to apply the various methods of teaching in order to enhance learning and scholastic growth. Shulman (1986), furthermore, describes curriculum knowledge (content), which is the knowledge of materials and programmes that are the tools of the trade, knowledge of learners, their characteristics and backgrounds.

Grossman (1990) goes on to develop Shulman's pedagogical content knowledge and includes other sources which strengthen teachers' knowledge base.

These sources include; apprenticeship of observation, disciplinary background, professional coursework and learning from experience which provide the opportunity for the development of knowledge for teaching (p. 23).

Learners find difficulty in reading and understanding due to the difference in home language. According to Franke, Carpenter, Levi and Fennema (2001) it is important for foundation phase teachers to have the ability to continually add to their understanding by using their personal and professional knowledge in order to solve pedagogical problems and help to meet the educational needs of the students.

Knowledge of content and teaching (KCT) is an important domain of PCK. This aspect covers knowledge about teaching and knowing about subject. The authors acknowledge that these domains of knowledge elaborate on but do not replace Shulman's (1986) construct of pedagogical content knowledge. They identify KCS and KCT as coinciding with two main dimensions of PCK.

Moving from Ball's (1999) article to Anderson and Kim's (2003) one can see a glimmer of light that might be able to excite others. In their article "A Missing piece in an Elementary School Subject Teacher's Knowledge base" they add a new dimension to teachers' knowledge base. They call this subject pedagogical content knowledge. With reference to Shulman's (1986) theoretical framework on teacher knowledge the author reiterates his ground breaking theory.

What is of interest is the opening line in their article. It is very intriguing and asks: "How do we judge whether an elementary school teacher is good at teaching one subject or any other subject? However, how they acquire knowledge and where is this knowledge acquired from to make them good at teaching certain subjects?"

Anderson and Kim (2003) say in California and several other states, that teacher education is a two part program. The first part being, an undergraduate program which develops the content knowledge base of prospective teachers.

The second part is the post-baccalaureate credential program which develops the prospective teacher's pedagogical knowledge base.

However they believe that an elementary subject teacher most definitely "needs a strong conceptual understanding of subject content and an equally thorough understanding of pedagogical skills and practices. (p.18)

Shulman (1986) contends, however, that in connecting these two there is a missing piece. This is addressed by offering us three types of knowledge required for teaching elementary subjects. These are: content knowledge for teacher candidates, pedagogical content knowledge for teacher candidates and professional knowledge and skills for teacher candidates. Within pedagogical content knowledge is: subject pedagogical content knowledge.

In the South African context, there have been curriculum changes so often that it has become imperative for teachers to further their content knowledge. Anderson and Kim (2003), Ball (2000) say that subject pedagogical knowledge is the knowledge it takes to teach a particular subject concept to pupils so that they understand and make sense of the concept. It is also the ability of the teacher to analyse and understand pupils' background knowledge and beliefs on the topic.

Anderson and Kim (2003), Ball (2000) concur with Grossman (1990) in stating that teachers need to build and scaffold pupils' learning by drawing on pupils' prior knowledge, using this as a base point to help them access new learning especially in diverse classrooms. Those teachers who have subject pedagogical content knowledge are in an advantageous position because they know how to explain and demonstrate different topics, and have an insight into which areas in the subject that will pose a problem. Using this knowledge they are able to choose suitable activities to promote new learning and build on old knowledge. This would contribute greatly to the South African context.

Every learner comes to the classroom with rich diverse prior knowledge and it is important that the teacher knows how to build on what the learner already knows. With reference to Shulman (1986) teachers have the content knowledge as well as pedagogical content knowledge but what they lack is the understanding of how content and pedagogy interact which is the subject pedagogical content knowledge. Having a teacher who uses her subject pedagogical content knowledge is what makes the difference between a successful and unsuccessful student in that subject. Subject pedagogical content knowledge holds much promise of being the missing link of the knowledge base needed to become an effective elementary teacher.

Leinhardt and Smith (1985) generate a number of different models of teacher knowledge and they categorize teacher knowledge into subject matter knowledge and knowledge of lesson structure. There are a number of earlier models of teacher knowledge but to begin with the one that made the most ripples and left huge footprints for the community of researchers was Shulman's (1986) seven categories of teacher knowledge, namely; General pedagogical knowledge, Knowledge of learners and their characteristics, Knowledge of educational contexts, Knowledge of educational ends, Content knowledge, Pedagogical content knowledge, and Curricular knowledge. Shulman (1986) originally presented three categories of subject matter knowledge for teaching. His first category was content knowledge, which refers to "the amount and organization of knowledge per se in the mind of teachers" (p.9). According to Shulman, content knowledge, includes both facts and concepts.

Scholars such as Ball (1999) and Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) believe that Shulman's (1986) theoretical framework of teacher knowledge with special emphasis on pedagogical content knowledge 'lacks definition and empirical foundation, limiting its usefulness' (p. 389). It is for this reason that they have explored the practice-based route for investigating

teacher knowledge bases for teaching elementary subjects. The authors have chosen to observe actual class lessons and identify subject knowledge for teaching. Ball (1999) and Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) differ in their manner of investigation on what knowledge is required for teaching a specific subject. Their theory differs from the other scholars discussed in this study. They depart from the theory of Shulman (1986) Grossman (1990) and other scholars not mentioned.

Ball (1999) together with an esteemed professional mathematician and Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) explore what subject knowledge is needed to teach elementary subjects. This issue is central to both professional education and instructional improvement. They explore what teachers should know by examining practice itself. Ball (1999) does this by analysing and identifying core activities of teaching and in doing so tries to figure out what children know. She examines and works closely with the pupils, how they make their representations of learning, understanding their thought processes and interpreting their reasoning and explanations while engaged in class activities.

While Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) embark on two projects: Subject Teaching and Learning to Teach Project and Learning Subject for Teaching Project in order to understand what knowledge is required for teaching. The first project focused on the work teachers do in teaching subjects and the second developed survey measures of content knowledge for teaching various subjects.

Ball (1999) and Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) say this approach is more like a job analysis and focuses on the actual work teachers do. In using this approach, there is greater opportunity for prospective and practising teachers to develop elementary subjects more effectively.

In an ethnographic study of her own grade three class, Ball (1999) was able to get first hand information on what transpired in the classroom. From the lens of a researcher/ participant her insights into teaching and learning elementary subjects were well founded.

In Ball's (1999) study, there was no conclusive strategy that could be employed to improve student achievement. It is assumed teachers' subject knowledge is weak and shows no effects on student performance. Ball (1999) also states that 'course-taking is not a good proxy for knowledge' (p.21). This lack of understanding troubles policy about professional preparation. Some believe that 'what teachers need to know is what they teach' (Ball, 1999, p.21).

This study also reveals that the 'subject problems teachers confront in their daily work are left unexplored, the occasions that require subject sensitivity and insight un-probed' Ball (1999, p.21). This means that the nature and subject knowledge needed in practice is insufficiently understood.

According to Shulman (1986) we expect the mature physician to understand the full range of treatments available to ameliorate a given disorder, as well as the range of alternatives for particular circumstances of sensitivity, cost, safety or comfort, side effects and interventions. Similarly, we ought to expect that the expert teacher possesses such understandings about the curricular alternatives available for instruction.

However, what did emerge was the need to be able to link content and pedagogy (pedagogical content knowledge). Shulman (1986) called this the missing paradigm, pedagogical content knowledge also includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult; the conceptions and misconceptions that all learners bring to the classroom. It is imperative that the teacher uses representations and innovative teaching strategies to teach content to learners.

These discussions reveal that Shulman's content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are necessary requisites to promote teacher expertise. The continuous curriculum changes that are present in South Africa make it difficult for teachers to master the content knowledge. Berliner believes that context affects teacher expertise as, in her opinion, an expert teacher in one context maybe considered a novice in another context.

2.4 Expert teachers' contextual challenges in developed and undeveloped countries

According to Ball (2009) national and international concern about changing demographics, inequities in the distribution of educational resources and continuing underachievement of students has increased concern for learners attending urban schools. The apartheid era had brought about seclusion and segregation of different races. Democracy encouraged and allowed integration of various races, cultures, languages etc. These processes resulted in creating culturally and linguistically complex classrooms. Low academic achievement, high dropout rates, and low college graduation rates among low income culturally and linguistically diverse students are present in these classes. Teachers in the US and RSA classrooms come to the class under-prepared to teach students that come from rich diverse backgrounds (Ball, 2009).

Ball (2009) goes on to suggest that qualified teachers were not equipped to teaching in culturally and linguistically complex classrooms which was responsible for the change in demographics. Educational resources were distributed unfairly.

Culturally and linguistically complex classrooms caused a disconnection between learners and teachers and between the learners themselves. Students were continuously producing poor results. Most teachers are monolingual and lack confidence in their teaching practice and their inability to interact with students.

Ball (2009) also believes that teachers were not offered professional development courses to prepare them and equip them to teach diverse student populations. It seems as though schooling has not been keeping up with the challenges of real-life situations. The goal and challenge to the education is to prepare learners to live with change for life.

Teachers who are being trained for the profession are not being trained with the eleven official language and the foreign languages that are present in the classroom in order to communicate effectively with the learners. This, therefore, hinders the transfer of content knowledge in the teaching process. The knowledge of educational contexts, such as classrooms, school district, administration, communities, group characteristics and cultures play a pivotal role in how a teacher decides to teach the content to his or her learners.

In defining the expert teacher, Berliner (2001) contends that ‘although inexperience is often equated with a novice status in the field, the acquisition of experience does not automatically qualify for experience;’ Berliner further believes that ‘while one may be considered an expert teacher in one context, s/he might be defined as a novice in another. In this view, cognitive competencies of expert teachers must always be thought of as relative to the context and culture because ‘context affects teaching’ (Berliner, 2001, p. 467).

According to Spaul (2001), in developing countries contextual factors can impact greatly on learner’s results. Lack of resources seems to be a major contributing factor, and Spaul (2011) showed in his study the similarities and differences that existed between the primary school performance in Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa. He compared the grade 6 subject and English results between these countries. He also researched the resources, teacher absenteeism, teacher content knowledge, availability of textbooks, grade repetition, language barriers and the availability of pre-school education and school feeding programmes which cater for child nutrition.

Spaull (2011) showed that ‘there is a large performance differential between urban and rural schools, large population and resource differentials which were taken into account when comparing student performance between the four countries’ (p. 23). This paper focuses on five main areas of consensus which involve students; ‘they should be functionally literate and numerate by the 6th year of Primary Schooling, students cannot learn if their teachers are not present, in school, teaching, teachers cannot teach what they do not know, hungry children have difficulty learning, and textbooks are a fundamental pedagogical tool especially in poorer, text-deprived schools. In Mozambique, grade repetition is a particularly acute problem, with more than one in two students repeating at least one grade in their Primary School. South Africa, in contrast, is plagued with excessive teacher absenteeism, with subject teachers being absent for an entire month in the previous year’ (p. 23-57).

According to Spaull (2011) ‘although Botswana has an extremely successful school feeding program, the vast majority of Botswana students receive no preschool education. South African and Namibian students receive at least one year of preschool education prior to grade one and more Mozambican students have access to their own textbooks as compared to South African students especially when South African per-student spending is 15 times than that of Mozambique’ (Spaull, 2011, p. 54-60).

In the South African education system there are 11 official languages. In South Africa, English is used as the language of commerce, and, in addition to Afrikaans, is the main medium of instruction in the country. Students learn in their mother-tongue for the first three years of primary school(Grades 1 to 3), where after they switch to either English or Afrikaans for the remainder of their schooling career (Grades 4 to 12) (Garrouste, 2011).

In addition to large enrolment differentials between the four countries, there is also a stark difference in available resources in each of the four countries. While both Botswana and South Africa are well resourced countries, only Botswana performs better than all three other countries. It is not clear why South Africa, an equally well resourced country, performs so much worse than Botswana. p23

Devoted men and women in developed states like Harlem, Kentucky and Mississippi made a coordinated effort and created The Harlem Children's Zone which has established a new method to end the cycle of generational poverty. By addressing the needs of the entire community, HCZ isn't simply helping children beat the odds; it's helping to change the odds.

Poor student attitudes and apathy in the classroom is a problem that every teacher faces in schools in Kentucky. However, these obstacles are not insurmountable. There are 4 steps a teacher can take to combat these attitudes which is firstly, the teacher must pique student interest and secondly the teacher should encourage participation in student organizations and thirdly the teacher should understand the background of each individual student and lastly the teacher should always teach in a professional manner.

The Mississippi Adequate Education Program is a promise by legislators to provide teachers and schools the resources necessary to bring students up to the standards required by the accountability system. The accountability program rewards “successful” performance, and the MAEP provides a formula that determines the funding necessary to produce “successful” programs. This law also provides a ceiling on the portion of that funding a local school district is required to provide. There are many schools in America where programmes are put into place in order to improve education.

Ball (2009) says that language and education are interrelated because all teaching is given through the medium of language. Language is considered to be both a precondition for thought and a bearer of thought and, therefore, influences the extent to which a child's intelligence is actualised.

In the South African context, linguistic diversity is a complex issue. It has increasingly become the task and responsibility of educators to develop strategies in an attempt to facilitate quality education for their learners. Language is critical for cognitive development as it provides the concepts for thinking and, therefore, a means for expressing ideas and asking questions (Vygotsky, 1989). In order to achieve an in-depth subject understanding, it has been suggested that effective communication of subject ideas is the key because language forms an integral part of this communication (Thurston, 1995).

Learning and teaching subject in multilingual classrooms where the medium of instruction is not the learners' home language is a complicated matter. Learners have to deal with the new terminology of subject as well as the new language of instruction in which subject is taught (English). Educators, therefore, need to develop effective ways of teaching both the language of subject and the language of teaching and learning (Setati, 1998a). In support of this view it has been stated: "Subject teachers face different kinds of challenges in their bi-/multi-lingual

classrooms from English Language teachers" (Adler, 2001). English language teachers have as their goal fluency and accuracy in English. Subject teachers, however, have a dual task.

They face the challenge of continuously needing to teach both subject and English at the same time (Adler, 2001). In fact, it has been opined that the challenge for many educators is helping learners to move from where they are unable to understand English to where they can communicate subject in English (Setati, 1998b).

Ball (2009) suggests that in the South African context linguistic diversity is a complex issue. It has increasingly become the task and responsibility of educators to develop strategies in an attempt to facilitate quality education for their learners. Monolingual teachers have been shown to allow learners to express their thoughts in their own language when speaking with their peers; however, they require them to use English in reporting back in class (Adler, 1995).

A nation's national curriculum is at the heart of its education system. It is a primary source of support and direction for learning and teaching in the education system, and plays the role of equalizer in terms of educational standards. (Review Committee of the Department of Education – D.O.E, 2009, 11)

South Africa has moved from the era of apartheid to an optimistic era of democracy, but with the change of governance came the implementation of a new curriculum. Curriculum 2005, encompassed a new outcomes based education (OBE) approach, among others, goals were formulated for the education and training sectors. These goals reveal the general political thinking pattern within which the outcomes-based education was made (Bamps, Cronje, Elen & Thoka, 1998, p14).

It is clear from Spaul's discussion that the teachers who experience contextual challenges are mainly found in developing countries. These challenges are also experienced by teachers in South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique and Botswana. Teachers in developed parts of the United States like Harlem, Kentucky and Mississippi also experience contextual challenges. The linguistic diversity that is present in South Africa is not exclusive to developing countries only but is present in developed countries as well due to the influx of immigrants.

2.5 Theoretical framework

Theories are constructed in order to explain, predict and master phenomena (e.g. relationships, events, or behaviour). The theoretical framework of a research study helps to contain or locate the broad understandings of reality that are the scaffolding for the study. It influences the conceptualization of the study, its possibilities and its limits, and also serves as a basis for conducting the research. It helps the researcher see clearly the variables of the study. It can also provide a general framework for data analysis. The study this researcher is going to conduct will help to identify the experiences of teachers moving between the two poles of expert and amateur and how contextual factors influence teachers in the foundation phase.

This study is largely influenced by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) 5 stage typology. Two researchers who were brothers wanted to write software that could acquire skills in the same manner that humans learn and acquire skills. They had to first understand the human acquisition of skills. The Dreyfus model is a construct theory, which is intangible abstractions; it cannot be proven but it can be evaluated in terms of their usefulness.

<p>1. Novice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigid adherence to taught rules or plans • Little situational perception • No discretionary judgement
<p>2. Advanced Beginner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for action based on attributes or aspects. • Situational perception still limited • All attributes and aspects are treated separately and given equal importance
<p>3. Competent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with “crowdedness” • Now sees actions at least partly in terms of longer-term goals • Conscious deliberate planning • Standardised and routinised procedures
<p>4. Proficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sees situations holistically rather than in terms of aspects • Sees what is most important in a situation • Perceives deviations from the normal pattern • Decision-making less laboured • Uses maxims for guidance, whose meaning varies according to the situation
<p>5. Expert</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No longer relies on rules, guidelines or maxims • Intuitive grasp of situations based on deep, tacit understanding • Analytic approaches used only in novel situations or when problems occur • Vision of what is possible

Figure 1: Dreyfus and Dreyfus Five Stage Typology

The Dreyfus model describes how and why our abilities, attitudes, capabilities and perspectives change according to the skill levels. In the 1970's, the Dreyfus brothers began seminal research on how people attain and master skills.

They looked at highly skilled practitioners, including pilots and world-renowned chess players and their research showed that huge changes occur as you move from novice to expert. Your perceptions change on how to approach problem solving and how to acquire new skills.

The 5 stages start with the novice followed by the advanced beginner who identifies each situation in isolation. In this study, the researcher plans to combine these two stages in order to create the amateur. The third stage is the competent person who copes and plans with goals in mind. The proficient is the person who sees the situation holistically and finally the expert who is able to adapt in any situation and solve problems at hand.

2.5.1 Interpreting the Dreyfus and Dreyfus Typology for the study

Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) say that a teacher can have all the necessary skills, knowledge and abilities to teach a specific class, but ask whether this knowledge is sufficient to teach in a multi-lingual, diverse classroom.

A novice has no previous experience in this skill area and, therefore, follows a rigid set of rules and plans and has difficulty transgressing from it. A novice would want to accomplish an immediate goal with no particular intention of learning the skill. The novice is more effective when they are given context-free rules to follow in the form that “whenever X happens do Y.” They do not know how to respond to mistakes and are easily confused when things go wrong.

According to Amin and Ramathan (2009, p. 69-77) ‘the characteristics of the post-apartheid landscape is described as multi-cultural and homogeneity, multi-racialism and mono-racialism, co-education and gender-specificity, class distinctions and class elitism and a range of disparities, inequalities and similarities, and differences between and among the popularities presented. They believe that the transformation and change within and across institutions is now challenged to prepare teachers for such complexities knowing that the novice may not have experienced the full range of diverse school contexts. The non-preparedness of experienced teachers to teach in conditions of adversity has become a

problem.' Schools vary in terms of poverty and wealth distribution, geographic locations, demographics, language, culture, social mores and religious beliefs (Amin, 2008). All stakeholders should come together and contribute to providing an ideal teaching practice programme.

Although teachers are in high demand, the difficulties they face upon entering a new school or changing contexts are so stressful that many struggle in their teaching careers (Gordon & Maxey, 2000). Teachers will require continuous support in order to succeed during their changing contexts (Gold, 1996). In research studies in which teachers were asked about their perceptions of support that helped them to succeed in their initial year or years of teaching, the following commonly cited factors were the one-on-one support, whether formal or informal, from more veteran teachers acting as mentors. Mentorship plays a major role in the support structure of a multi lingual school (Baptiste & Sheerer, 1997; Lasinski, 1992; Oberski, Ford & Higgins, 1999; Quinn, 1991; Wilkinson, 1997).

The group support from other faculty members (Butler, 1992; Detert, Louis, & Schroeder, 2001; Ganser, 1999; Johnson, 2001; Lee, 1994): "Beginners need to have a reasonable chance to succeed" (p. 492).

The new teachers in the study struggled with many of the "environmental" difficulties previously discussed as commonly encountered by many new and experienced teachers, such as overly difficult teaching assignments and disruptive students (Gordon & Maxey, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Wildman et al. (1989) recommended: Although it is common practice to assign new and excess teachers to difficult schools and classes, a close look at the effects of this practice leads one to suggest that it is short sighted and not in the best interests of teacher, students, and school. Moving one to three students from a new teacher to a more experienced professional would have makes a world of difference. Under stress caused by disruptive students, unmotivated classes, or militant parents, the beginner's attention is diverted from teaching and learning to teach, to simple survival (p. 492).

"Beginners need to be understood by those who can influence and support their emerging careers" (p. 492) Wildman et al. were also surprised to find that the research team members were often the only ones to know, in detail, teachers' beliefs, expectations, and other salient thoughts during their first 3 years of teaching. The knowledge we acquired simply from

listening gave us a perspective on their development that would have been extremely helpful to these beginners' colleagues, principals, and to local policy makers (p. 492). Each of these two jobs of new teachers – teaching and learning to teach – is difficult (Wildman et al., 1989). Taken together, they are daunting tasks.

