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The Geographies of Literacy Teaching and Learning in isiZulu Mother Tongue

in a Grade 3 Classroom

By

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DECLARATION

I, Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko, declare that this dissertation entitled:

The geographies of literacy teaching and learning in isiZulu mother tongue in a Grade 3 classroom,

is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

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20 March 2016

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late mother, Sandy Albertina kaSakhile-Sibiya- (intombi yeBhaca kaNodwengu ngokudwengulela) and to my late sister, Nomusa Patricia kaSibiya-Mbatha - who have always been my source of inspiration. The advice you gave that still lives in me, and without you I would not have achieved much**