2.5.2 The advanced beginner stage

An advanced beginner would identify each situation in isolation and has very limited situational backing from previous experiences. The advanced beginner is not ready for the holistic understanding. They require necessary information at a rapid rate. They can apply knowledge in the correct context, can break away from fixed rules and they can try tasks on their own but have problems trouble-shooting (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986).

2.5.3 The competent stage

The teacher at this stage copes and plans with long-term goals in mind. A competent person is able to deal with large numbers as well as use standardised and routine procedures. They are able to solve problems that they haven't faced before on their own. They are able to implement advice from experts effectively. Their work is based on deliberate planning and past experiences. However, they may still experience difficulty trying to take on leadership roles. They are recognised as being resourceful and having initiative. Besides having the right materials and sufficient training, a competent teacher should possess certain positive characteristics which cannot be purchased from a teacher supply store. These kind of positive characteristics are already within you and just waiting to be unlocked, developed and honed (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986).

2.5.4 The proficient stage

This person sees the situation holistically rather than in fragments. A proficient person is able to isolate important information in a specific situation and deviate from a normal pattern in order to solve problems. There is a major breakthrough with the proficient practitioner on the Dreyfus model, namely; they can correct previous poor task performance, and they are able to reflect and improve their approach in order to accomplish a better result in the future.

This shows that they are able to self-improve, learn from the experiences of others, has the ability to understand and apply maxims which are proverbial, fundamental truths that can be applied to the situation on hand. Maxims are not recipes; they have to be applied within a

relevant context. In addition to the Dreyfus & Dreyfus approach, Wayne's (2003) eight traits of a good teacher can be seen as elements of the proficient stage and I elaborate further.

Wayne (2003) discusses the eight traits of a good teacher. The first trait of a high-quality teacher is that he or she is a good learner, they are always eager to learn new things, expand their knowledge base, experiment with better ways to achieve success. They are lifelong learners and they produce lifelong learners. So, the first trait is to be unsatisfied with what you know, the best teacher is always a student.

High expectations are the second trait of outstanding teachers. There was once a principal who said having high expectations created failure. The principal did not want to set high goals for fear of parent complaints. In reality, setting high standards brings out the best in students and creates in them a feeling of accomplishment. They become self-reliant, learn to delay gratification, and fit more readily into adulthood where competition is inevitable. High standards are not impossible standards. Setting high expectations may require making the student uncomfortable, much like taking the training wheels off a bicycle.

Honesty, ambition, and confidence are evident in leadership, and teachers with this quality create a classroom environment of trust, service and community (Steele, 2010). The second trait is that good teachers encourage risk taking and accept errors. They are not the centre of the classroom. The students are encouraged to look for help and answers on their own. They are passionate about not teaching, but facilitating learning.

The third trait is that they are promoting their own obsolescence. Just as a fine manager has a team in place that can operate well without him or her, a good teacher creates in a student a sense of self that lasts a lifetime. They promote a deeper understanding of concepts and work habits than just learning the curriculum suggests. They also create independence.

Fourthly, they possess a deep understanding of the subject matter and are able to manipulate, simplify, and individualize this data more easily because they are a master of it. To gain this they are not just hard workers, but have a passion for the subject. They are able to empathize with students who might not like that subject and turn that lack of enthusiasm around by presenting the facts from a different angle. Their bumper sticker reads, "This teacher stops for new ideas."

The fifth trait is that first-class teachers have a good sense of humour. They make jokes and accept jokes. They are not comedians, but they are entertaining. They tell stories, point out silly things, bring joy to difficult situations, and are not afraid of laughter. They use humour to connect to their students. Excellent teachers keep the students' attention without fear. According to McDermott and Rothenberg (2000) students enjoyed teachers with a sense of humour and found those teachers made learning fun.

The sixth trait is to provide quick and accurate assessment of student work. Tests and other projects are evaluated in a timely manner. The student work may not be filled with red marks or gold stars, but it is returned with the understanding of what was right and what could be improved. Without constant evaluation a learning child cannot make the progress of a student who is guided. A helpful teacher does not discourage original thinking, but it must be proven.

At all times, the best educator is looking for the student's reasoning, rather than the answer. For the insightful teacher, student assessment assesses the teacher's performance and provides ideas of what changes both need to make to improve.

The seventh trait refers to the best teachers who use the community as their resource. They see education as more than what is done in the classroom. They belong to civic groups, participate in organizations, and use their contacts to enhance student learning. For example, they bring in guest speakers, seek donations from the community as needs arise, and allow their students to display their work for the citizenry to critique and enjoy. They use technology as an extension of the community and find new resources to make their lessons more attractive.

They use a newspaper and current and relevant events to open a learner's mind to what is happening in the world and at all times they search for a teachable moment (any instance where a learner expresses an interest in something that could be used to stimulate their learning). This includes both negative and positive items and is the main reason lesson plans are never mentioned as a trait of good teaching. Superior teachers abandon them to follow more encouraging leads. This is why educators and education is so misunderstood by those who feel children are cans of soup, all alike and open, ready for knowledge to be poured in and sealed. Excellent teachers encourage student input and use the community to make for more invigorating teaching. A quality instructor is a master of flexibility.

Eight, a good teacher provides multiple methods in order to stimulate learning. They integrate the lessons among several subjects; they use research papers, artwork, poetry and even physical education as part of the learning process. For example, when a child is studying an explorer the teacher shows them how many miles per hour they walk, how to create a graph of the calories they would need, make a map of the trip with legend, write a journal of what they saw, draw pictures of the flora and fauna, and make a presentation of what the student felt was the best and worst part of the discovery. The proficient educator offers learners a diverse array of avenues to pursue excellence. Teachers who persuade students to invest in their own learning are more likely to produce growth and higher student achievement (Farr, 2010).

2.5.5 The expert teacher

Experts are primary sources of knowledge and information in any field. They have a vast body of experience that they can tap into and apply in the right context. According to Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) an expert would be able to be very flexible in any situation and is able to use analytic approaches when problems occur. One will be able to develop a strategy to solve problems. Strategy thinking is the teacher who does not answer a question directly, but leads the students to answer it for themselves. Contextualisation is an important ingredient for being an expert practitioner as a contextualising teacher knows what skills, knowledge and ability to use in any given situation.

The five major dimensions of excellent teachers: expert teachers can identify essential representations of their subject; they are able to guide learning through classroom interactions; monitor learning and provide feedback; attend to affective attributes; and influence student outcomes.

A major attribute of experts is their deep representations about teaching and learning. Experts and experienced teachers do not differ in the amount of knowledge they have about curriculum matters or knowledge about teaching strategies. However, experts do differ in how they organize and use this content knowledge.

Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) go on to discuss experts possess knowledge that is more integrated, in that they combine new subject content knowledge with prior knowledge; can relate current lesson content to other subjects in the curriculum; and make lessons uniquely their own by changing, combining, and adding to them according to their students' needs and

their own goals. Due to these deeper representations, expert teacher's can spontaneously relate what is happening to these deeper sets of principles, they can quickly recognize sequences of events occurring in the classroom which in some way affect the learning and teaching of a topic. The expert teacher can detect and concentrate more on information that has instructional significance.

2.5.6 Distinguishing expert teachers from novice and experienced teachers

The expert teacher would acquire additional information in order to create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning, whereas experienced teachers focus more on directly available data. Experts are more focused on solving problems with respect to individual student's performance in the class, whereas the experienced teachers generally focus their decisions on the entire class.

Experts are more opportunistic and flexible in their teaching. They take advantage of new information, quickly bringing new interpretations and representations of the problem to light (Shulman, 1987). It is this flexibility, and not merely the knowledge/experience of possible scenarios that make the difference.

Experts are more adept at anticipating problems and then improvising. They tend to spend a greater proportion of their solution time trying to understand the problem to be solved as opposed to trying out different solutions. Experts are more likely to monitor their ongoing solution attempts, checking for accuracy, and updating or elaborating problem representations as new constraints emerge (Larkin, 1983; Voss & Post, 1988).

Experts can make better predictions based on their representations about the classroom, they can identify a greater store of algorithms that students might use when solving a particular problem, and, therefore, are able to predict and determine what types of errors students might make. Experts are much more responsive to students. One of this researcher's criticisms of Secondary Schooling in NZ is the degree to which it is powered by curriculum, assessment, time bells, and other bureaucratic controls and not by responsiveness to students.

Experts take more time compared to experienced teachers to build these representations, they understand why students succeed, they are able to reorganize their problem solving in light of ongoing classroom activities, can readily formulate a more extensive range of likely solutions, and are more able to check and test out their hypotheses or strategies. Expert

teachers are entirely context bound, and find it hard to think outside the specifics of their classrooms and students. Generalization is not always their strength.

2.6 Conclusion

Teachers' professional development and experience helps to develop teaching skills but problems are inevitable when mono-lingual and bi-lingual teachers are placed in multi-lingual classrooms. Due to the demographics constantly changing, an influx of foreign learners from surrounding countries has contributed a great deal to multi-lingualism in central city schools.

Lack of resources, laboratories, libraries and technologies has played a major role in the poor literacy results. Although teachers make use of various teaching methods and visual learning the learners tend to struggle with English due to the minimal contact they have with the language. Most of our city centre schools are rich in diversity of culture, language, ethos, values and prior knowledge thus making teaching very challenging.

All foundation phase teachers have at some stage moved from novice to expert and post 1994 at some stage have moved from novice to expert to novice due to challenging circumstances, due to them adapting to difficult contexts which may require different problem solving strategies.

Shulman's (1986), powerful analogies, illustration, explanations and demonstrations seem to be some effective pedagogical content knowledge that can be used in the classroom. General pedagogical knowledge is vital in order for the teacher to use specific strategies to cater for learners' learning styles, cultures, mixed group abilities, historical backgrounds which keep lessons relevant and interesting and which will help learners keep focused. The next chapter discusses the methodology that is used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the literature and the theoretical framework that were relevant to this study. In this chapter, this researcher discusses the research design and methodology that has been used. The study was conducted at Tulip Primary School. The school is situated in a Kwa-Zulu Natal central business district. The school is surrounded by small businesses rather than a community of residences. The school has nineteen educators and 621 learners. Permission to conduct this study was granted by all participants, the department of education (DoE) and management. This researcher chose foundation phase educators in this study because they were relevant to the focus of the study: How teachers move between the expert – amateur poles due to continuous changes. A case study was used to capture the real life experiences of these educators and to promote understanding of complex situations. Furthermore, a qualitative research method was used with two instruments, namely; interviews and focus group interviews which will be discussed later.

3.2 Paradigm and research understanding

In this research, the researcher embraces the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm was aimed at understanding teachers' experiences in a challenging context. It was the most appropriate choice because it supported the belief that reality is constructed by the participants' perceptions. This researcher worked within this paradigm because she was interested in the social construction of meaning. People have free will, purposes, goals, and intentions. Hence, people should be studied as active agents. Here, this paradigm was used to capture the teachers' lived experiences in challenging contexts.

Fostering a dialogue between researchers and participants was critical in this study. It was through this dialectical process that a more informed and sophisticated understanding of the social world was created. All interpretations were based in a particular moment. That is, they were located in a particular context or situation and time. They were opened to re-interpretation and negotiation through conversation. Interpretive approaches rely heavily on naturalistic methods (interviewing and observation and analysis of existing texts). This research was conducted with teachers in a focus group as well which allowed for open interpretation through conversations.

In the interpretive view, the ontological stance is that the world is complicated and dynamic, and is constructed, interpreted and experienced by people in their relationship with each other (Creswell, 2009).

3.3 Methodology of the study

Qualitative research methods are used in this study. These methods attempt to understand the complexities from the viewpoints of the participants, although the researcher and the participants are involved in interpreting the data (Bryman, 1988). It was used to describe the social setting of the participants so that the participants' views are not isolated from their contexts. Semi-structured interviews and focused group interviews were used to capture the participants' thoughts, feelings and behaviours through discussions.

Information was acquired from participants experiencing difficult contexts. These participants were required to answer semi-structured interview questions that were audio recorded so that the responses could be transcribed at a later stage. The questions were formulated as a guide.

This researcher chose to use the qualitative method of research because the aim was to achieve understanding and for an in-depth inquiry. Qualitative data refers to any information that the researcher gathers that is not expressed in numbers (Tesch, 1990, p55). Qualitative data include information such as words, pictures, drawings, paintings, photographs, films, videotapes, music and sound tracks. Here, audiotapes to tape record the interviews were used and were transcribed at a later stage.

Qualitative data analysis involved organizing, accounting for and explaining the data, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situations, and further noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. It was up to the researcher to decide which method of analysis to use according to the issue of fitness of purpose. The researcher transcribed all the interviews and used themes to create understanding of the data; eight themes were used in the data analysis and a further seven themes in the cross theme analysis.

Bryman (1988) discusses some characteristics of qualitative research, namely; the qualitative researcher is very interested in understanding the issues being researched from the perspective of the participants.

The researcher tried to see through the eyes of the participants. The researcher analysed and interpreted the data in association with the participants. The researcher did not merely report the views of the participant because this would have deteriorated into a research report that is anecdotal. Anecdotal reports largely reflect the participants' views with the researcher providing little commentary or in-depth analysis of these views. Here, the data was cleaned up and taken back to the interviewees for approval of the final draft.

According to Cresswell (2009) human behaviour does not occur in a vacuum. It is necessary to provide a comprehensive description and analysis of the environment or social context of the research participants. Contextualism emphasises the various macro- and micro-contexts of the individual and how these contexts dynamically interact with one another. The historical context of the participants may also be important to the researcher. The historical context plays a pivotal role in this study because of the challenging context that influences teachers' professional expertise which was mainly due to the impact that the political shift (apartheid to democracy) had on the education system.

Process research examines interrelated events along a temporal or developmental continuum. It is necessary to understand how prior events played a role in the participants' thoughts or behaviour. In the interviews, questions were asked concerning the past experiences of teachers which proved to be beneficial in the identification of expertise in teaching.

Social events are not static and, therefore, understanding change and process is imperative. It was a study done with foundation phase educators in which interviews and focus group interviews were used as research instruments. The focus group interviews were used to supplement the individual interviews.

3.4 Data collection plan

The study is underpinned by the following critical question:

What are teachers' conceptions of their professional expertise? (This question seeks to explore whether the change in context influences their conceptions of their expertise.)

QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION PLAN
	Question 1
Why is the data being collected?	To record expert and novice teachers experiences in challenging contexts.
WHAT is the research strategy?	Semi structured interviews and focus group interview was subjected to discourse analysis.
WHO (or what) was the sources of the data?	Six foundation phase, expert and novice teachers.
WHERE is the data to be collected?	The teacher was interviewed at a Primary School in Central town.
HOW MANY of the data sources were accessed?	Six teachers were interviewed at this specific school.
HOW OFTEN will data be collected?	The data was collected once in the semi structured interview and once in the focus group interview.
HOW will the data be collected?	Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews which were audio taped and transcribed.
Justify the plan for data collection. (Why is this the best way of collecting data for this Critical question)?	I chose six teachers because it is a manageable number and I was able to obtain sufficient data to understand this phenomenon and provide insight into expert and novice teachers' experiences. It will provide in-depth data. They were semi-structured to allow the researcher to probe initial responses. It will also be ideal number for a focus group discussion.

Figure 2: Data collection plan (From Vithal & Jansen, 2010)

3.5 Researching novice and experts experience: The case study

The case study method has been chosen for this research because, according to Yin (2009, pp.72-3), a case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly rather than presenting readers with abstract theories or principles. Sturman (1999, p.103) argues that 'a distinguishing feature of case studies is that human systems have a wholeness or integrity rather than being a loose connection of traits, necessitating in-depth investigations.'

Case study research excels at bringing one to an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known to previous research.

Case studies emphasize a detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Researchers have used the case study method for many years across a variety of disciplines. Social scientists, in particular, have made wide use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods.

Further, contexts are unique and dynamic, hence, case studies investigate and report the real-life, complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in unique situations. This entire investigation is based on real life experiences in complex teaching contexts.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p.316) suggest that ‘case studies are distinguished less by the methodologies that they employ than by the subjects of their enquiry, where there is frequently a resonance between case studies and interpretive methodologies.’ Hitchcock and Hughes further suggest (p. 322) that ‘the case study approach is particularly valuable when the researcher has little control over events, i.e. behaviours cannot be manipulated or controlled.’ ‘A case study has several hallmarks such as: being concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case; providing a chronological narrative of events that are relevant to the case; highlighting specific events that are relevant to the case; the integral involvement of the researcher in the case study, and, finally, the case study may be linked to the personality of the researcher’ (Verschuren, 2003, p.133). ‘Case studies have the advantage over historical studies of including direct observation and interviews with participants’ (Yin, 2009, p. 11).

They strive to portray ‘what it is like’ to be in a particular situation, to catch the close-up reality and ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of participants’ lived experiences concerning their thoughts and feelings about a specific situation. ‘They involve looking at a case or phenomenon in its real-life context’ (Robson, 2002, p.178). ‘They are descriptive and detailed, with a narrow focus, and combining subjective and objective data’ (Dyer, 1995, pp 48-49). It is important in case studies for events and situations to be allowed to speak for themselves, rather than to be largely interpreted, evaluated or judged by the researcher. One of the benefits of using case studies is that the researcher is able to observe the participants’ reactions and emotions during personal interviews and focus group interviews.

Case study data are gathered systematically and rigorously. Indeed, Nisbet and Watt (1984, p 91) specifically counsel case study researchers to avoid journalism which would include picking out more striking features of the case, thereby distorting the full account in order to emphasize more sensational aspects; selective reporting which would be selecting evidence which will support a particular conclusion only, and as a result misrepresenting the whole case; blandness which is unquestioningly accepting only the respondents' views, or only including those aspects of the case study on which people agree rather than areas on which they might disagree. In this study, the researcher took care not to misrepresent the data by working with the participants every step of the way.

The researcher determines in advance what evidence to gather and which analysis techniques to use with the data to answer the research questions. This author chose to use case study in order to investigate the real-life experiences of teachers moving between two conceptions of teachers: as experts and amateurs, and how contextual factors influence teachers' conception of expertise in the foundation phase.

This specific method allowed the researcher to work with teachers who have experienced difficulties and was able to learn about the different methods they use in order to overcome their difficulties, furthermore, this empirical study gave the opportunity to get first-hand evidence on the real-life experiences of six South African teachers.

Information was used and gathered by means of personal interviews and a focus group interview. The focus group interviews are complimentary and are used to bring more detail to the individual interviews. The respondents were requested to answer in-depth interview questions.

Six participants who were teaching multilingual learners in the foundation phase were interviewed. This researcher interviewed them once, and then proceeded to a focus group interview. They were assured that the information obtained will be treated with confidentiality and their anonymity was guaranteed. The results, it was explained, would be used for research purposes only.

3.6 The research participants

3.6.1 The selection of participants

Six foundation phase educators from Tulip Primary School were selected to participate in the study. The teacher's names are Zak, Nelly, Sandy, Anna, Kelly and Delain (pseudonyms). The teachers have varying years of experience in the teaching field from novice to expert, and comprise one male and five females. These six participants entailed the entire Foundation phase educators at the school.

This specific school was chosen because it was easily accessible, the costs involved were fairly low and it was convenient. Rich data was retrieved from this school because it is situated in a central business district. It is rich in diversity because many students who attend the school are foreigners and come from parts of Africa like Mozambique, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia. These learners come with their own languages and add to the multi-lingual character that is already present at Tulip Primary School. The context of this specific school has its own unique set of challenges that were found to be interesting enough to form the backdrop of the study.

3.6.2 Description of the participants

In this section the researcher provides a brief description of each participant. The description is a necessary aspect of case study work, as cases are exemplified by non-generalisable participation.

The participants

Zak

Zak lives in an elite Indian suburb. He attended the local primary and high schools. Both his parents are in the teaching profession and he decided to follow in their footsteps.

He attained his teaching degree and the first school in which he taught was Tulip Primary School. He now has three years of teaching experience. He teaches underprivileged learners from different backgrounds and intellectual levels. Zak found that the large numbers of learners in small classrooms to be one of the contextual factors that hinder teaching and learning in his classroom.

He found that college did not prepare him for the contextual factors that he faced at Tulip Primary School. For example, he had a class of forty five learners, many of whom could not speak English. He felt that he did not do justice to the learners and as a result most of the learners were condoned to the next grade. He received mentorship from management that helped him. He discovered through teaching experience that the needs of every learner differ and as an educator he had to reflect and adapt accordingly.

Nelly

Nelly was born in a small suburb. She attended Rosewood Primary School and then attended Burnwood Secondary School. She is currently completing her B Ed Honours in Maths and Science. She has fourteen years teaching experience in the junior primary phase. Nelly started teaching in a school called Rosewood Primary. The noteworthy part of her experience is that Nelly went back to her Primary School to start her teaching profession. It was a community based school and predominantly Indian due to the demographics of the area. This particular school had learners from affluent backgrounds. Resources were readily available and in abundant supply. The school was well supplied with equipment like duplicating machines, radios and televisions which were readily available to use in the classroom. The school had their own pool in which coaching was also available. All extra-curricular activities were coached by professional people from the community. The school grounds and hall were sponsored by parents as well. The parents played a major part in their children's education. Extra swimming classes, remedial classes, bible classes and speech and drama classes were given to learners. The huge fundraising events of the school used to be the mini debs ball and the fun walk activities.

As a new educator, the biggest obstacle she endured was the pedagogical content knowledge. She knew her content but she struggled with how to teach the content effectively. She used the trial and error method in order to improve her teaching strategies. She considered this a growing period in her life.

She found it frustrating when certain strategies did not work because her teaching practice was very limited due to her being a newly qualified teacher. Her tenacity allowed her to persevere. One of her major struggles was returning to a Primary School where she was once a learner. She found it difficult to be a professional among her own teachers. She lacked confidence in the presence of her peers.

In the classroom, she uses teacher centred teaching and learning and the teacher and textbook was the sole source of information. Learners were not involved in the lessons. She used this method initially and eventually developed different teaching strategies in order to develop the delivery of her lessons. She taught learners whose home language was English, so initially she got away with talk and chalk and worksheet methods of delivery. Trial and error seems to have worked for Nelly.

Sandy

Sandy was born and raised in a small town. She attended Jasmine Primary School and, thereafter, Dalia High School. She began studying to become a teacher immediately after she matriculated. She attended a teaching college of education. She says that teaching was an easy profession to enter because they received bursaries at that time.

Sandy has her teaching diploma with forty years experience and she taught in a school situated in a farm area and this specific school used a platoon system (the platoon system entailed teachers working morning and afternoon shifts) at that specific time in order to cater for the large numbers that were present in the surrounding areas. This was during the apartheid era when there were very few schools and the existing schools had to cater for the large numbers. These schools were English medium, while Indian schools were managed by the Indian affairs department.

There was no electricity because it was a poor farm school. She was fortunate to have had small numbers in the classroom due to the implementation of the platoon system. She enjoyed teaching although she used to finish at four o' clock. She said that language barriers did not exist and the learners came to school with basic prior knowledge and they were able to follow simple instructions without any trouble. The learners were able to write their names and date without being taught by the foundation phase teacher. They were eager to learn and were happy to be at school.

Anna

Anna was born in Rose Street which is located in a Central Business District. She attended Kingston Primary School and Chelsea Girl's High School. She enjoyed her high school years and regarded it as being the best time in her life and she remembers having the most memorable friendships during that specific time in her life. She initially studied designing at a technikon after she matriculated, but she did not receive any satisfaction from that

experience. Anna endeavoured in her teaching studies in 1998. She studied a Montessori, pre-school course through correspondence. She enjoyed her pre-school course experience immensely and was motivated by family and friends to pursue a degree in education which has empowered her to become a better parent, teacher and mentor. She then completed her B Ed Honours and has been teaching for thirteen years.

She started her teaching career at a Kindles pre Primary School in Chelsea. The school was very well resourced and all the learners were exposed to different kinds of media in lessons taught. These learners came from homes where their parents were well educated and their prior knowledge was rich resulting in them being well spoken and intelligent. The context was very challenging for Anna. She had to be knowledgeable about her context because the learners were very knowledgeable. Anna says she always took the students learning styles into consideration when preparing her lessons.

Kelly

Kelly lived in the North Coast. She attended Vishnu state aided platoon school which worked in two shifts which was morning and afternoon shift. Kelly has a B Ed degree and has twenty-eight years of teaching experience in the junior primary phase. She is currently the head of department in Tulip Primary School. She had been moved to Tulip Primary School due to being in excess of the number of teachers allowed by the department of education in her previous school. She started her teaching career in a rural school in a farm area called Mariegold Primary, where she had the misfortune of being redundant when she first arrived at the school. She was then placed in a Phoenix school called Manchester Primary three weeks later. She arrived at a newly built school that was very beautiful, it was barely a year old. Children came from financially sound backgrounds. It was a large school with large numbers. She was a new teacher with no teaching practice and teaching large numbers was very challenging due to discipline problems.

There were fifty learners per class due to the learners waiting for new schools being built in the area so children could be transferred. Parents were very passionate about their children's education and being a teacher in that specific era was very motivating for teachers. Kelly realized that her qualifications on paper did not prepare her enough for what she had experienced in the classroom. She considers experience the best teacher. As a new teacher, she was fortunate to be part of a mentorship programme at the school. Although learner

discipline was a problem due to large classes, corporal punishment was accepted by the parent community and she relates that corporal punishment took care of discipline problems.

Delain

Delain was born and raised in a very close-knit community. She attended Trinity Primary School and then went on to Judah Secondary School. She did not study after she completed her secondary schooling because she came from a large family and lack of finances did pose a problem. She started her teaching profession long after she was married. It was her dream to become a teacher. She initially did her diploma in teaching went on to do her advanced certificate in education (ACE). She currently has her Honours in teaching and learning.

Delain started teaching in 2000. She started teaching in Thousand Hills Primary School in KwaZulu Natal. The school was an English medium school. Ninety nine percent of the learners' home language was English so as a result language barriers did not exist in the classroom. She did have learners who had learning difficulties but nothing with which the parents would not help the learners. Parents were very involved with their children's learning processes. It was a community based school which meant that the school was surrounded by a community of residences. Learners lived within walking distance from the school. Parents would be called into school immediately to address learners' behavioural problems and other discipline issues as well as poor performance. Parents would ensure homework was done by signing homework books on a daily basis.

Delain states that she was not a very confident teacher at the beginning of her career, but each day was a growing experience. She tried to implement new teaching strategies as she went along each day.

She depended on her maternal instincts to keep her going, Delain found that trying to be a mother to the learners made them feel safe and made her more protective over her learners. She initially taught grade R and she put herself in the situation of the mothers by creating a safe, loving environment for her learners, which made the learners want to be at school.

The learners were very intelligent and many of the learners came from educated backgrounds. She states that the parents were lecturers, engineers, lawyers, policeman, and nurses, and their children came to school with rich prior knowledge. She had to teach them more than they already knew. She tried to make the class discussions very interesting and hands on. She also

had learners who were average but she could not run the risk of the bright learners becoming bored, so she always had to have expanded opportunities available for the brighter learners.

She realised through her teaching that each child was different, and that they were unique in their styles of learning. She had a variety of learning styles that were present in her classroom including a few learners who had learning problems due to problems at home. She learnt that there are different types of parents and the different things that they wanted for their child. She had to adapt her teaching methods to cater for all the learners' needs.

She stated that she was a very caring, sensitive person who showed in her character as a teacher. She used her practical knowledge and interesting ways to teach this knowledge but she lacked confidence because she didn't know if she was being effective enough in the classroom. Delain said that she did her best in her teaching and found that she helped learners with different learning styles by getting them involved in the learning processes.

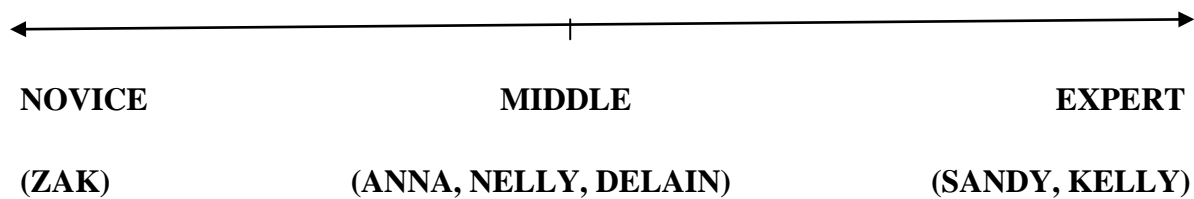


Figure 3: Where teachers fall on the continuum

3.7 Producing data in context

3.7.1 The purpose of interviews

The purpose of interviews in this study is to collect data. As a distinctive research technique, the interview serves a few purposes. Firstly, it was used to gather information which has a direct bearing on the research objectives. As Tuckman (1972) describes it: “By providing access to what is ‘inside a person’s head’, making it possible to measure what the person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).”

The research interview has been defined as a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focussed by the researcher on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation (Cannell & Kahn, 1968). It is an unusual method in that it involves a gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals.

The researcher here chose to use interviews as a method in the qualitative research because it is a data gathering tool that has a distinctive research technique used to gather information. Interviews are an alternative to questionnaires. The face to face conversational method used as an instrument for data collection makes the process personal.

Kvale (1996, p.14) remarks that interviews involve the sharing of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest and at the centre of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situation of collecting research data. Personal interviews also provide a good response rate, and in this instance it is an easy way to persuade individuals to participate in the research.

The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say concerning their teaching experiences in the foundation phase (Kvale, 1996). A qualitative research interview seeks to cover both a factual and a meaning level, though it is usually more difficult to interview on a meaning level (Kvale, 1996).

The interviews were useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. In-depth information around the topic which was aimed at revealing how the teachers in this study moved along the expert-amateur continuum was pursued. It may be found that the physical presence of the interviewer had a positive effect on the accuracy of the data that was obtained.

Interviews in this study deemed very useful as a follow-up to certain respondents compared to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses through follow-up questions. An interview is not an ordinary, everyday conversation (Dyer, 1995, pp.56-8), it has a specific purpose, it is question based, and questions are asked by the interviewer. It was used to test the hypothesis or to suggest new ones. It also helped to identify variables and relationships like mentorship relations between the novice teacher and expert teachers. It could also be used to follow up unexpected results (Kerlinger, 1970), or validate other methods. Interviews are known to attain a higher response rate than questionnaires.

Here, semi-structured interviews were used instead of a structured or focused semi-structured interview. Structured interviews are formalised with a limited set of questions whilst semi-structured interviews are more flexible and allow the researcher to ask new questions during the interview according to what the interviewees reported.

This researcher also made use of an ‘interview guide’ which had specific questions which allowed her to gain information from the teachers about their experiences as expert and novice in the foundation phase. A focused semi-structured interview approach was effective in collecting data. Unlike telephone interviews, a personal semi-structured interview allows one to probe and ask follow-up questions.

3.7.2 Purpose of focus group interviews

Focus group interviews used group interaction to generate data. They were used to increase understanding about how these participants feel or think about certain issues. The group was viewed as a collective rather than as an individual. They participated, shared perceptions, points of views, experiences and concerns about how context influenced their teaching expertise. The interview was planned so that the discussion took place in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Kruger, 1988, p.18).

The reasons for using focus groups (Morgan, 1997, p. 2) are that ‘they are a self-contained method which serves as a supplementary source of data. This facilitates a relaxed environment for the participants to feel free to share their experiences.’

According to Kingry, Tiedje and Friedman (1990) all participants must be made to feel that their contributions are worthwhile and that they are free to disagree with each other at any time. The facilitator must be attentive and willing to listen, show an interest in what is being said, encourage a wide range of opinions, assist participants to explore their ideas further, avoid belittling participants, and tactfully redirect the conversation when people become repetitive or stray from the topic (Kingry et al., 1990; Kitzinger, 1995).

The participants’ were asked for permission to tape-record the focus group interviews which were then transcribed accurately at a later stage. Notes were taken on the reaction of the participants concerning their views.

The focus group interviews allowed for exploration and discovery. It produced concentrated and precise amounts of data on the topic of interest. The comparisons the participants made between one another’s experiences and opinions were a valuable source of insight into their behaviours and motivation.

According to Kingry et al. (1990) the disadvantages of focus groups are that they require skilled group facilitators, generalisation to a population is not possible given the small sample size, the facilitator may be biased in directing the discussion and the participants may be unwilling to disclose all their thoughts on the topic.

The researcher addressed the above issues by creating a very relaxed environment that was without fear and criticism. The participants were encouraged to express themselves freely and honestly. The participants were also part of the transcribing process which ensured that the research was not bias in anyway and that the information was accurate. The transcripts and interpretations were made available to all the participants. The final report was available to management and all participants.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Whatever the specific nature of their work, the researcher must take into account the effects of the research on participants, and act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings and this was the researchers' responsibility to participants. Ethics has been defined as: 'a matter principled sensitivity to the rights of others' and that 'while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better' (Cavan, 1977, p. 810). Respect was always shown to all participants and their well being was always placed first.

Ethics also feature in discussions of 'ownership of the data, and when the ownership passes from the participants to the researcher, and with what constraints, requirements, conditions and powers over the use and dissemination of the findings placed upon the data by the participants' (Howe & Moses, 1999, p. 43). Researchers need to be clear if they own the data, once the data have been given, or whether the participants have control over what is released, and to whom; this should be agreed, where possible, before the research commences. Oliver (2003, p. 63) argues that 'the raw data are still the property of the participants, but once the data have been analysed and interpreted, they become the property of the researcher.'

This is unclear, however, as it does not cover, for example, observational data, field notes and such like, which are written by the researcher though often about other people. The participants agreed and allowed this researcher to use the data that was generated from the interviews in this research.

According to Oliver (2003) ‘Negotiating ownership rights, rights to release or withdraw data, rights to control access to data, rights to verify and validate data, rights to vet data or see interim or complete or uncompleted reports, rights to select data and decide on their representativeness, rights to own or change the final report, rights to retain data after the research (e.g. for other purposes, as in the ongoing compilation of a longitudinal or comparative study), move the conduct of research beyond being a mechanical exercise to being an ethical exercise’ (pp. 63-5). These participants were made aware of their rights to withdraw from the research at any point and they could ask for their data not to be used at any given time of the study.

According to Cohen and Manion (2011, p. 542) ‘given that qualitative data analysis frequently concerns individual cases and unique instances, and may involve personal and sensitive matters, it raises the question of identifiable, confidentiality and privacy of individuals. Whilst numerical data can be aggregated so that individuals are not traceable, this may not be the case in qualitative data analysis, even if the participants are not named or are given pseudonyms which has been done in this study.’

Robson (1993, p. 33) discusses ten questionable practices in social research which are of utmost importance. ‘One should not involve people without their knowledge or consent. They should not be coerced into participating. One should not withhold information about the true nature of the research. Researchers should not deceive participants or induce them to commit acts diminishing their self-esteem.’ Here, all the participants who were involved in this study gave the researcher a written consent form and the true purpose of this study was made known to all participants from the very outset.

3.8.1 Ensuring the privacy of the participants

For the most part, individual ‘right to privacy’ is usually contrasted with public ‘right to know’ (Pring, 1984) and this has been defined in the Ethical Guideline for the Institutional Review Committee for Research with Human Subjects as that which should extend to all information relating to a person’s physical or mental condition, personal circumstances and social relationships which is not already in the public domain. These guidelines has given the individual or group the right to decide for themselves when and where, under what circumstances and to what extent their personal attitudes, opinions, habits, eccentricities, doubts and fears are to be communicated or withheld from others. This study did not pose any danger to the participants’ physical or mental condition in anyway, and participants were

assured that pseudonyms would be used to protect their identities. In this study, the researcher sought full consent to use the data that was generated in this study.

3.8.2 Ensuring the participant is not betrayed in anyway

The term ‘betrayal’ is usually applied to those occasions where data is disclosed in confidence and are revealed publicly in such a way as to cause embarrassment, anxiety or perhaps suffering to that subject or participant disclosing the information. It is a breach of trust, in contrast to confidentiality, and it is often a consequence of selfish motives of either a personal or professional nature.

As Plummer (1983) comments: ‘In sociology, there is something slightly awry when a sociologist can enter a group or a person’s life for a lengthy period, learn their most closely guarded secrets, and then expose all in a critical light to the public.’ All the investigations here were done in confidence and with the full consent of the participants. (Concerning the use of pseudonyms and how background details of participants were changed to prevent identifying individuals.)

3.8.3 Ensuring the participant is not deceived in any way

The use of deception in social psychological and sociological research has attracted a certain amount of adverse publicity. Deception may have occurred if the researcher did not tell the participants that they are being researched (in some people’s eyes this is tantamount to spying), by withholding information from the participants, by telling lies or compromising the truth. It may also occur if the participants are used in a degrading or dehumanizing way (e.g. as a rat in an experiment). The researcher ensured that the participants were not deceived in any way during this study.

In social psychological research, the researcher should not knowingly conceal the true purpose and conditions of the research, or else positively misinforms the subjects, or exposes them to unduly painful, stressful or embarrassing experiences, without the subjects having knowledge of what is going on. The deception occurs in not telling the whole truth. Participants in this study were made aware of the study, its intentions and how the data was used. At no time were the participants deceived about the study. The participants in this study were not exposed to any embarrassing experiences, stress or pain at any time in the investigation.

3.9 Validity and reliability

Validity is an important requirement for effective data analysis for both qualitative and quantitative research. 'Validity demonstrates whether a particular instrument measures what it is intended to measure' (Winter, 2000, p.1). In qualitative data, validity might be addressed through honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the objectivity of the researcher (Winter, 2000). Triangulation can provide valid evidence when there are various data sources, several investigators, and various methods (Patton, 1990).

According to Mishler (1990, p. 419) validation is the 'degree to which one can rely on the concepts, methods, and inferences of a study, or tradition of inquiry, as the basis for our theorizing and empirical research.' Validity needs to be considered in qualitative research, but here it is more difficult to address validity concerns than it is in quantitative research. There are various ways of confirming or validating qualitative data and some of these were discussed.

According to (Maxwell, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990; Winter, 2000) descriptive validity refers to whether the information that was provided was accurate and comprehensive or whether any information has been partly omitted or distorted. Acquiring the assistance of the participants or other researchers in examining the accuracy of the data can improve the descriptive validity of the data. If researchers disagree on the interpretation of the data then, agreement on the interpretation was sought.

Interpretative validity was indicative of whether the participants' meaning or perspectives e.g. of the events and behaviours are accurately reported. Emphasis was placed on the perspectives and language, of the participants rather than on the interpretations and terminology of the researcher. Eliciting comment from participants on the findings was important in maximising the interpretative validity of the findings. Here, this researcher thought it would be important to discuss the interpretations of the data with the participants in terms of the concepts used and the theory developed from the data.

The researcher was part of the research world and was able to catch meaning and intention which was an essential part of the data collection plan. This study uses three forms of data collection instruments to ensure triangulation, namely; the use of semi structured interviews, observations and focus group interviews.

Validity, also referred to as trustworthiness or credibility, is also considered in qualitative research. Listed below are five basic measures that helped this study to a great extent to avoid common pitfalls and increase the trustworthiness of my qualitative data. The researcher used these to describe how the study was designed, data collected, and conclusions generated so that the findings are much more likely to be taken seriously. Although there are no widely accepted ways for testing validity in qualitative research there were ways of confirming or validating qualitative data.

Theoretical validity refers to whether there is common agreement between the researchers and the participants about the concepts or theory used to refer to the phenomena that have been described. As Maxwell (1992, p 292) states: ‘theoretical validity.... is concerned with problems that do not disappear with agreement on the “facts” of the situation, the issue is the legitimacy of the application of a given concept or theory to establish facts....’ It was important for the researcher to discuss the interpretations of the data with the participants in terms of the concepts used and the theory developed from the data which was done by the researcher in this study.

On the other hand, Winter (2000) contended whether findings are only useful if the participants concur with them. It is possible that the participants could have a vested interest in providing certain viewpoints e.g. obtaining information from people who stand to benefit from donations. In this case, one should not accept alterations on the interpretations blindly.

Reliability refers to the consistency or stability of any experimental effect. The most common technique for establishing reliability is by replication; if the same experimental design leads to the same results on subsequent occasions and using different samples then the experiment is said to be reliable which is commonly established by other researchers comparing interview data, observational data, psychometric tests and single case experimentation.

3.10 The limitations of the research findings

This study has limited value as it refers to the conceptions of six teachers in one school. As a case study, it enlightens by providing glimpses of conceptions that may be more prevalent in studies with larger groups of participants. Hence, all the findings and claims made in this study should be seen as emergent and will need a large-scale intervention to test the findings.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided discussions on the research design and explained the suitability of the qualitative research approach used in this study. An explanation of the methodological strategy outlined the data collection and data analysis procedures. The focus of the next chapter will discuss the emergent themes obtained from the individual interviews and focus group discussions.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter this researcher discussed the research design and methodology of this investigation. This chapter deals with a detailed analysis of the data gathered from teachers who teach in very challenging contexts. The data deals with novice teachers and expert teachers' experiences in different teaching contexts and their conceptions of novice and expert teachers. The critical question 'What are teachers' conceptions of their professional expertise?' is explored to fathom whether the changes in context influence teachers' professional expertise.

This chapter is organised in themes according to the data that was collected from the individual interviews. Here, data from the focus group interviews was also used to supplement the data from the individual interviews. There are eight themes that were focused on in this chapter, namely; the conceptions of a novice teacher, the conceptions of an expert teacher, novice teachers and school context, expert teachers and school context, novice teachers and change in curriculum, expert teachers and change in curriculum, the role of experience for novice and expert teachers and novice and expert teachers relationships with peers / leaders and mentors. Each will be discussed in the sections that follow.

4.2 Theme 1 - Conception of novice teachers

From the data, this researcher found six conceptions of novice teachers. The first conception of novice teachers relates to their experience:

They do not have a lot of teaching experience. Some of them went into schools to do their practical lessons. A novice can find themselves in contextually challenging schools and they may encounter difficult situations like if they are put in a school like ours, they will, I think, have a difficult experience, but they will have to adjust slowly.
(Sandy-I)

Sandy started teaching forty years ago and during that era the teachers were placed in schools where there were no language barriers and the context was not complicated because they were familiar with the area, the families who lived there and the social and cultural practices of the community they served. Her opinion is that novice teachers have no idea how to deal

with the complexities that they are presented within their schools. She thinks that novice teachers' experiences are limited to the practical lessons that they had to do during their teacher training years. She feels, however, that the context is not the same as the school that they ended up teaching in. The context becomes very challenging when a novice is left alone to deal with all the problems that are present.

The second conception of novice teachers is very similar to the first conception which is a lack of experience even though the novice teacher is qualified to teach:

I would say a novice is a teacher who has a teaching degree but does not have the teaching experience and is new and would have to put theory into the classroom situation. (Kelly-I)

Kelly is an experienced teacher who has taught for many years. She is the head of a department and mentors the new teachers who come straight from college and are placed in the school. She is aware that there are times when teachers struggle with teaching strategies because they are new to the profession. She says that novice teachers, initially depend on and use theory in the classroom because they lack experience. They lack, in her opinion, insight in adapting theory to the context in which they have to teach.

The third conception relates to not knowing how to deal with learners:

A novice teacher for me would be me, because you are walking into your class with your bag fully packed with pens, pencils and the daily programme. You go into the office smiling, collect your paper work and walk into the classroom. Then reality hits you, you shocked and don't know how to deal with forty five learners. As a novice you are trying to calm the learners when each one is doing their own thing and misbehaving, as a novice teacher you don't know where to turn to. You seek advice from your peers but sometimes they cannot be helpful and it can be difficult. (Zak-I)

Zak, a teacher who has three years of teaching experience believes that novices feel uncomfortable and do not know what to do when they find themselves in a challenging situation. He has experience in feeling this way because he has only been a teacher for a short while and he can identify with these feelings on a personal level as he is currently a novice teacher. He speaks about the confidence he had on the first day of teaching until he walked into the class and was faced with forty-five learners. He had a bad experience when he walked into his classroom and the learners refused to listen to anything he said because he

was a new teacher. It is only through the support and guidance offered by his mentor at the school that he was able to cope.

The fourth conception relates to lack of confidence:

She lacks confidence and is afraid in her approach. She is cautious in what and how she teaches and she would be more rigid because she wants to stick to what she knows. (Anna-I)

Anna who has been teaching in contextually challenged schools for the past fourteen years assumes that a novice teacher lacks confidence and is inflexible. Anna's initial teaching experience was very challenging because she taught learners who came from educated backgrounds. The learners came to school with rich, prior knowledge so as a result she had to adapt to teaching well-informed children and she related her fears about not knowing enough and of being wrong. Due to her own experiences and challenges in her early career, Anna believes that all novice teachers go through similar experiences.

The fifth conception relates to novice teachers feelings of inadequacy when compared to teachers who are more experienced, as reported by Anna and Delain who shared this conception:

The teacher would find problems to maintain discipline in a contextually challenged classroom. He or she may lack confidence and might be afraid to make mistakes. They would probably feel safer to stick to the textbook and try not to transgress too much. They would be cautious and get to know the learners abilities. They feel inadequate compared to teachers who have more experience. (Delain-I)

Delain says that a novice is still a learner and is afraid to make mistakes because a novice feels safe to follow a rigid set of rules in order to cope in the beginning. The novice teacher does not feel comfortable to digress from a set pattern. A novice feels safe with the known zone which would be theoretical and text book information.

In her opinion, they find it problematic to deal with disruptions and continuous talking during teaching because they lose focus on delivering the content. The result of this approach is that learners tend to start talking because they struggle to understanding the content due to language barriers and they are easily distracted.

The sixth conception is that a novice relates to someone who is still learning:

Not someone that doesn't know anything but someone who is still learning and someone who is still developing skills how to teach what works what doesn't work, how to deal with children how to deal with different people. (Nelly-I)

Nelly says that a novice is learning through experience about what strategies work and what does not. She is continuing her studies and is always trying to learn new strategies and methods in order to improve the teaching and learning in the classroom. She believes that everyday a novice learns through their experiences in the classroom and as they implement problem solving strategies to the various situations they will discover what works and what does not.

4.3 Theme 2: Conceptions of expert teachers

There are also six conceptions of expert teachers as revealed in the data. The first conception relates to always being in the classroom so that learning takes place all the time.

They are in the classrooms ready to do their work and they can correlate the subject so it is not compartmentalised and the children are learning every minute of the day in the class. (Sandy-I)

Sandy believes that an expert teacher is hardworking, competent and effective in the classroom. Sandy states that an expert is always in the classroom. She mentioned in her interview that she had experience of witnessing novice teachers being habitually absent from the classroom.

Sandy states that an expert teacher will not teach any subject in isolation but integrate and correlate content to create understanding in the classroom. She speaks about continuous learning which means that the classroom has to be conducive to learning and be very stimulating for all learners.

The second conception relates to the expert knowing how to handle situations:

He's calm, mellow and he knows how to handle situations, he is very just and a fair person and he can adapt himself accordingly to suit the needs of the children rather than his own needs in my opinion. (Zak-I)

Zak believes that an expert teacher is “calm, mellow and knows how to handle situations.” He speaks about an emotionally controlled teacher who is in charge of any situation that may

present itself and goes on to say that the teacher is fair to all learners and is able to adapt and change his teaching methods in order to cater for the learners learning styles and needs. Zak struggles with being emotionally controlled especially when he has to deal with discipline problems. He finds that experienced teachers are not emotional about discipline problems that may arise; they solve problems at hand in a very rational and fair way, and take the learners backgrounds into consideration.

The third conception relates to willingness to learn from others:

A teacher who is willing to learn from others and is opened to criticism, a teacher who accepts the changes that are happening and is very flexible in her methods, one who is always willing to learn and is more mature in her thinking and in her approach to her field. (Anna-I)

Anna says that an expert is always a willing learner, embraces change and is flexible in her teaching methods. She is competent and effective in the classroom and outside the classroom. They are always helping with school activities and extra-curricular activities. She is not afraid to ask for help and is always looking to improve their teaching strategies.

The fourth conception relates to being able to empathise with the child's situation:

It is difficult, but I think an expert teacher would be able to empathise with the child's situation, should put him or herself in the child's position and is able to bring up the child to a good standard. I think an expert teacher should have these qualities and a passion for teaching. (Kelly-I)

Kelly deals with children that come from different backgrounds and difficulties. Learners experience many challenges in school, and at home. Teachers, she feels, need to take all aspects of the child into consideration and empathise with his/her situation. When a child is being taught all aspects, for example, emotional, social, intellectual, and cultural, of the child must be taken into consideration in order for the teacher to assess appropriately.

The fifth conception is about teachers relating to lots of children and diversity in the classroom:

An expert teacher is diverse, is able to relate to lots of children and diversity in the classroom. She uses a lot of resources, uses the latest technology. She can communicate well and be able to get children to communicate. She can code switch and understands that the curriculum is going to continually be reviewed, it's not static, that is why we

had department doing this all along its going to have to change to cater for the new type of children that we are going to be teaching. (Nelly-I)

Nelly states that she is very versatile and willing to take on a challenge in her career. She believes that an expert teacher should empathise with children who come from diversity which involves lack of resources, use of technology, different languages and working with continuous curriculum changes. Teachers, in her opinion, need to consider learners whose home language is different from the language of teaching and learning and teachers. She reported enjoying change and always feeling a sense of accomplishment when she overcame any challenge or difficulty that could have presented itself at any given time.

The sixth conception deals with using self-correcting methods:

She uses self-correcting methods to improve her own teaching techniques. (Delain-I)

Delain comes across as a forward thinker, looking for progress and improvement for both the learner and the teacher. She is always aware of new teaching techniques and she is never afraid to admit that she learnt something new. When a specific teaching strategy is not working she is willing to change it in order to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. This ability to correct one's self, she believes, is a characteristic of the expert teacher.

4.4 Theme 3: Novice teachers and school context

There are multiple opinions concerning school context and novice teachers. For example, the first teacher discusses the culture shock that novice teachers experience:

The novice teachers who come to schools like ours get a shock at the beginning. It's a culture shock and I think they take a long time to adapt there's a lot of changes from what they learnt at college, which is an ideal situation, this is not, with large numbers. That's a discipline problem and it's very difficult to teach if you can't maintain discipline. (Sandy-I)

Sandy discusses the contributing factors to the culture shock, the language barriers, the continuous curriculum changes, lack of resources, discipline problems that also rear its head due to language barriers. These are some of the contextual factors that bring challenges to the teaching and learning process. She apportions blame to higher education institutions, which in her opinion; do not prepare new teachers adequately for the complexities they have to face in schools.

The second teacher says that the better the context the better the novice educator will become:

It will have a positive effect on them because your context cannot get worse it can only get better, so the better the context the better the educator. (Zak-I)

Zak indicates that the situation cannot get worse than it already is; once a novice is in the situation all he or she has to do is get into it and get to grips with what they have to deal with and adapt accordingly. This means that once teachers are in a school, they know what the challenges are and that they, as teachers, can make it better by becoming better teachers.

However, school contexts vary and so do opinions. The third participant interviewed said that novice teachers will realize that different contexts need different approaches:

A novice teacher will find it difficult to adapt to different contexts. You will realise different contexts need a different approach so maybe the teacher will be more flexible and open minded; on the other hand, the teacher might get afraid and feel that she can't handle it and maybe afraid to ask for assistance so it just depends on a person personally I think. (Anna-I)

Novice teachers, according to Anna, must have a plan of action on how to approach each situation. The approach, however, depends on individual choice. Some will respond flexibly, while others may be fearful and unable to act. Novice teachers, she believes, will find it more difficult to adapt to change.

The fourth teacher says that it depends on how novice teachers see themselves and fit into that context:

It will be hard for some of them because it depends on the individual and how they see themselves and fits into that context but then each novice teacher has to make it happen for him or herself. (Kelly-I)

Kelly says that it is up to the individual teacher to be self motivated and to want to overcome the contextual issues at hand in a school. The novice teacher has to adapt to the context and not reject it by complaining about it because then it becomes more stressful.

The teacher has to learn how to deal with the ever changing contextual problems and work a way around solving it. Working in a context means, from this perspective, that adaptation and success are personally driven and achieved.

The fifth teacher says that it must be a language barrier that has a detrimental effect on a novice teacher's performance:

Sometimes it has a detrimental effect because being a novice person, it could be a language barrier for example I came from a school that was predominantly English speaking and I came to here where I have at least seven languages spoken in the classroom, the home language is IsiZulu, the second language for grade one, two, and three is IsiZulu. But the children communicate at the playground and other places in English. The Grade four to seven do English. I can communicate in the English language but I cannot code switch, so that's a huge learning barrier and language barrier for me. I found that you got to adapt yourself to peer teaching, and different teaching strategies to make your teaching work for you. If a teacher is placed in a different context again it depends on your ability as a teacher or as a novice to want to change. (Nelly-I)

Nelly said that her school is very diverse due to all the refugees that attend the school and a novice teacher will have to deal with such complexities. According to this teacher, although there are many schools in the central Durban area which are contextually challenged, she believes that the rich diversity that is present in her school is due to the influx of refugees whom they never turn away. For example, there are more than seven languages spoken in the class she teaches. Most of the learners have very little contact time with the language of teaching and learning which is English. They only get to speak English in class during contact time. During their lunch breaks and in their homes they go back to speaking their home language. They tend to forget the language over long holidays, which have a detrimental effect on assessments and teachers tend to get frustrated. Dealing with challenges posed by the language of instruction, which differs from the children's languages of communication is one of the challenges for novice teachers in a school context.

The sixth teacher said novice teachers have difficulty in adapting to language barriers:

A novice teacher has difficulty adapting to context and one major contextual factor is language barriers that has the greatest impact on most educators, it doesn't matter if you are novice or expert. The presence of language barriers in the classroom has become a continuous struggle for many educators especially in the city centre schools. (Delain-I)

Delain says that the problem with language barriers tends to present a huge problem for teachers and both novice and expert teachers are affected by this contextual factor. City centre schools tend to draw most of the refugee learners which adds to the different language speaking learners that are present in the school. The learners who do not understand the language of teaching and learning which is English tend to get restless and bored which gives rise to talking and disruptions. Teachers, be they novice or expert, find it difficult to continuously deal with side issues while teaching.

4.5 Theme 4: Expert teachers and school context

There were six contributions made by participants about how expert teachers handle challenging contextual changes. The first, that expert teachers can handle all situations:

They are more experienced, they should be able to handle all changes and situation. I had a problem with technology that is where I got stuck. I didn't advance in technology which is my only obstacle. (Sandy-I)

Sandy discusses that expert teachers can easily adapt and handle contextual problems because of their years of experience but then she goes on to say that the only obstacle she has not yet overcome is the technology aspect concerning the use of computers. She reveals that their expertise is compromised by not being technology savvy. Therefore, if a teacher has been in a school context for many years, the advent of new technology which is often not used in poorer state schools can mean that the teachers have to rely on older methods and approaches to prepare lessons, to teach and to assess.

The second contribution is the belief that all expert teachers are experienced and can handle varying contexts:

An expert teacher will know how to handle the situation. A novice teacher like me will go in with guns blazing, an expert teacher would have been teaching longer and react in a different way. (Zak-I)

Zak says that he is very hot tempered and he tends to get angry when faced with discipline problems and he has noticed that more experienced teachers are able to handle discipline calmly and are able to resolve the problem at hand. He is aware that there is a better way to deal with discipline problems, and regards temperament to be a characteristic of novice teachers. Experienced teachers, he believes are in control of their emotions.

The third teacher says that expert teachers refuse to adapt to change in context:

I think expert teachers are not as willing to accept change because they are so set in their ways compared to new teachers who are willing to adapt. (Anna-I)

Anna said that they are inflexible because they are set in their ways, whilst she feels that the new teachers are willing to adapt. When students come out of college their minds are fresh and receptive of new knowledge and thus they are able to adapt to different school contexts.

The fourth teacher thinks that nobody is an expert because teachers are always learning:

I think nobody is an expert teacher because I think we are always learning. We get children that are coming from throughout Africa and therefore I think we all have to make changes in order to cater for our ever changing context. It's not easy and we have to change with our responses and the way we carry ourselves. (Kelly-I)

Kelly said that finding alternative methods to deal with discipline problems can pose as a difficulty for expert teachers. She also feels that in the current contextual changes that are taking place in South African schools with regards to the influx of refugee learners, it makes it difficult for any teacher to regard themselves as expert.

The fifth teacher felt that an expert teacher, in one context, can feel like a novice in another challenging context:

If some expert teacher were placed in a different school context then the teacher can become novice with regards to their context, but not with regards with their knowledge, the content stays the same, but when it comes to anyone, expert or novice, it doesn't matter if you once was an expert the context in which you teach determines how you react and how you teach. (Nelly-I)

Nelly believes that the descriptions 'novice' and 'expert' are conditional to the context in which a teacher is placed. A change of context can lead to a change of expertise. In Nelly's opinion, a teacher moves through the continuum of expert and novice due to the type of challenges that may present itself at any given time.

The sixth teacher says that any teacher can feel like a novice when the context changes:

A teacher in my school is very competent in teaching her grade and learning areas in her classroom. Suddenly in the middle of the year three new foreign students were sent to her class, these learners do not speak or understand a word of English because their home language isn't English. They don't understand her teaching and she can't code switch because she doesn't speak French. (Delain-I)

The above point proves true to the following case according to Delain, where a very effective teacher felt inadequate concerning the enrolment of French speaking learners in her class in the middle of the year. Any expert teacher can be faced with a challenging situation at any given time in their teaching experience. Their difficulties can make an expert feel like a novice.

4.6 Theme 5: Novice teachers and change in curriculum

There were five views on how novice teachers respond to curriculum change. The first view was from Sandy, and she thinks novice teachers tend to get confused with all the curriculum changes:

I think they get very confused. (Sandy-I)

Sandy said that they are barely trying to master one teaching method when the curriculum changes again. This can become very confusing for a novice teacher because they tend to get their recordings of lesson preparations mixed up.

The second teacher who is a novice teacher declares that he finds it very difficult to adapt to curriculum changes:

It's a bit hard to adapt because you are taught a certain way I know I was taught OBE but then we went back to the old method of teaching. It was a bit of getting used to but we survived. (Zak-I)

During the period when Zak learnt to be a teacher, he was introduced to a curriculum he was trained to teach. Two years after he started his teaching career, the curriculum was changed. From a content based curriculum, which he was familiar with, the education system changed to outcomes based education. This did pose as a huge problem for him. It took him time but he managed the change with the help of his colleagues.

The third view was that teachers are afraid of the unknown:

They are afraid of the unknown they don't feel as confident in a classroom situation, what else can I say, with new changes they not sure of the approach and teaching methods so they will need a lot of workshops and a lot of motivation. (Anna-I)

Anna's view is that novice teachers lack confidence when they are faced with the unfamiliar. They require support and motivation in order to move on. Most of the novice teachers coming into the profession are very young and single. They have very little experience dealing with

learners from complicated backgrounds and discipline problems. Teaching learners from adverse backgrounds can become very challenging for the novice teacher.

The fourth view was that novices are more susceptible to change:

I think many novice teachers are young and I think change is easier to come with the novice teachers than an old teacher and I think they should accept change because every day there is change. (Kelly-I)

They welcome change more easily. They are not set in their ways. They are willing to try new things and are able to adapt and move on more easily. They do not make an issue of changes that has to be implemented. (Delain-I)

The view that novice teachers are open to change was shared by both Kelly and Delain. They believe that novice teachers are not grounded in their ways. It is difficult for a more experienced teacher to adapt because their teaching has become a ritual. Novice teachers are young and are more open minded, and they are able to improvise and adapt as they go along because they are not set in their ways.

The fifth view was that a novice is willing to learn new things and new knowledge should be part of every teacher's job:

I think we adapt, I regard myself as a novice, because I may know the content, I am more willing as a novice to learn new things. I do not know it all, so because I continually want to understand the world in which I am living, understand the children I am teaching, that makes me a better person to assimilate this new knowledge. It is not something that is daunting it is part of the learning. (Nelly-I)

Nelly said that a teacher expects their learners to assimilate new knowledge on a daily basis so a teacher should be able to do the same when it comes to overcoming curriculum change. She believes that novices are willing learners while experts are not comfortable with change and adaptation.

The following contribution was made by Delain in the focus group interview concerning the advantages of being a novice when everything is changing, especially curriculum changes.

The South African Education system has since 1994 been in a constant state of change. Curriculum 2005, using the outcomes based approach (OBE) was skills driven and learner-centred, a move away from the traditional chalk and talk methods, teacher authoritative classroom practice. Educators based their lessons on learners contexts

i.e. backgrounds, social, political, economic, societal, religious and cultural backgrounds. Lessons had specific learning outcomes and assessment standards for learners to achieve desired outcomes. Educators became facilitators.

Being a new or novice teacher to the education system, but having had OBE training at college I was an expert at implementing OBE as opposed to some educators who employed traditional means of teaching.

When the National Curriculum Statements were revised into RNCS stakeholders assumed that they had changed again. New Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements addressed content, moving away from OBE. (Delain-FG)

Delain discussed that novice teachers come into school with knowledge of the current curriculum so they will have a greater understanding of the implementation of the curriculum.

4.7 Theme 6: Expert teachers and change in curriculum

There were six conceptions on how curriculum change affects expert teachers. The first conception relate to record keeping:

Yes I think so with these curriculum changes especially with all the recording that they expect we have to record it according to how they want it that is like challenging. (Sandy-I)

Curriculum has impacted on all educators and expert teachers also find curriculum change very challenging. So the conception of curriculum change effecting teachers is not isolated to the novice teacher only. Sandy finds record keeping very time consuming and a huge burden. She feels that the teacher should be able to record the way they find easiest. It should not be made a cumbersome task.

The second conception was that expert teachers know how to handle curriculum change:

An expert teacher will know how to handle the situation a novice teacher like me will go in with guns blazing, an expert teacher would have been teaching longer and would react in a different way. (Zak-I)

Zak as a novice teacher assumes that an expert will know how to handle curriculum change compared to a novice because he views the expert teacher as being very competent.

The third conception was that expert teachers are not willing to accept change:

Yes, I think expert teachers are not as willing to accept change because they are so set in their ways compared to new teachers who are willing to adapt. (Anna-I)

Anna said that expert teachers struggle with change and novice teachers find it easier to adapt to changes in the curriculum. She feels that the novice is flexible and more receptive to change.

The fourth conception is that no teacher is an expert with all the curriculum changes we are experiencing:

I think nobody is an expert teacher because I think we are there learning because we get children that are coming from throughout Africa and therefore I think we all have to make changes and it's not easy and we have to change with our responses and the way we carry on. (Kelly-I)

Kelly feels that we are continuously learning due to the curriculum changing all the time. She also discusses the various languages that are present in the classroom which impact on the teacher when the curriculum changes. An expert teacher tends to feel inadequate in the classroom trying to deal with language barriers and curriculum changes at the same time. Therefore, Kelly feels that the experience is also a challenge for an expert, making them feel a novice teacher.

The fifth conception relates to the teacher being grounded in the curriculum:

Some expert teacher if they were placed in a different school you can become novice with regards to their context, but not with regards with their knowledge, the content stays the same, but when it comes to anyone, it doesn't matter if you once was an expert, the context in which you teach determines how you react and how you teach. (Nelly-I)

Nelly strongly believes that every teacher should be grounded in the curriculum and content and should not feel shaken by changes that may come their way. She does, however, think that the only thing that should make an expert feel like a novice would be a challenging context.

The sixth conception is that the teachers who are teaching for over fifteen years are comfortable with the current curriculum:

The curriculum has changed so many times in the past few years that one barely started to implement the curriculum and it would change again. Now we are implementing the

CAPS document. The expert teachers or the teachers who have been teaching for a long time believe this is old curriculum coming back and mixed a little with the new, so they are responding fine to this change. (Delain-I)

Delain says that teachers who have taught for many years are very comfortable with CAPS (curriculum assessments and policy statements) because it resembles the old curriculum which they were familiar with. Expert teachers have found common ground after a very long time. Delain feels that the new curriculum gives the teachers a little more confidence when it comes to record keeping because it is familiar to them and they understand what is expected from them. It is thus possible to reclaim their expertise.

Anna, in the focus group, had the following to say about curriculum change for expert and novice teachers:

The curriculum is in the state of flux. Since, the new government in 1994 the curriculum has changed due to politics. Millions of rands have been used to implement curriculum changes. However, it seems we are going back to the curriculum of the 80's. Names have been changed only, content in some subjects have been changed. Quantity seems to be the emphasis today. In the foundation phase our learners are struggling to grasp the various skills and knowledge. In the 70's and 80's emphasis were on quality of teaching rather than quantity of content. Remedial, guidance and special education need to be brought back into schools. We need to develop the child totally not only academic. (Anna-FG)

Anna recounts the changes in curriculum and firmly believes that the old curriculum was about quality while the changes made in the last fifteen years are about quantity and completing the syllabus:

With the constant change in the curriculum educators are not work-shopped in advance to deliver the curriculum correctly. There is also insufficient information for educators to work with, workbooks and educator guides are delivered late, in some schools not delivered at all this results in schools following different books and learning different themes therefore when learners change schools there is confusion a certain concepts were not taught. (Nelly-FG)

Nelly strongly feels that insufficient information has been cascaded down to the teachers to work with. This has resulted in both novice and expert teachers experiencing confusion in the implementation of the curriculum:

In the past the curriculum was rigid and remained there for a long time making it possible for educators to take ownership of the system. There was no confusion of implementing the curriculum. In today's dispensation there are too many changes in the curriculum making it very confusing to learners, educators and parents. (Zak-FG)

Zak says that teachers were given the opportunity to master the curriculum and become experts in the curriculum. The implementation of the curriculum, in the new dispensation has been accompanied by confusion and a lack of support. This has resulted from the failure of the curriculum being cascaded incorrectly:

Also, the workshops conducted by Department of Education officials are not adequately prepared to pass on and cascade the information correctly and appropriately, therefore leaving room for confusion and incorrect implementation of the curriculum, thus affecting the correct and effective implementation of the curriculum. In the past we had quality education today we focus on quantity. (Zak-FG)

Zak said that very little facilitation was given on curriculum change and most of the time the facilitators do not receive adequate training. As a result they are unable to answer questions pertaining to the changes. In his opinion, this has impacted negatively on both expert and novice teachers when it came to the implementation of the curriculum.

Sandy is not happy about all the changes which have resulted in the decrease of teaching time and increase in record keeping:

The curriculum has changed so many times that educators are not sure anymore, what is expected of them. It has become a joke- we know that education is politically motivated. Those that make these ridiculous changes need to come into classrooms to see what's going on. Govt has wasted money by trying out new changes that were unsuccessful at the expense of the children. Now the CAPS system has reverted to the old system that worked and was successful. Now we have too many aspects of recording which is unnecessary. More recording and assessments and the actual teaching time has decreased, the learner is not the most important person in this system. (Sandy-FG)

Sandy says that the learners have suffered the most in the process of curriculum change and both the novice and expert teachers are burdened with too much of recording which gives them less time to spend with developing the learners.

Anna also speaks about teachers' instability and lack of confidence:

The ever changing curriculum has created instability lack of confidence and much debate amongst educators, who are unable to cope with such changes. Contextual factors within schools, learner's numbers, linguistic barriers and curriculum changes should be for the better and not disabling the system further. Specialist educators from different school context must be consulted and become part of curriculum development programmes and must accompany the curriculum change to make the change more acceptable to educators. (Anna-FG)

Anna discusses the difficulty teachers are having with coping with all the changes and both novice and expert teachers agree that they have been affected. She believes that all teachers from different contexts must be consulted, not just a few, when these changes take place.

4.8 Theme 7: The role of experience for novice and expert teachers

There were six conceptions about what role experience plays for novice and expert teachers.

The first teacher suggested that novice teachers can learn through observation:

Workshops, maybe if a new teacher is having a problem in the class observing an experienced teacher's class will help, like an experience teacher going into the classroom giving a lesson with the children and guidance is very important and also the inexperienced teacher must be willing to learn. (Sandy-I)

Sandy says that a novice can have an experienced teacher to teach a lesson in the class so s/he can observe the methods that are effective in this classroom. The novice can learn through observation and learn through this experience.

The second conception was that of mentorship:

The novice teacher must be mentored accordingly. (Zak-I)

Zak thinks that mentorship would play a major part in a novice improving his teaching strategies.

The third conception relates to open and honest communication:

Getting assistance from experienced teachers and being directed in a sense. There must be open communication where the teacher knows exactly what is expected from them and what is expected from the children. I think they will feel more confident if they continue getting assistance and being a novice will eventually die off. (Anna-I)

Anna believes that the senior teachers should guide the newly qualified teachers who face challenging context. The mentor teacher, she believes, has to tell the novice openly and honestly what is expected from them. A relationship that is honest and free from intimidation will aid in growth. Clear instructions should be given to novice teachers by mentors so that they are aware of what is expected of them. In her opinion, both novice and expert teachers should not be afraid to seek and ask for assistance at any given time.

The fourth conception relate to being able to learn by watching others:

I think if a novice is able to learn by watching others and take advice I think he will be able to grow into an expert teacher. The novice must be able to except criticism, to grow from strength to strength and know that learning is a daily process. (Kelly-I)

Kelly said that a novice should be an eager learner, always observing and picking up hints as he or she goes along and should not get offended when they are being corrected or guided.

The fifth conception is support from school management team (SMT):

Development, support from all people. The HOD, the teachers on staff, the management, getting the feedback on what works and what doesn't work, the IQMS, the appraisal all of that will helps and assist and builds, but you have to be that willing to want to change on how to teach you can't want to remain the same, and expect to suddenly see some sort of change. Being a novice, you have to be willing to develop yourself. (Nelly-I)

Nelly says that the SMT plays a huge part in professional development in the school. Nelly goes on to say as much as the SMT can provide a teacher with a personal growth plan. It is ultimately up to the new teacher to want to learn and grow.

The sixth conception is asking for advice and help from others:

A novice should be able to ask for advice and help from more senior and experienced teachers in that specific context. They should attend workshops and learn about the challenging context and learners backgrounds. A novice teacher should also understand the learners in their classroom and their difficulties e.g. like poor learners need to eat before they can concentrate in class. (Delain-I)

Delain suggested that novice teachers should also have learner knowledge e.g. learners who come to school hungry will not be able to concentrate. Willingness to learn comes across strongly from Delain. She feels that a novice should take up the initiative to develop his or

her experience by asking senior teachers and more experienced teacher for help with understanding learners' difficulties and backgrounds like lack of resources, language barriers, abuse, and travelling long distances to school.

All six teachers that participated in the interviews shared the same opinion concerning experience of novice teachers and expert teachers. They all believe that expert teachers (HOD, staff, and management) should assist and provide guidance and support to novice teachers.

4.9 Theme 8: Novice and expert teachers' relationships with peers/ leaders and mentors

All the teachers in this study bring similar ideas forward concerning the mutual exchange of information and knowledge, guidance and support. The first teacher said the novice teacher's needs mentorship in curriculum implementation and about pedagogical content knowledge:

Yes I think so because there are some things that the college does not teach them. So when they come to a school they need a mentor especially if they teach in the same grade, grade mentorship is important. (Sandy-I)

Sandy says that new teachers have to learn the rules and policies of the school. Each school may differ in the policy structures due the context and leadership style in terms of, for example, duties, discipline, and record keeping. A new teacher, according to Sandy, has to be guided by the senior teachers in order to be effective inside and outside of the classroom.

The second teacher says a teacher needs mentorship because of the challenges contexts that they are faced with in many school.

Yes because you need the growth and development and a school is not the easiest place to work in. (Zak-I)

Zak says that a novice is always feeling insecure. For Zak, when the context changes at any given time, it presents problems to new teachers. It is vital, in his opinion, that mentors guide the novice teachers without belittling them in anyway whatsoever and they should never be made to feel inferior for any reason.

The third teacher says that mentorship can be a two-sided relationship between the novice and expert teacher:

Definitely most definitely so they can assist with experience and novice teachers can assist with new ideas it goes hand in hand. (Anna-I)

Anna says that the expert teacher can guide the novice with the ethos of the school and the context and the various teaching methods that can cater for the different learning styles but just as the novice can benefit from the expert all teachers believe that the novice comes into the school with rich prior knowledge which can be very beneficial to the expert teacher as well.

The fourth teacher says that mentorship should be without intimidation:

It would be a good idea but the expert teachers must also be simple and humble and they must actually lead the novice by hand and put them in an environment where the novice will want to learn and at the same the expert can learn from the novice as well because learning is a 2 way process. (Kelly-I)

The teachers from this specific school have mentioned in their interviews that they have trainee teachers from surrounding colleges who serve their practical lesson at this school and they serve to be very helpful leaving lots of current and interesting ideas behind when they leave. So Kelly and the foundation phase teachers know from experience that novice teachers have a lot to contribute to the learners and towards making the learning and teaching environment more interesting and exciting for the learners as well as the teachers.

The fifth teacher says that the expert should mentor the novice:

I think in every educational field, if it is possible someone who deems himself an expert in that field for them to teach novices because then you won't have a professor, you won't have somebody higher up. You won't have the levels we go through in education field. There are people on staff that have gone on to doctorates and the amount of educational knowledge that is needed to get to that level has to have been an expert hand along the way. (Nelly-I)

Nelly says that there should always be a more experienced and knowledgeable person on staff to mentor the new teachers. Every level that a person reaches in the academic field, there has to be someone more qualified in order to take you to the next level.

The sixth teacher says that there should be an exchange of information:

Definitely most definitely as much as the young teachers come into the profession with fresh and new ideas there are the old techniques and methods that are very effective in the classroom and we still get results using them, so it won't hurt for the expert to

exchange information with new teachers. Anyways new teachers coming into the school need to learn the ethos of the school and the context. (Delain-I)

Exchanging of information and knowledge can take place between both expert and novice teachers. They both have a wealth of knowledge that can be shared and can be regarded as helpful in promoting growth and development. This process of helping and sharing of information will edify both the teachers and the learners.

Due to the complexities that are present in current school situations it has become a necessary requirement for both novice and expert teachers to receive mentorship and guidance. Expert and novice teachers require continuous help and assistance concerning various aspects of teaching in order to become effective in the classroom.

4.10 Summary of Findings

The findings, based on the themes presented above, are captured hereunder in the form of a summary.

CATEGORY	NOVICE TEACHERS	EXPERT TEACHERS
Conceptions of	Cannot cope with complexity, lack experience and confidence, rely on theory, need mentoring, feel inadequate, still learning, do not know what to do	Hardworking, prepared, calm, mellow, willing to learn, able to empathise with learners, is diverse, willing to improve teaching strategies and not afraid to ask for help.
School contexts	Language barriers is a problem, culture shock, difficult to adapt to different contexts, must be self motivated, demotivated.	Able to handle situations, difficulty with technology, not willing to accept change, nobody is an expert; context can make an expert teacher a novice.
Curriculum change	Difficult for new teachers, get confused, hard to adapt, afraid of the unknown, change is easier, willing to learn new things,	Changes are challenging, know how to handle changes, not willing to accept change, nobody is an expert, can make an expert feel like a novice, responding fine to change.
Relationships with peers	Senior teachers can mentor them, can assist with experience. Experts must exchange information with new teachers.	Expert can learn from novices as well, more current information.

Figure 4: Summary of findings

4.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed eight themes that were derived from the data gathered from both novice and expert teachers' experiences dealing with complex contexts. The teachers' experiences were inferred from the data and discussed.

Dreyfus and Dreyfus discusses novice teachers has teacher who would adhere to a rigid set of rules and plans in order to survive and that point is very prominent throughout the data. Expert teachers on the other hand would make use of analytic approaches in novel situations and when problems occur.

According to Shulman (1987) 'the knowledge needed for teaching is of three types: content knowledge (knowledge of the subject matter to be taught), pedagogical knowledge (knowledge of how to teach in general terms), Pedagogical content knowledge includes: (knowledge of how to teach that is specific to what is being taught). Pedagogical content knowledge includes the knowledge of how to structure and represent academic content for teaching. This would include knowledge of the common conceptions, misconceptions and difficulties that learners may have when learning particular content. And knowledge of the specific strategies that can be used to address learners needs in particular classroom circumstances. We find that teachers who have acquired the necessary content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are not exempt from being challenged when it comes to language barriers and continuous curriculum changes that pose as a huge problem in many schools.

The next chapter will deal with the findings and conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the analysis of the data. In this final chapter the researcher discusses the manner in which context influences teachers' professional expertise. A major finding was that irrespective of where a teacher may fall on the continuum of expert and novice, all teachers are challenged in complex contexts.

The research question framing this study asked: "How does context influence a teacher's professional expertise?" The interpretive paradigm was embraced using a qualitative approach. The semi structured interviews and focused group interviews were audio taped after which they were transcribed and proof read by the participants in order to examine accuracy of the data and improve the descriptive validity of the data. The researcher identified eight themes which were discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter seven cross theme analysis will be presented.

5.2 Conceptions of expert and novice teachers are different

From the analysis it is clear that depending on who is asked for an opinion about expert and novice teachers, the response differ. For example, Zak, a novice teacher, holds any expert teacher in high esteem. He believes that an expert can handle any situation and can overcome any challenge because of the experience that they possess. Zak longs to become an expert because of the deep-seated respect and admiration that he has for an expert teacher. Berliner's (2001) reasoning shows experts look for opportunities that are flexible and sensitive to task demands and to the social situations surrounding them when solving problems.

Sandy believes that an expert teacher is experienced, hardworking, prepared and always ensures that the children are learning. The novice has to develop a considerable amount of teaching expertise before they can be considered an expert.

According to Glickman (1985) the expert teacher resides in the impact stage, and can be viewed as an award winning teacher who makes an impact on his or her students' lives. Every day is focused on teaching effectively, rigorously and in an engaging manner by making an impact on the way learners' learn.

Anna, who is in the middle of the expert and novice continuum, believes that the novice has a lot to offer if given a fair chance because a novice is flexible, knowledgeable about the current curriculum and is computer literate. She also thinks that expert teachers are set in their ways and has difficulty adapting to the changes that are taking place on a frequent basis. The data show that both expert and novice teachers experience difficulties in adapting to challenging contexts. Novice teachers struggle with discipline, language barriers and lack of resources whilst expert teachers struggle to master technology.

5.3 Teaching and school context are experienced differently by novice and expert teachers

In the focus group interview, Kelly related that in the 1980's South African schools were homogeneous places. All children who came from English speaking background homes attended English medium schools. There were fewer challenges in regard to language barriers compared to the present time. Children from city centre schools, she avers, came from all parts of Africa. Learners had to learn in languages that were not spoken at home. Language was critical for cognitive development as it provided the concepts for thinking and, therefore, a means for expressing ideas and asking questions which learners found difficulty to do. (Vygotsky, 1989).

Kelly also relates that due to job opportunities in SA and the rest of the world, parents now want their children to be English and isiZulu literate (in South Africa). Transformation has taken place at a fast rate; however, the education system has many flaws. Statistics show that students are struggling to achieve successfully in education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2005).

Ball (2009) says that language and education are interrelated because all teaching is given through the medium of language and a learner who has problems understanding the language of medium will experience great difficulty in learning. Language is considered to be both a precondition for thought and a bearer of thought and, therefore, influences the extent to which a child's intelligence is actualised.

Due to these changes learners come from different language and cultural backgrounds making it difficult to teach effectively. As a result, novice teachers have problems communicating effectively in the classroom. In a multi-lingual class it makes it challenging for both expert and novice teachers to code switch.

Nelly states that learners who come from isiZulu speaking homes, but are taught through the medium of English, are unfairly assessed. This frustrates educators as they feel they are unable to teach effectively because learners do not understand the language. In order to achieve in-depth subject understanding, it has been suggested that effective communication of subject concepts is the key because language forms an integral part of this communication (Thurston, 1995).

Zak states that it is difficult to code switch in a multi-lingual classroom. This challenge is also enhanced by large class sizes where group or individual remediation or mentoring is almost impossible. Expert teachers can code switch with a few languages but they also have a problem with foreign languages like French. On the other hand, novice teachers experience problems with code switching with all languages except Afrikaans.

Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005) highlights the problem of the importance of effective communication during teaching and learning and go on to say that problems arise when previously segregated groups come together in classrooms with teachers who feel inadequately prepared to teach students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It is possible from the data that has been gathered that both expert and novice teachers can fall in this category.

According to Sandy this problem did not exist in the apartheid era of teaching. Their learners understood the language of teaching and learning and, therefore, worked at a faster pace. Parents assisted their children with their homework because they understood the home language. Experts and novices are faced with a huge problem because of the language barrier. They have learners from diverse backgrounds and languages. In grade one, teachers have to teach grade R and grade one work to learners who don't understand the language of instruction.

In defining the expert teacher, Berliner (2001) contends that although inexperience is often equated with a novice status in the field, the acquisition of experience does not automatically qualify for expert status; Berliner believes that 'while one may be considered an expert teacher in one context, he/she might be defined as a novice in another. In this view, cognitive competencies of expert teachers must always be thought of as relative to the context and culture because 'context affects teaching' (Berliner, 2001, p. 467).

This challenge is also enhanced by large class sizes where group or individual remediation or mentoring is almost impossible. Low academic achievement, high dropout rates, and low college graduation rates among low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse students are frequent in these classrooms (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2005; Willms, 2006).

Nelly states that novice teachers feel that insufficient resources such as textbooks, makes it difficult for them to teach the prescribed curriculum. Expert teachers feel that textbooks often change depending on the department and their policies, this causes money to be wasted and schools do not have enough funds to purchase new books. Due to the large numbers in classrooms there are also insufficient textbooks for all learners which hinder teaching.

According to Spaul (2001) in developing countries contextual factors can impact greatly on learner's results. He discusses the lack of resources which seems to be a major contributing factor, and Spaul (2011) showed in his study the similarities and differences that existed between the Primary School performance in Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa.' (p. 23)

Zak said that in the past the education department was separated according to race groups. There were no financial constraints, resources were accessible to all learners and books were directly related to the schemes of work. All other resources including books were supplied by various departments and resources were standardized. Human resources were adequate, there was a flexible teacher pupil ratio, but now, because of frequent curriculum changes there are varying resources that make it challenging to standardize the teaching and learning process. With CAPS, both the expert and novice teachers in the study are hoping that this confusion of the curriculum with their resources will come to a halt.

Anna believes that the resources, and the lack thereof, may hinder an educator's ability to adequately deliver the content. As professionals, flexibility and improvisation are key factors in making teaching and learning purposeful. Resources are the tools for education and the government needs to prioritise their education budget to ensure that all schools are equally resourced and that there is equal and fair education for all children.

One can conclude, that due to contextual factors within schools, the large number of learners in classrooms, linguistic barriers, both novice and expert teacher are affected. Novice teachers find the context more challenging than expert teachers when it pertains to language barriers because they are unable to code switch in many languages whilst the expert teacher is

skilled in different teaching methods and is able to improvise in order to create understanding in the classroom. The novice teacher may experience a limited amount of problems when it comes to curriculum changes due to their flexibility and their ability to adapt.

5.4 Curriculum change makes teaching challenging for expert and novice teachers

The continuous curriculum changes over the past eighteen years have posed a great challenge to both novice and expert teachers.

Anna said that the curriculum is in a state of flux since, a democratic government took over in 1994, and the curriculum has changed. Millions have been spent to implement curriculum changes. However, it seems that they are going back to the curriculum of the 1980's. Names have been changed and content in some subjects have been changed. The amount of work to be completed for the year seems to be the emphasis today. A great amount of attention is currently being allocated to the knowledge that is unique to the profession of teaching. According to Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008) there has been much discussion and consideration surrounding content and pedagogical knowledge that teachers need, to effectively teach their subject matter.

Anna goes on to say that in the Foundation phase learners are struggling to grasp the various skills and knowledge. In the 70's and 80's emphasis were on quality of teaching rather than completing the syllabus. Remedial, guidance, and special education need to be brought back into schools. She believes that they need to develop the child totally not only academically.

Zak said that with the constant change in the curriculum, educators are not work-shopped in advance to deliver the curriculum correctly. Research done by Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005) is relevant to the South African schooling system due to the ever changing curriculum and varying contextual factors that has become more heterogeneous in the post 1994 era.

Teachers are faced with many challenges of coping and dealing with these contextual changes. The participants' challenges that are experienced in this study correlates with the research done by Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005).

Nelly said that there is insufficient information for educators to work with; workbooks and educator guides are delivered late, in some schools they have not been delivered at all and as a result schools follow different books. Therefore, when learners change schools there is confusion when certain concepts were not taught.

Zak, as a novice teacher, makes reference to the past experiences of teachers. He reflects on the fact that in the past the curriculum was rigid and remained there for a long time which made it possible for educators to take ownership of the system. There were no confusions concerning the implementing of the curriculum.

Zak goes on to say that in today's dispensation there are too many changes in the curriculum making it very confusing to learners, educators and parents. In the courage to teach, educator Palmer (1998) identifies four elements, namely; objects of knowledge, experts, amateurs and baffles. He refers to the objects as knowledge, experts are the teachers, amateurs are the students and baffles allow objective knowledge to flow downstream. He speaks about the flow of knowledge from the expert to the amateur through different teaching methods that are used.

Also, the workshops conducted by personnel are not adequately prepared to pass on or cascade the information correctly and appropriately, therefore, leaving room for confusion and incorrect implementation of the curriculum, thereby affecting the correct and effective implementation of the curriculum. Expert teachers believe that, in the past, they had quality education whereas today they are focusing on completing the curriculum.

Experts also represent problems in a qualitatively rich and deep ways, and they are capable of fast and accurate pattern recognition. They are also able to bring rich personal sources of information (content) in order to solve problems. Experts are challenged to reinterpret and reorganise their thinking when they experience dissonance (Berliner, 2001).

In contrast, novice teacher' reasoning is characterised by rigidity, and by their need to adopt a single, homogeneous perspective on a problem. The novice teachers feel that the ever changing curriculum has created instability and lack of confidence and many debates amongst educators, who are unable to cope with such changes. Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005) make reference to the difficulties teachers have to endure in a culturally challenged school.

5.5 Experience is important for expert and novice teachers

Experience influences educators' professionalism, since educators have to now adopt more than one role which is, a parent, social worker, nurse, pastoral role and researcher. Theorists like Becher (1999) and Eraut (2000) draw attention to other types of teacher knowledge. They speak of explicit and tacit knowledge which is the external knowledge that the teacher

has, derived from prior experience. This prior knowledge of how to teach is linked to implicit knowledge, which comes from non-formal sources derived from direct instruction and books. There is also tacit knowledge which is derived from one's own experience or being taught by parents, films, television, faiths and beliefs and through travel.

Expert teachers believe that most of the caregivers or parents are often illiterate and in some cases the parents are absent from the learners' life and thus educational assistance from home is neglected. Anna said that many of the learners come from child headed homes and they have no 'sense of belonging' which severely affects a child psychologically and emotionally. Expert teachers find that teaching a child like this is very challenging. The teacher can only become good in the context after dealing with different aspects of the child after a period of time which comes with experience.

5.6 Every teacher needs a mentor

All teachers irrespective where they fall in the novice expert continuum will need a mentor at some time in their teaching career. A novice needs a mentor with record keeping, the ethos and policies of the school, the backgrounds of the learners and the context of the school. The mentor is often the mode appropriate for many novice teachers, at least for their first year or two at the school. Once they gather confidence in their teaching, they will most likely become more self-directed and will subsequently need less supervision (Glickman, 1985).

According to Glickman (1985) in some instances, the mentor teacher is considered to have greater knowledge or expertise than the new or struggling teacher. When the mentor takes on a directive style of supervision, s/he is also taking direct ownership of the problem and the corresponding solution. The role of the mentor is very prescriptive and very active.

According to Sandy, the expert teachers will also need a mentor in computers and dealing with changes like curriculum and contextual factors. Expert teachers also find it difficult to change their teaching methods from rigid teacher centred methods which can pose a problem. Anna and Kelly believe that expert and novice teachers need to be mentored into the new dispensation with clear instructions in order to prevent confusion.

According to Glickman (1985), it would certainly be the hope of all mentors that their mentor colleagues are self-directed and professional but there are times when direct messages must be given so that there can be no confusion about what is expected of the faculty member.

5.7 All teachers are always novices

The continuous curriculum changes, challenging contexts and a lack of resources are some of the contributing factors for most teachers feeling inadequate with certain aspects of their teaching.

Sandy believes that expert teachers tend to get very annoyed when record keeping requirements change from year to year according to the curriculum. Schedules and reports change from ratings to percentages and then back to ratings. This can become very frustrating for teachers. Lesson planning formats change as well.

According to Glickman (1985), it is important to remember that people do not just fall neatly into simple categories. The teacher may face complexities within him or herself. He or she may be an unfocused worker when teaching one subject and a professional when teaching science or a teacher may feel like an expert in one context and like a novice if the context changes.

Nelly declares that record keeping changes when the curriculum changes. A teacher who has become accustomed to a specific method of record keeping is asked to change their methods, which can result in a teacher feeling like a novice.

They also suggested that besides the frequent curriculum changes that affect teachers, there is a vast amount of knowledge that is out there waiting to be researched and this, as well, has the ability to make an expert feel like a novice especially if they are not computer literate and cannot use the internet.

They also face the challenge of continuously needing to teach both subject and English at the same time (Adler, 2001). Demographic change and the learners that come into their schools can make the context challenging. Teachers who change schools and grades can go from feeling adequate to feeling inadequate. According to Hollins and Torres-Guzman (2005) it becomes problematic when a rich diversity of learners comes together in one classroom.

5.8 The need for flexibility

Sandy has been teaching from 1972, and during that specific time teachers had no knowledge of computers or being computer literate. Manual work was acceptable and minimal because they had designated secretaries who were employed to carry out all the paperwork through the use of typewriters.

Teachers did not have to create worksheets unless absolutely necessary. Each learner was supplied with their own textbooks and stationery. When the new dispensation took place teachers had to also go through a transformation. Each teacher had to become a secretary as well, and one of their responsibilities was to become computer literate which many of the seasoned teachers found very difficult to adapt to. Many teachers decided not to conform to the change because they were close to or on the threshold of retirement. Expert teachers definitely need to be more flexible when it comes to computer literacy. An expert teacher should be able to deal with these contextual challenges in order to improve teaching and learning in the classroom.

Palmer (1998) says that expert teachers are able to use curriculum knowledge to their benefit in order to increase the standard of teaching and learning in the classroom. They are able to use learners' backgrounds and characteristics and create relevant texts in order to improve understanding and interest.

Kelly had come from feeling like an expert to a new school after twenty two years of teaching, she had just become excess in her school and had been relocated to Tulip Primary School as a junior primary H.O.D. Her teaching context had changed overnight. The learners that she was given to teach had no form teacher for six months and as a result Kelly was faced with discipline problems when she arrived at her new school. She had to deal with a change in school as well as colleagues and learners. This was challenging.

Shulman's (1986) theory of teacher knowledge includes general pedagogical knowledge with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that appear to transcend subject matter, namely; knowledge of learners and their characteristics and their learning styles, knowledge of educational contexts ranging from workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures. Mixed group abilities promotes respect, knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values and their philosophical and historical backgrounds, while keeping lessons relevant and interesting will help learners stay focused. This knowledge, one can infer, is vital for both expert and novice teachers teaching in a South African context in order to improve teaching and learning in our diverse classrooms.

However, the experience of the expert teacher allows them to succeed when it comes to discipline problems and they know how to handle challenging situations. The shifting ground for novice teachers are the challenging school contexts due to the presence of language

barriers, lack of resources and a changing curriculum. A novice feels like an expert when it comes to the use of technology especially the use of computers which has become a vital part of the teaching profession. Teachers need to use computers to create relevant worksheets, set tests and examination papers, reporting, recording of marks and year end schedules.

5.9 Conclusion

The notion of novice and expert can be seen as a shifting ground. The shifting ground for the expert teachers had been the huge change in context and the lack of resources. Sandy and Kelly who are expert teachers went from having all the necessary resources to improvising, from teaching in a monolingual context to a multi-lingual context, from a relaxed environment to a stressful environment, from focusing on teaching and assessments to fulfilling the seven roles of a teacher.

This researcher realised through observation of the participants that the focus group interview gave them an opportunity to reminisce about their earlier teaching experiences. The researcher also watched the older teachers' faces light up with excitement while they spoke about their early years of teaching which they realised that they took for granted and when they felt like an expert teacher.

The younger teachers also remembered their schooling years and the availability of stationery and the excitement they felt when they received their stationery on the first day of school. They still feel the excitement of teaching, but know they are novices who have to strive to become experts. For the researcher, the lesson is clear: All teachers are either novice or experts and recognising when one is an expert or novice, may help to achieve success as a teacher.

During the focus group interviews the expert teachers kept on reverting to the time when they felt like experts, they discussed curriculum changes and Zak said that the curriculum was stable which allowed the teachers to take ownership of the curriculum and feel expert in the implementation of it. Resources were supplied in abundance and textbooks were standard and the same syllabus was implemented throughout the country which played a major role in preventing confusion during transfers and relocation of teachers and learners.

Contexts of teaching were not as challenging in terms of language barriers and large classes. Language barriers did not exist, and classes had small numbers and learners with special educational needs attended special schools. Expert teachers were able to focus on mastering

the content and becoming an expert in their field without too many complications unlike in our current era. Therefore, findings show that both expert and novice teachers feel like novices concerning the challenging and complex contexts that are present in most schools today.

At the end of this study, we realise that development is not always progressive due to the contextual challenges that may be present. This implies that irrespective of where a teacher may lie on the novice expert continuum, the context in which they teach influence their expertise. It means that patience is required for teachers who are placed in different contexts. They should be given more time to develop their expertise for specific contexts.

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APPENDIX 1



27 August 2012

Mrs Sathiaveni Duol Moodley Z11559024
School of Education

Dear Mrs Moodley

Protocol reference number: HSS/0792/012M
Project title: The Influence of context on teacher's conceptions of professional expertise.

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Nyna Amin
cc Academic leader: Dr MN Davids
cc School Admin: Mrs Sindhamoney Naicker

Professor S Collings (Chair)
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Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville



APPENDIX 2

64 Montdene Drive, Croftdene
Chatsworth
4092
20 JUNE 2012

The director
Department of Education and Culture Services

Re: Request for permission to conduct research at [REDACTED] in the Umlazi District.

I, Mrs S.D Moodley (student no. 211559024) currently a Foundation Phase educator in the Foundation Phase request permission to conduct research at the above school. As part of my professional development, I am presently enrolled for a Master in Education Degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. In order to successfully complete my studies I am required to do a dissertation.

The focus of this study is on professionally trained teachers with a substantive number of years of teaching experience who work in unfamiliar context. The context is unfamiliar because of taking a transfer to another school, relocating to another province or district, or a change in the context in which they teach. In each case, the context is different to the one in which they previously experience successful teaching. The conditions that enabled success do not exist anymore, and although teaching is familiar, the context has made it unfamiliar. Consequently, this study intends to fathom whether the skills, and knowledge they acquired through years of teaching sustained them in the new situation, and what these experiences are. I have a hunch that changing the context will result in a change of experience and this study intends to explore the changed experiences.

My study entails interviewing 5 teachers, novice/experienced teachers at the school. Interviews will be audio recorded. Before conducting my research written consent would be obtained from the principal and all the other participants at the schools. The schools and the participants would be ensured of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity during all stages of the research. Participants will be free to withdraw at any stage of the research. I give you my undertaking that I will follow research ethics in handling all data collected. Data collected will be locked in a cabinet for five years as per university rules and will be later destroyed through a process of shredding of printed copies and incineration of audio cassettes.

I hope that you will consider my request favourably and grant me written consent to conduct my study at this school.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours faithfully

SD. Moodley (Mrs.)

Tel. no. 031-4015264
email: duelmoodley@gmail.com
Cell no. 072 9556 821

APPENDIX 3

University of KwaZulu-Natal – Edgewood Campus

Faculty of Education – School of Education and Development

Re: Request for permission to conduct interview

Dear Principal

I Sathiaveni Duel Moodley am currently engaged in a Master's Degree in Education, at the above mentioned institution. As part of the degree requirement I am expected to do a dissertation in order to complete my studies.

The focus of this study is on professionally trained teachers with a substantive number of years of teaching experience who work in unfamiliar context. The context is unfamiliar because of taking a transfer to another school, relocating to another province or district, or a change in the context in which they teach. In each case, the context is different to the one in which they previously experience successful teaching. The conditions that enabled success do not exist anymore, and although teaching is familiar, the context has made it unfamiliar. Consequently, this study intends to fathom whether the skills, and knowledge they acquired through years of teaching sustained them in the new situation, and what these experiences are. I have a hunch that changing the context will result in a change of experience and this study intends to explore the changed experiences.

I humbly request your permission to conduct my research at [REDACTED] School and would be most grateful if I could engage 6 of your teachers in my study. Before conducting my research written consent would be obtained from the Department of Education and the participants.

I would assure you that:

- The interview will be conducted out of school.
- The interview will not be conducted during instruction time and will therefore not inconvenience you or the pupils.
- Your name and the name of your school will be substituted by a pseudonym.
- Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will always be maintained.
- All data collected will be locked away safely for 5 years as per university policy. Thereafter printed copies will be shredded and audio cassettes will be destroyed through a process of incineration.

This study intends to fathom whether the skills, and knowledge they acquired through years of teaching sustained them in the new situation, and what these experiences are. I have a hunch that changing the context will result in a change of experience and this study intends to explore the changed experiences. I'm hoping to fill the gaps and shed more light on the different experiences that the teachers at [REDACTED] have endeavoured.

I hope that you will consider my request favourably. I look forward to your positive reply and wish to thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully
SD Moodley

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor: Dr Amin Nyna

Tel: 031 2625225 Cell: 0825851718

Faculty of Education

email: amin@ukzn.ac.za

School of Education and Development
15 Maryvale Road

APPENDIX 4

University of KwaZulu-Natal – Edgewood Campus

Faculty of Education – School of Education and Development

Re: Request for permission to conduct interview

Study title: The influence of context on teachers' conceptions of professional expertise.

Dear Participant

I Sathiaveni Duel Moodley am currently engaged in a Master's Degree in Education, at the above mentioned institution. As part of the degree requirement I am expected to do a dissertation in order to complete my studies.

The focus of this study is on professionally trained teachers with a substantive number of years of teaching experience who work in unfamiliar context. The context is unfamiliar because of taking a transfer to another school, relocating to another province or district, or a change in the context in which they teach. In each case, the context is different to the one in which they previously experience successful teaching. The conditions that enabled success do not exist anymore, and although teaching is familiar, the context has made it unfamiliar. Consequently, this study intends to fathom whether the skills, and knowledge they acquired through years of teaching sustained them in the new situation, and what these experiences are. I have a hunch that changing the context will result in a change of experience and this study intends to explore the changed experiences.

By asking you to participate I'm hoping to fill the gaps and shed more light on the different experiences that you have endeavoured. To that end, your participation will require:

- That you answer a few questions about your school experiences.
- That one semi-structured interview will be conducted.
- That one focus group interview will be conducted.
- No personal questions will be asked, except when did you start teaching, where did you teach and your experiences as a professional.
- The interviews will be audio-taped.

Participation also means that you have rights. These are

- The right to withdraw your participation at any stage.
- The right to have your identity protected.
- Access to all drafts of the paper before and after it is submitted for review.

All data recording and transcripts will be kept in a safe, locked cupboard while being used, and destroyed thereafter. Should you require any further clarification or details about the ethics of this study you may contact the ethics administrator in the School of Education, Dr Noor Davids at 031 260 3439 or via email at davidsmn@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your co-operation

Yours faithfully

SD Moodley

Informed Consent Declaration.

I _____ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project and I consent to participating in the personal interviews and the focus group interviews. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

APPENDIX 5

I, Nicholas K. Challis (MA), of the professional editors group (PEG), started and completed an edit of a Masters degree at the

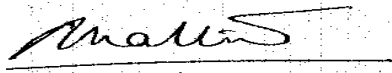
University of KWAZULU NATAL for S.D Moodley, student no. 211559024

Title: The influence of context on teachers' conceptions of professional expertise.

This took place during January 2013.

I have thoroughly checked her work.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Challis
23, 5th Avenue
Parktown North
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(w) 011 788 8669

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Local contact staff member: Kathy Gibbs:

kathy.gibbs@worldonline.co.za

011-802-4564

APPENDIX 6a

Interview 1 - Sandy

Which year did you begin your teaching career?

I started teaching in 1986 in a school called Manchester Primary school because I lived in Westville so that was closer. We had a platoon system.

What is a platoon system?

We had morning shift and nightshift. So we used to have morning session from 8 to 12 and we used to start at nine and go up to 4.

What were the schools like?

We didn't have a problem there because it was under the Indian affairs department at that time so we had only Indian learners. They knew English but we used to get those cry babies and all that you know.

How many learners did you have in your class?

We had very small classes. Beautiful classes and that is why even though we taught till so late it didn't matter. I really enjoy teaching

What did you like about the context of that school?

We didn't have a language problem but now it's so frustrating like in those days if you told the child write your date they knew what to do. They came to school knowing how to write, they knew their names and the basics.

What about the attitude of the children who came to the school at that time?

They were very eager to learn and happy to be at school and very comfortable in their environment and they enjoyed coming to school.

At that stage of your teaching career did you ever think about whether you are a good teacher and your abilities as a teacher?

Not really, I did teaching because I liked and wanted to do teaching. I wanted to be a social worker but I ended up becoming a teacher because we couldn't afford to study at a university. The reason most of my family did teaching was because you could get a bursary so paid back four years of services. That's why most of the teachers did teaching, they were given bursaries and I wanted to work with children, it was a love for teaching.

If you had to look back from now to the time that you started teaching is there anything that you think you would have done differently then when you first started?

Not really as I said everything was so comfortable we were in a good set up the children could communicate, reading wasn't a problem and instructions were understood. I think all of them went to pre-school so we didn't have the problem we have now, all the learners went to pre-school, we didn't have that pre-school problem.

Did the learners attending pre-school make a difference for the learner's abilities in the class?

But even if they didn't go to pre-school then they understood English so it was not a problem and even the content was less than it is now in the subjects like for maths we had to do up till one to ten in grade 1 with all the aspects and now we are gone to a hundred with children that don't understand English so the content is expanding.

Do you think that you have to use different methods now compared to the time when you first started teaching or in different context?

The only difference will be you have to use a lot of apparatus because learners in my class don't understand the language of instruction, and then if you told the child bring me ten things the child will bring it to you. Today I have to teach most of the concepts with concrete objects and we have to explain in isiZulu. I tell a child to explain the instructions in isiZulu so children who don't understand English can understand the concepts taught. When I started this year I had 10 – 12 children who understood me out of a class of 47 and those 10 – 12 children went to pre-school or grade R.

How do you find this context?

It is very difficult.

In your opinion, do you think a teacher that is newly qualified will have enough expertise in the field?

No not really, they are novices and they don't have a lot of practical experience with challenging contexts that are present in today's schools. They do their practical lessons in ideal schools where they may not have language barrier. When they are placed in schools they experience difficult contexts and find it very difficult to cope and adjust.

How long do you think a novice or a newly fledge teacher will need to become an expert teacher?

Depends on the individual, because we had student teachers that came to us from a nearby college, they were accustomed to the ideal situation but when they attended our school they struggled initially. It takes those about three terms to manage with our context. It may take some teachers 2 or 3 years.

How do you think a novice stage can be shortened, what would help a teacher to become more experienced?

I think if the teachers' attitude towards teaching, hard work and determination will make the teacher a better teacher in a short space of time.

How would a newly fledge teacher require development towards expertise?

Well, they can be developed in a school, especially concerning discipline, how to handle discipline, weak learners and language barriers. I think every teacher should come out of college with a second language. The heads of department and experienced teachers should guide them and they will definitely develop towards expertise.

Do you think a teacher feeling inadequate in a classroom has anything to do with the context of the classroom?

Yes I think so, language is a big problem I remember there was a grade 2 teacher that used to cry in the class, I was next to her and I used to go into her class to assist her.

The learners would be screaming and she was fresh out of college and had no idea what to do.

When do you think a teacher can actually consider themselves being very experienced in their job?

I think after, a teacher walks into a class prepared to do a day' work and if there's discipline in and outside the class then I think the teacher knows what they are doing, If there are children who don't understand the language, that should not be a reflection on the teachers performance.

What are some of the characteristics of an experienced teacher?

They are hardworking teachers, they come prepared to school, and they mark all the learners' books. They are in the classroom ready to do their work, they can correlate the subject so it is not compartmentalised, the children are learning every minute of the day in the class. They don't take long leave and leave their classes without a teacher.

Do you think there is a time limit to becoming very confident in your classroom?

A lot of that will depend on the school situation and the assistance they get from the heads of department. The principal and management should provide the teacher with help and guidance everyday with all problems and the teacher will become confident and positive.

Can any teacher become an expert teacher in the classroom?

Yes, definitely. As I said with hard work and dedication the teacher can do that, and you know we take work home. I sleep so late at night; midnight is my time to sleep so a teacher should be dedicated. A teacher who doesn't take work home and is not prepared for the next day may not succeed.

Would someone considered to be an expert in their school still be an expert in another school?

Yes if you are an expert in one context, you can be an expert anywhere. You just get into the situation and if you have a love for teaching, you can handle a situation anywhere.

What are some of the things that would influence the growth?

Workshops, a new teacher who is having a problem in the class can observe an experienced teacher which should be very helpful. An experienced teacher can teach a lesson in that classroom, giving guidance is very important. The inexperienced teacher must be willing to learn.

How do the continuous curriculum changes affect the new teacher?

I think it's very difficult for the new teachers with us (expert) we know exactly what the child is expected to learn with the curriculum changes. There is a lot of paperwork that is killing. Teaching the children and getting them to understand and progress is different from all the admin work. Novice teachers get confused.

Do novice teachers respond to change well in the context the fact that the language and children change?

Well I think if they come to schools like ours they will get a shock at the beginning, it's a culture shock and I think they take a long time to adapt. There are a lot of changes from what they learnt at college which is an ideal situation this is not, with large numbers which creates discipline problem and it's very difficult to teach if you can't maintain discipline

Do you think experienced teacher in the context of this school, would respond differently from a new teacher?

I think so definitely, they are more experienced and they should be able to handle all situation and changes. It's just the technology, is where I get stuck, I didn't advance in technology which is my only obstacle.

The numbers that you taught when you started in Marrianhill to now is there much difference?

Big difference we taught half the numbers

Do you think that contributes to the difficulties in the classroom?

Definitely, it is very difficult when we do assessments with 46 learners, you cannot give attention to the weak children. The teacher can concentrate on some of the learners and we got a lot of weak children in the class.

Do experienced teachers need to attend development programmes?

Yes definitely, with the new changes you have to go although we know the content we need to attend workshops to get to know the new teaching methods.

Looking at a new teacher and a very experienced teacher where do you think you lie on the continuum?

Definitely experienced, I have lots of years of experience and I did JP teaching throughout my years of experience which is about forty years and I went to college.

You being such an experienced teacher have you ever felt challenged at any time in your teaching experience or felt challenged?

Yes especially with be not being computer literate, that was a big challenge and it's my fault that I didn't overcome it. Has a HOD, it would have been easier for me if I was computer literate.

Do you think that an experienced teacher could feel like a new teacher at some stage in their teaching career?

Yes I think so with these curriculum changes especially with all the recording that they expect we have to do record keeping according to department requirements which can become very challenging.

Do you think that new teachers are experts in some aspects in their teaching profession?

Yes I do they must of done teaching for the love of it and loving the little children so that is a start they definitely do have expertise in their own way.

Do you think that an experienced teacher may need assistance concerning their teaching profession?

Yes you know with large numbers, teacher aids would have been a God sent. Some schools do have teacher aids I think that's such a big help because we get frustrated with big classes and marking 47 books and computer literacy like typing.

Do you think an experienced teacher can learn from a new teacher?

Definitely because we are lifelong learners, so we are always learning.

Do you think it is a good idea for experienced teachers to mentor new teachers?

Yes, because there are some things that the college don't tell them about so when they come to a school, they need a mentor, especially like if they teach in the same grade, grade mentorship is important.

APPENDIX 6b

Interview 2 - Zak

In which year did you begin your teaching career?

I started on the 21st January 2009.

Where did you teach?

I taught at Tulip Primary School.

Can you tell me a little about the context of the school?

This school is a basically a government school which is very underprivileged. You get learners from different backgrounds and different academic levels in the school. The classrooms are very small and there are 45 learners in a classroom its contextual factors hinder learning in a classroom.

Can you tell me about your early days of teaching?

It was very difficult. I just came out of university and I was not taught how to work with 45 learners. In my practical lessons I taught in a school with 25 learners and the school was fully resourced compared to other schools. So as a newly novice educator I found it very difficult to adapt but due to some mentorship from the management members I adapted.

What were some of the challenges that you faced initially?

Most learners never understood English; their knowledge of the language was very poor. The learners who fail have to advance to the next grade if they have already failed in that specific phase. According to department rules a learner cannot fail more than once in a phase. My style of teaching was very high for them so I had to bring it to a lower level so they could understand basic concepts and terms.

What did you learn about teaching in that context?

That not every learner is the same and as an educator you need to reflect on each lesson being taught because even though you think you know a lot you do not know much.

When you first started teaching what did you think about your abilities as a teacher?

I thought I was very well groomed because coming from University we thought we were the best but your abilities change once you enter a school of this sort because once you enter a Government school you enter into complex situations.

With hindsight, do you think your abilities were related to the context?

Oh not really because where I studied we worked out how to handle and deal with things and there was a perfect picture painted but in actual fact it was a real ugly place.

What are some things that you would do differently?

I would approach each situation differently with a calmer mind, calmer head rather than going in there screaming and performing because screaming and performing never got me anywhere so I would approach these situations much differently.

What would you not change?

I would not change my attitude and style because with my attitude of not being a very approachable person allowed learners to respect me more and I maintain more discipline in the classroom with this attitude

Would you be able to display the same level of performance in a dramatically different context?

Yes of course

Why?

Because I am a very adaptable individual I do many things besides teaching and I work well in situations when I am under pressure.

In your opinion as a newly qualified teacher would you say you are an expert or a novice?

A novice because you don't know what you get yourself into only when you are in the school plant, you will understand.

How would you describe a novice?

A novice teacher for me would be me, because you are walking in there with your bag, fully packet pens, pencils daily programme going into the office smiling, collect your paper work, walk into the classroom and you get a shock. Nothing prepared you to work with 45 learners who are not behaving. You try to calm the learners; each one is doing their own thing, as a novice teacher you don't know where to turn to. You seek advice from your peers but sometimes they cannot be helpful and it can be difficult

How long do you think a teacher would stay in a novice period?

I think over 3 years.

How can the novice stage be shortened?

In my opinion it cannot be shortened but it is based on the individual because if the individual adapts poorly it's going to take a longer period but the 3 year phase is quite right because you learn the insides and outs and thereafter well I don't think you can get an expert teacher but you can grow after the 3 years.

What do you think a new teacher would need for development towards expertise?

They need a lot of mentorship mainly from the management team and the peers from school; they need a good support base.

Do you think the context has anything to do with the person feeling novice?

No I think it is basically the person as I said if the person cannot adapt then they going to have difficulty whether they are an expert or a novice.

When can a teacher consider them self to be an expert?

No I don't think a teacher can be an expert even as a teacher in a university a teacher is a lifelong learner. You keep on learning irrespective if you are the principal, the HOD or whoever you are you are not an expert teacher. There is no teacher I know or principal or even the minister of education can tell me they can come to a complex class of 45 learners and get them to produce results of 80 percent and above so you are not an expert only an expert can get you to get 80's and above.

What would be the characteristics of a teacher who has been in the profession a long time?

He's calm, mellow he knows how to handle situations, he is very just and he is a fair person and he can adapt himself accordingly to suit the needs of the children rather than the needs of himself in my opinion.

How long would you say it would take a teacher to reach this stage?

30 years or more.

Do you think any teacher at any stage can consider themselves being an expert?

It's all based on everyone's ego, if an individual has an ego and had studied 5 or 6 degrees then they would classify themselves as an expert teacher but the proof is in the pudding if the marks show that the educator has performed accordingly then you can label yourself an expert teacher.

If a teacher has to tell they are an expert teacher would you say they can consider themselves an expert in another context or another school?

No you cannot because you are only as good as your weakest link and if your school is your weakest link you are not good enough.

What influences the growth of a novice into an expert?

It's the mentorship and the novice should be mentored accordingly.

How do novice teachers respond to continuous changes of the curriculum?

It's a bit hard to adapt because you are taught a certain way I know I was taught OBE but then we went back to the old method of teaching it takes a bit of getting used to but we survived.

How do novice teachers respond to change of context?

It will have a positive effect on them because your context cannot get worse it can only get better, so the better the context the better the educator.

Do expert teachers respond in the same way? How do they differ in the terms of their responses?

An expert teacher will know how to handle the situation a novice teacher like me will go in with guns blazing, an expert teaching would have been teaching longer and in a different way.

In your opinion, is there a point at which experts would need to attend development programmes?

Yes to be an expert you need to continuously be improving yourself you cannot be classed an expert if you just sit in the ranks of a novice.

At the beginning you did said you came in as a novice teacher looking at the continuum from a novice to an expert or from a new to an experienced teacher where would you place yourself?

Me? Novice

Are there situations in which even an expert will feel challenged? Do you think an experienced teacher will feel challenged at any stage?

Yes, because different situations will call for different actions. If teachers do not learn to adapt then they are going to feel challenged.

Can an expert become a novice?

Yes if you not going for workshops, meetings and not being kept aware of what's happening in the teaching world you will definitely fall back into the ranks of a novice.

Are some novices experts?

Maybe I don't know. No I don't think so.

Are there things about teaching that even expert teachers needs help with?

Yes you get an example where an expert teacher is trying to speak to a student with a language barrier and he cannot get the message across obviously he is going to ask another teacher who can be a novice teacher who speaks the language to explain so he is in need of assistance.

Can expert learn from novices?

Yes because we have come out of university freshly and bushy tailed and we also learned something new especially the current curriculum, although we might not blurt it out we know something.

Would it be a good idea to have expert teachers mentor novice teachers and why?

Yes we need the growth and development because a school is not the easiest place to work in.

APPENDIX 6c

Interview 3 – Anna

In which year did you begin your teaching career?

1999

Where did you teach?

I taught at a Kindles Pre Primary School in Chelsea.

Can you tell me about the context of that school?

The school was very well resourced children were exposed to different kinds of media when they were being taught. Children came to the school with a lot of prior knowledge and background knowledge because they had parents that were educated these children were very well spoken and they were quite bright children.

Can you tell me about your early days of teaching?

I wasn't a very confident teacher, each day was a new learning experience and I had to learn to adapt my planning according to the circumstances of the day

What were some of the challenges that you faced in that context?

The learners were very curious; they were very knowledgeable so I had to learn how to be knowledgeable about my content. I had to learn how to use the resources I had to be flexible and more open minded to questions that were asked.

What did you learn about teaching in that context?

Children like variety; they liked to be taught in different ways. Each child is different and they unique in their styles of learning. We had visual learners, kinetic learners and I had to adapt my ways to accommodate the learners.

At that specific time of teaching what did you think about your abilities has a teacher?

Theoretically, I thought I was very practical although there were many challenges; I took each day as it came and tried to adapt.

What would you say about your abilities related to that context?

Because the kids were very bright they had prior knowledge, I had to do a lot of research, I had to learn a lot before I came into the class and presented my lessons, I had to be ready to answer the questions so there was a lot of preparation needed and lots of planning needed, I had to know my content very well.

If you had to look back what are some things that you would do differently?

What would I do differently? I was a little rigid in my teaching methods where I wanted to stick to a plan. I think I should be a little more flexible and should allow the learners to lead me.

What would you not change?

I was happy that I gave the learners an opportunity to progress according to their own pace. I allowed and gave them opportunities to learn according to their potential. I didn't push them, I structured my way according to the learners potential so bright learners were taught with enrichment and learners who needed more assistance and help were taught differently, different worksheets and different planning.

Would you be able to display the same level of performance in a dramatically different context?

Obviously not, if the school is not well resourced and the children are not English speaking children I would have to change my teaching methods and strategies and my approach to the kids themselves.

In your opinion is a newly qualified teacher an expert or a novice?

I would think you are always a novice teacher. I would think every day is a new experience and I don't think we could ever be experts because there are always changes in the educational field all the time.

How would you describe a novice?

She lacks confidence and is afraid in her approach and more cautious in what and how she teaches and she would be more rigid because she wants to stick to what she knows.

How long is the novice period?

Just depends whether she is placed in a grade for a long period of time or she changes grades, if she is placed in the same grade for a 3-5 year period I think by the 3rd year she would be more confident. If a teacher is changing the grades she teaches every year then every year she is novice.

How can the novice stage be shortened?

Planning, preparation, speaking to mentor teachers and getting advice from others peer teachers will help shorten this stage.

What would a novice teacher require for development towards expertise?

I think in school training would be better with teachers who are more experienced in the field, attending workshops, becoming much more familiar with the curriculum and what is expected from the teacher.

Is being a novice connected to context?

I think definitely, a teacher also knows that the more resources that the school has the easier it is for the teacher to teach. But she also has to know how to use the resources. A school that lacks resources requires much more planning and preparation from the teacher so yes definitely context does determine your novice position.

When can a teacher consider herself to be an expert?

Me personally i have been in the teaching field for 13 years and i don't consider myself expert i think with all the changes no one can consider themselves to be expert. You are an expert if you are a specialist teacher like if you teach natural science you a little more expert in your field but in your teaching approach and what learners you get every year then you are a novice

What would be the characteristics of an expert teacher?

A teacher who is willing to learn from others and is opened to criticism, a teacher who accepts the changes that are happening and is very flexible in her methods, a teacher who is always willing to learn and is more mature in her thinking and more mature in her approach to her field.

How long does it take to become an expert teacher?

I am not too sure I don't think that any teacher will reach that stage where they think they know it all. There is no such stage, I mean in apartheid times when they were teaching and using those textbooks that were indoctrinating the kids, now we use textbooks to exposed the learners to the world so I don't think you reach an expert stage, you change with the times.

In your opinion, would someone considered to be an expert at a school, still be an expert in another school? Explain.

No every school is different every context is different. It also depends on what her position was or is in each school I mean if you got a position of authority and leadership and then you come to a school where you are dictated to and not allowed to make decisions that can make you feel inadequate.

What influences the growth of a novice into an expert?

Experience, getting assistance from others, being directed with open communication whereby the teacher knows exactly what is expected from her and what is expected from the children in her class. I think by then she herself or he himself will feel more confident and being a novice will eventually die of.

How do novice teachers respond to continuous changes of the curriculum?

They are afraid of the unknown they don't feel as confident in a classroom situation, what else can I say, with new changes they not sure of the approach and teaching methods so they will need a lot of workshop and a lot of motivation

How do novice teachers respond to change of context?

A novice teacher will find it difficult to adapt to different contexts but right now while studying in your notes you will realise different contexts need a different approaches so maybe the teacher will be more flexible and open minded but on the other hand the teacher might get afraid and feel that she cannot handle difficult situations and maybe also feel afraid to ask for assistance so it just depends on a person personally I think.

Do expert teachers respond in the same way, how do they differ in the terms of their responses to curriculum changes?

Yes, I think expert teachers are not as willing to accept change because they are so set in their ways compared to new teachers who are willing to adapt.

In your opinion, is there a point at which experts do not need to attend development programmes?

I would hope not. I would hope that they would be learning and want to learn more and continuously enrich themselves. I hope that's not the case because nobody can say that they are fully prepared in a situation.

Where would you place yourself on the novice-expert continuum?

Always novice everyday is a new learning experience.

Are there situations in which even an expert will feel challenged? Can you describe such a situation?

Definitely, I should think so if an expert teacher is level 1 and is promoted to HOD or principal that's a challenge by itself. With promotions I think challenges come up.

Can an expert become a novice?

Yes curriculum changes make you a novice, different schools, learning materials, changing grades always makes you a novice.

Are some novices experts? When? Why?

The only thing I would say is because they are young they are willing to try new things so maybe they are expert in being more open minded.

Are there things about teaching that even an expert will require some assistance? Can you give some examples?

Yes definitely every child is unique so if you have an integrated class with special needs or language barriers that's always a challenge and an expert may need assistance.

Can experts learn from novices?

Yes they can come up with new ideas; everybody brings new ideas into the profession.

Would it be a good idea to have expert teachers mentor novice teachers and why?

Definitely most definitely so they can assist with experience and novice teachers can assist with new ideas it goes hand in hand.

APPENDIX 6d

Interview 4 - Kelly

In which year did you begin your teaching career?

I started teaching in 1984.

Where did you teach?

I was first posted to a rural area. It was a farm area which was called Mariegold Primary and when I arrived there I realized I was redundant which is called excess today. I waited for 3 weeks till I was posted to the second school which was called Lantern Primary School.

Can you tell me about Lantern Primary School?

I was very fascinated with the school because it was a beautiful school, new buildings and it was barely a year old when I entered there. We had children that were from financially sound backgrounds. I would say it was a stable environment and the school plant itself was a new layout which really fascinated me as a new teacher. It was a very big school with large numbers.

What were some of the challenges that you faced in that context?

Being a new teacher we know more the theory part and we go for practice so I would say that the challenges were mostly discipline problems. Being young, about 21 I think we faced discipline problems in large classes. We had about 50 learners at that time because our school was waiting for a new school to be built so the children could be transferred there.

What did you learn about teaching in that context?

I learnt that the parents during that time in that specific area were very passionate about their children and education meant a lot and we as teachers were passionate at that time we were motivated and it was like a different kind of scenario compared to today's world.

In those early days what did you think about your abilities as a teacher?

I think when you are newly qualified at the beginning you think you know it all you got your qualifications on paper but really speaking you need to be hands on in the classroom to gain experience although you know the theory part you have to put the theory into practice and I think being dedicated and many of the teachers that time were dedicated and we had people that actually led us on and taught us where to go from there and move forward so we were lucky in that time that we had mentors.

With hindsight, do you think your abilities were related to the context?

Yes I think it was related.

What are some things that you would do differently?

There are not many things that I would do differently but now if you look at it we have a transformation, we have different languages then we just had one language because it was apartheid era. I was I don't know fortunate or unfortunate to work in the apartheid regime so we were just under house of delegates and there weren't many challenges. We need to change with the transformation.

What would you not change?

I think the discipline problems is challenging. In my early days of teaching discipline was not a problem. Teachers were given the due respect compared to today and I think I wish I could go back because in those days teaching was a profession it was an honourable profession so I think I would not change the discipline of learners because we had learners who would listen and wanted to be educated.

Would you be able to display the same level of performance in a dramatically different context?

It's not possible although I can give up my same level of performance but every context is different, what I do in one school is different to the other; you have to move with the time with the changes.

In your opinion is a newly qualified teacher an expert or a novice?

Definitely a novice.

How would you describe a novice?

I would say a novice is a teacher who has the qualification but does not have the experience and is new and would have to put theory into the classroom situation.

How long is the novice period?

I think there as well it depends on the individual and how the individual portrays herself and how fast they can move into becoming more confident, it can take a teacher six months or it can take a teacher six years it depends on the individual and her ability as a teacher.

How can the novice stage be shortened?

It depends on the management of the school and if they give the teacher support help and by actually mentoring the teacher, well then the teacher will be able to overcome their challenges and then the novice stage can be shortened.

What would a novice teacher require for development towards expertise?

A novice teacher will require a lot of empathy, support, and by actually taking and leading the teacher by the hand. I think I was actually fortunate when I was a novice teacher because I had that kind of mentoring by my HOD and I always remember her for she actually told me things like, use a red pen here and add some colour in your lesson plans. It was little things like that, I remember most. I think it depends on which institution the teachers qualified in as well as on the individual I would say.

Is being a novice connected to context?

I would say it is connected because the context changes all the time you cannot say that it is the same in every school. I think being a novice is definitely connected to the context, because every school, surrounding and area is not the same so one can feel like a novice in challenging contexts.

When can a teacher consider herself to be an expert?

I really don't know if a teacher can consider herself an expert. I don't think anybody is perfect because being an expert would be being a perfectionist and it is not easy to be a perfectionist and if a teacher is an expert we won't have learners who are facing

challenges because that teacher must be able to bring that child up to average or above average.

What would be the characteristics of an expert teacher?

I think an expert teacher should empathise with the child. They should put him or herself in the child's position. They are able to bring the child to a good standard and I think a teacher with these qualities and a passion for teaching maybe an expert teacher but it is not easy to fill that role of being an expert teacher.

How long does it take to become an expert teacher?

I think we will work all our lives towards being expert. I don't even think we could call ourselves expert teachers because that would be the perfect world. We don't live in a perfect world we live in a world full of challenges.

In your opinion, would someone considered to be an expert at a school, still be an expert in another school? Explain.

No, definitely not because every school has its challenges. Some schools have everything and some schools have very little resources.

What influences the growth of a novice into an expert?

I think if a novice is able to learn by watching others and take advice then I think a novice will be able to grow into an expert teacher. The novice must be able to except criticism to grow from strength to strength and not a person that knows it all because we all learn every day.

How do novice teachers respond to continuous changes of the curriculum?

I think many novice teachers are young and change is easier to come with the novice teachers than a teacher who has been in the profession for a long time. They should accept change because our society is ever changing.

How do novice teachers respond to change of context?

It will be difficult for some of them because it depends on the individual and how they see themselves and how they adapt to the context but then individual has to make it happen for him or herself.

Do expert teachers respond in the same way? How do they differ in the terms of their responses?

I think nobody is an expert teacher because we are always learning. We get children who come from throughout Africa and therefore we all have to make changes and it's not easy. We have to change with our responses and the way we approach situations.

In your opinion, is there a point at which more experienced teachers do not need to attend development programmes?

Definitely not we need to develop all the time. There are changes taking place all the time, the curriculum changes, we have to cater for the learners with different ability.

Where would you place yourself on the novice-expert continuum?

I would say I am not a novice neither am I an expert. I would say that I am somewhere in between. I am still learning and growing there's no end to growing. I think we will grow till our last day on this earth.

Are there situations in which even an expert will feel challenged? Can you describe such a situation?

I would say that experts comes into a classroom with learners are below average I think he or she will feel challenged because he or she will have to form different methods in which the can uplift that class. We have different challenges in schools. There are still school under a tree, under a tent and I am sure an expert is a person who is used to having all the resources, so there would be challenges in those kinds of contexts.

Can you tell me a little about yourself coming out of the school that you did and moving into your current school?

I was too long in one school which is not good. I think change is good but if you are not prepared to be opening minded and to work. You have to work all the time, and I think hard work doesn't kill anybody it only makes you able to cope in any situation. I came from a school that makes me feel proud because I had the training, the background training and therefore I can handle the context of this school.

Can an expert become a novice? When? Where? Why?

You may get some of them experts in a curriculum like CAPS. Our novices would know more than a teacher with thirty years experience because the content and curriculum that they were trained in would be CAPS orientated so they will be an expert in that and an expert can be a novice in that aspect and can learn from the novice.

Are there things about teaching that even an expert will require some assistance? Can you give some examples?

It like overlaps with everything an expert can require help with children like psychological help, doctors to be called in with health issues, and social workers can be called in to help our learners. So experts are not experts in everything because we need to develop the total child and I don't think we can do everything with regard to a child so we need help from other sectors.

Would it be a good idea to have expert teachers mentor novice teachers? Why? Why not?

It would be a good idea but the expert teachers must also be approachable and humble and they must actually be lead the novice by hand and put them in an environment where the novice will want to learn and at the same the expert can learn from the novice as well because learning is a two way process.

APPENDIX 6e

Interview 5 - Nelly

In which year did you begin your teaching career?

I began in 1998.

Where did you teach? Describe the context.

Initially it was in a school called Rosewood primary and that was initially the starting up of my schooling career. It was a school that was predominately Indian learners who came from affluent backgrounds. Much of the resources were present. We had a science lab, computer lab, a well stocked library, children's worksheets, requirements for prep were readily available, overhead projectors, duplicating machines, radios and televisions that were accessible for use in the classroom. We also had a pool and coaches who came in for different codes of sport to coach, a beautiful ground, sponsored hall in which all functions and assembly's where held. There was no need for fundraising besides an annual mini deb's ball because everything else was sponsored by parents. We had remedial, bible and speech and drama classes.

Can you tell me about your early days of teaching?

I used learning as a learning curve because I was very hungry for knowledge and how to teach was my biggest obstacle. I had the content, the grade to teach but I had to figure out how to teacher it effectively. A lot of it was trial and error, something's worked and something's didn't and having to go back to the drawing board and teaching the subject again a lot of remediation but I think it was a growth period for me.

What were some of the challenges that you faced in that context?

A lot of times it didn't concern the children but how to deliver the content which got a bit frustrated when I couldn't make a child understand the concept or the content use to be too much for them to handle. My challenge was what pedagogical strategies I could use to make that content become more effective. I had enough of the content knowledge I just didn't have enough teaching practice to know how to deliver the content, so that was my biggest challenge.

What did you learn about teaching in that context?

I think maybe its tenacity because I had this will power to succeed especially because I was a pupil in the same school in which I have returned to be a teacher and to liaise with people that were my teachers and are now my colleagues. I struggled in terms of trying to fit in as a professional because I still saw myself as a child that was trying to learn there and now to suddenly become professional was difficult.

In those early days what did you think about your abilities as a teacher?

I was still developing. I called it a development phase because I didn't feel as confident as some of the other teachers. They would walk into a classroom and deliver a lesson with confidence. I felt that most of the time I was like a textbook talk and talk method from the textbook direct a child's attention to a worksheet it was very much about me delivering the content rather than the learners getting involved in the lessons. My abilities were limited concerning feedback.

With hindsight, do you think your abilities were related to the context?

I would think so because as a new person coming in I felt challenged and daunted about the new environment and being the new person and trying to fit in. Also being alone with the children in a classroom initially was very scary because I came out of college and I did practice for a little while.

What are some things that you would do differently?

I would probably get the children involved in lessons. I would have done more research on what kind of strategies because I was taught a few methods like class discussion, group work when doing a poster which wasn't very interactive. I didn't learn role play and no stimulating activities were taught.

What would you not change?

My tenacity, the way I wanted to go in and make a success against all odds.

Would you be able to display the same level of performance in a dramatically different context?

I don't think so because you teach according to the context that you are in, the environment is sometimes different. I am now teaching in a totally different kind of school and my context, the people I interact with, my learners, my knowledge now compared to then is all different. The context is never the same it is continually tentative that it is always changing and you have to adapt to that.

In your opinion, is a newly qualified teacher an expert or a novice?

I think it's actually both because in certain content, didactics and pedagogical styles that is current; a novice has the latest curriculum knowledge and probably an expert in delivering of the content. But when it comes to being a novice maybe in terms of administration, getting familiar with the classroom context then they would probably be novice in certain areas.

How would you describe a novice?

Not someone that doesn't know anything but someone who is still learning and someone who is still developing skills on how to teach, what works, what doesn't work and how to deal with children.

How long is the novice period?

I don't think there is a set period; you go through phases of being a novice. There are times when you are very adept with a specific content like for example first we had National Curriculum Statement and objectives to achieve. And the curriculum changed many times since then. These changes makes very experienced teachers feel like novice. So as long as changes are taking place the novice period will continue.

How can the novice stage be shortened?

I think probably development with the department in the form of workshops. I know there's a lot of hype about subject clusters. Teachers are expected to meet in cluster schools, but the only problem is that it becomes time consuming. We are running to finish a syllabus and there is not enough time for us to actually meet in clusters and to think that this used to be done when we were taught. Now we don't have the time or

the energy. Maybe schools can provide their own development workshops to train us with different teaching strategies.

Is being a novice connected to context?

Yes it is, because in any situation you don't completely feel expert example in the implementation of the new curriculum CAPS I feel like a novice but if I give myself a year or six months I would probably engage with the content more and then I can become an expert.

When can a teacher consider herself to be an expert?

Maybe concerning certain content like when someone keeps abreast with content change. I mean once upon a time they used to say that there were 9 planets and now they tell you that there are 3 dwarfs and 8 planets so if you are looking at that then yes I can be an expert in certain content area.

What would be the characteristics of an expert teacher?

Someone who is diverse, able to relate to lots of children and diversity in the classroom, uses a lot of resources, uses the latest technology, can communicate well and are able to get children to communicate, and code switch. Someone who understands that the curriculum is going to continually be reviewed, it's not static, it's going to have to change to cater for the new type of children that we are going to be teaching.

How long does it take to become an expert teacher?

I think lifelong. It is not something you can learn over night and even if it takes a year to master some other changes are going to come and render you a novice again. So you have to continually be at it. It's not something you can just say I am an expert in.

Can any teacher be an expert?

Well it depends on the teacher to be an expert. It is someone that is knowledgeable, abreast with curriculum change, someone who actually knows what to teach and how to teach then I would think you are an expert.

In your opinion, would someone considered to be an expert at a school, still be an expert in another school? Explain.

With regards to content yes but in regards to being a novice in the classroom, getting assimilated with administration and how the children are, it would be different, they would be novice.

What influences the growth of a novice into an expert?

Development, support from all people. The HOD, the teachers on staff, the management, getting the feedback on what works and what doesn't work, the IQMS, the appraisal will help, assist and build a teacher, but you have to be willing to want to change.

How do novice teachers respond to continuous changes of the curriculum?

I think we adapt, I regard myself as a novice, because I may know the content, I am more willing as a novice to learn new things. I don't know it all, so because I continually want to understand the world I'm living in, understand the children I'm teaching, that makes me a better person to assimilate this new knowledge. It's not something that is daunting it is part of the learning.

How do novice teachers respond to change of context?

Sometimes it's a detrimental effect because being a novice person, it could be a language barrier for example I came from a school that was predominantly English speaking and I came to here where I have at least 7 languages spoken in the classroom, the home language is IsiZulu, the second language for grade 1,2,and3 is IsiZulu. But the children communicate at the playground and other places in English. Grade 4 to 7 does English. I can communicate in the English language but I cannot code switch, so that's a huge learning barrier and language barrier for me. I found that you got to adapt yourself to peer teaching, and different teaching strategies to make your teaching work for you. A different context completely and again it depends on your ability as a teacher, as a novice to want to change. So that was one of the biggest problems I had coming here.

Do expert teachers respond in the same way? How do they differ in the terms of their responses?

Some expert teacher if they were placed in a different school you can become novice with regards to their context, but not with regards to their knowledge, the content stays the same, but when it comes to anyone, it doesn't matter if you once was an expert the context in which you teach determines how you react and how you teach.

In your opinion, is there a point at which experts do not need to attend development programmes?

I don't think so. I think education is a learning curb. You are never too old to learn. I'm in a course right now in B Ed Honours in Maths and Science. There are people among me that are peers who make me feel intimidated because they are more knowledgeable and are teaching for thirty to forty years and they continue to study.

Where would you place yourself on the novice-expert continuum?

In the middle. I'm safer in the middle sitting on the fence. I could fall on either side. I am a novice and there are times when I try to develop myself further with the studies and things like that to become more expert in the field.

Are there situations in which even an expert will feel challenged? Can you describe such a situation?

Yes when the curriculum changes, the presence of language barriers, discipline problems and lack of resources are only a few aspects that can contribute to an expert teacher feeling challenged.

Can an expert become a novice? When? Where? Why?

Yes. Depending on the context they are in.

Are some novices experts? When? Why?

Yes, current curriculum, computers and modern technology.

Are there things about teaching that even an expert will require some assistance? Can you give some examples?

I think especially with the curriculum changes, with the coming CAPS. We've been going to workshops just to become more Offa with the policy and assessments and what they require. Yes a novice can be an expert and an expert can be a novice depends on the situation.

Can experts learn from novices?

Yes

Would it be a good idea to have expert teachers mentor novice teachers? Why? Why not?

I think in every educational field, if it is possible someone who deems himself an expert in that field for them to teach novices because then you won't have a professor, you won't have somebody higher up. You won't have the levels we go through in education. It would make life easier for both teacher and learner.

APPENDIX 7

Focus Group interview: Anna, Nelly, Kelly, Zak, Sandy and Delain

Question 1: Does context influence professional expertise? How?

Kelly: Yes, The lack of resources. In the 1980's all H.O.D. schools were provided with sufficient resources that included stationery and text books. The school plant was managed by the government unlike today, schools are self reliant. All Indian schools were under the Houses of Delegates. The House of Delegates managed all schools under their care. **(K - FG)**

Delain: At my current school we do have a lack of resources; this influences teacher effectiveness in the classroom. There are on average forty five learners per class from grades one to seven. It is difficult to cater for ninety learners in each grade with respect to resources. In science, although having a lab, it is not properly equipped, there are no chemicals and apparatus are old or broken and we cannot afford to replace them. **(D-FG)**

Nelly: Insufficient resources such as textbooks make it difficult for educators to teach the prescribed curriculum. Textbooks often change depending on the department and their policies, this causes money to be wasted and schools do not have enough funds to purchase new books. Due to the large numbers in classrooms there is also insufficient for all learners. **(N-FG)**

Kelly: In the days of my parents (1940's, 50's) schools were provided with hot meals for the learners. However parents had to purchase stationery and textbooks. It was strongly believed that without nourishment for the brain, learning could not take place. Today our schools are given a stipulated amount of money depending on the enrolment of learners. However, this money (budget is not sufficient to purchase text books for all learner. Now we experience shortages in resources such as textbooks and stationery. **(K -FG)**

Zak: In the past our education dept was separated according to race groups. There were no financial constraints. Resources were assessable to all learners. Books were directly related to the schemes of work. All other resources including books were supplied by various departments. **(Z-FG)**

Delain: The library does not have recent books, much of the donated books are out dated. The school has a single computer that has internet access. Resources do hamper expertise. Most times educators demonstrate experiments concerning technology from text book pictures, this therefore does not actively involve learners and they find concepts and content hard to grasp because they cannot visualise the concept. **(D-FG)**

Sandy: When I started teaching it was a pleasure to teach because we had all necessary resources available to us. This made teaching easier for us. There was no financial constraints placed on educators, we could then concentrate on teaching our learners. We were given learners resources as well as resources for the educators e.g. felt pens, chart paper, crayons, pencils, rulers, art sheets and handwork resources. These days we do not receive any resources. We need resources to make teaching easier especially with our large numbers. We spend large amounts on resources for our classes. Learners do not have pencils or crayons to do their work – so their work is always incomplete. **(S-FG)**

Zak: Resources were standardized. Human resources were adequate, there was no PPN. Because of frequent curriculum changes in this new dispensation there are varying resources that make it difficult to standardize the teaching and learning process. With CAPS we hope that this confusion of the curriculum with their resources will come to a halt. **(Z-FG)**

Anna: Resources and the lack of may hinder an educators' ability to adequately deliver the content. As professionals, flexibility and improvisation are key factors in making teaching and learning purposeful. Resources are the tools for education and the government needs to prioritise their education budget to ensure all schools are equally resourced and equal and fair education for all children. **(A-FG)**

Language Barriers

Kelly: In the 1980's our schools were not multi racial. All children came from English background homes. There were fewer challenges to regard to language barriers compared to the present age. Today (2012) we have children from all over Africa and the rest of the world. Learners are forced to learn in languages that are not their mother tongue. However due to job opportunities in SA and the rest of the world parents want their child to be English and Zulu literate (in South Africa). Transformation has taken place at a fast rate, however our education system have many flaws. **(K-FG)**

Nelly: Yes, language barriers is a major problem, some learners come from Zulu speaking homes but are taught through English, this causes learners to be unfairly assessed and it also makes educators frustrated as they feel they are unable to teach correctly just because the learner does not understand the language. **(N-FG)**

Zak: Previously there were no language barriers because of different education departments. Learners started schooling at a grade R level with the LOLT of the school e.g. English, French, and Zulu. But today learners come from different language and cultural backgrounds making it difficult to teach effectively. In a multilingual class it makes it difficult to even code switch. This difficulty is also enhanced by large class sizes where group or individual remediation or mentoring is almost impossible. **(Z-FG)**

Sandy: This problem did not exist in my earlier days of teaching. Learners understood the LOLT and therefore worked at a faster pace. Parents assisted their children with their homework because they understood the home language. Today we are faced with a huge problem because of language barrier together with no grade R or formal education. We have learners from diverse backgrounds and languages. In grade one I have to teach grade R and grade one work to learners who don't understand the language of instruction. I know that educators that have grade ones in their first year of teaching are finding it difficult because of language barriers. **(S-FG)**

Anna: South African education is delivered predominantly in an English medium. However based on the characteristics of our country and its inclusion of the diversity of language, this does become the greatest challenge that educators face today. A classroom may consist of learners with several different languages. In terms of understanding, applying and delivering the content learnt may prove difficult for most learners. The large classes do not allow an educator to give individual attention to any learner. Peer teaching sometimes assist, if learners share the same language. **(A-FG)**

Delain: We have approximately seven languages in a classroom although the LOLT is English. The learners are predominantly isiZulu speaking but the remaining speak isiXhosa, Sotho, Afrikaans and foreign languages such as French and Lingala. I cannot code switch to ensure learners understand my instructions and the content being delivered. Peer teaching helps to a certain extent when learners are permitted to speak any language to help explain concepts and activities. There is however a problem in translating of science and maths terms

from English to another language can present errors. Often learners who do not understand the content do not want to participate and this apathy leads to discipline problems. I feel frustrated and like a novice teacher with respect to content delivery in a language other than English. Due to language barriers learners perform poorly in Annual National Assessments in English and Mathematics and English summative and formative assessments. **(D-FG)**

Curriculum change

Anna: The curriculum is in the state of flux. Since, the new government in 1994 the curriculum has changed due to politics. Millions have been used to implement curriculum changes. However, it seems we are going back to the curriculum of the 80's. Names have been changed only, content in some subjects have been changed. Quantity seems to be the emphasis today. In the F.P. our learners are struggling to grasp the various skills and knowledge. In the 70's and 80's emphasis were on quality of teaching rather than quantity of content (subject matter). Remedial, guidance, special education need to be brought back into schools. We need to develop the child totally not only academic. **(A-FG)**

Nelly: With the constant change in the curriculum educators are not work shopped in advance to deliver the curriculum correctly. There is also insufficient information for educators to work with, workbooks and educator guides are delivered late, in some schools not delivered at all this results in schools following different books and learning different themes therefore when learners change schools there is confusion a certain concepts were not taught. **(N-FG)**

Zak: In the past the curriculum was rigid and remained there for a long time making it possible for educators to take ownership of the system. There was no confusion of implementing the curriculum. In today's dispensation there are too many changes in the curriculum making it very confusing to learners, educators and parents. Also, the workshops conducted by personal are not adequately prepared to pass on cascade the information correctly and appropriately, therefore leaving room for confusion and incorrect implementation of the curriculum, thus affecting the correct and effective implementation of the curriculum. In the past we had quality education today we focus on quantity. **(Z-FG)**

Sandy: The curriculum has changed so many times that educators are not sure anymore, what is expected of them. It has become a joke- we know that education is politically motivated. Those that make these ridiculous changes need to come into classrooms to see what's going

on. Government has wasted money by trying out new changes that were unsuccessful at the expense of the children. Now the CAPS system has reverted to the old system that worked and was successful. Now we have too many aspects of recording which is unnecessary. The increase in recording assessments has resulted in decreasing teaching time, “Learner is not the most important person in this system.” **(S- FG)**

Anna: The ever changing curriculum has created instability lack of confidence and many debates amongst educators, who are unable to cope with such changes. Contextual factors within schools, learners numbers, linguistic barriers and qualified teachers need to be assessed before changes are introduced “change should be for the better” and not disabling the system further. Specialist educators from different school context must be consulted and become part of curriculum development programmes must be accompanying curriculum change to make the “change” more acceptable to educators. **(A-FG)**

Delain: The South African Education system as since 1994 was in a constant state of change. Curriculum 2005, using the Outcomes based approach (OBE) was skills driven and Learner-centred, a move away from the traditional challe and talle methods, teacher authoritative classroom practice. Educators based their lessons on learners’ contexts i.e. social, cultural, religious, political backgrounds. Lessons and specific learning outcomes, assessment standards and specific for learners to achieve are set from the very outset. Educators had to become facilitators. Being a new teacher to the education system, but I had the OBE training in college so I was an expert in the implementation in the new curriculum as opposed to educators who employed the traditional methods of teaching. **(D-FG)**

Learner’s background

Kelly: Learners backgrounds plays an important role when determining challenges that learners face, poverty, unemployment, single parenting, divorce, unstable families high rise of food, rent, drugs, gambling, alcohol, are what our learners face at home. There needs to be a close network between parent and school. However in this day, where parents are working, it is difficult to keep in close contact. Values should be taught at home. However it is not and therefore discipline at school suffers. **(K-FG)**

Nelly: Many learners come from disadvantaged homes were they lack parental supervision, love, hygiene and care. Many responsibilities are given to these learners aside from school

work e.g. household chores, taking care of younger siblings. Due to this learners are unable to concentrate during lessons; they are troubled and yearn for attention and causing discipline problems. **(N-FG)**

Zak: In the past parents took a keen interest in their children's education. There was a close link between school and home- benefitting the learner. Today we have learners coming from different culture and socio-economic backgrounds. Financial constraints have forced both parents into employment leaving a gap or inadequate educational supervision at homes. Emphasis is placed on short term survival rather than long term goals. Learners coming to our schools from no-parenting families find it difficult to sustain an educational environment. Introduction of large school fees also makes it difficult for learners to stay in one school – leaving room for instability in the learners' educational environment. **(Z-FG)**

Sandy: The diverse backgrounds and home environments play a major role in education of learners today. In the earlier days parents were able to assist with homework and discipline. They were important part in the complete well being of the child. We rarely had discipline problems and parents were ever willing to co-operate with the school. These days our learners come with a lot of baggage and poor home environments. It is a sad situation where they cannot be helped by their caregivers that cannot understand the language. We love our learners and do the best we can for them. Teaching is my passion – so I still enjoy working with my learners. **(S-FG)**

Anna: This hugely influences educators' professionalism, since educators have to now adopt a new role of, a parent, social worker, nurse, friend etc. Learners are too mature or extremely childish for their age and their influences their education. Educators are forced to assist learners overcome their emotional, physical and social barriers that hinder their education progress. Parents are often illiterate or absent from the learners life and thus educational assistance from home is neglected. "A child's first teacher is their mother" and most often learners have no idea who their parents are. There is no sense in belonging which severely affects a child psychologically and emotionally. Thus teaching a child like this is very challenging. **(A-FG)**

Delain: The indigent learners in our school are part of our feeding scheme, our learners also travel great distances to get to school, some of our children arrive at school at six o' clock due to their parents working in the Central business district (CBD). Most of our learners live

with caregivers and grandparents which poses a great problem when it comes to homework being completed. The adults don't understand English well enough to help the children with homework. It's the parents who insist on their children learning through the medium of English. **(D-FG)**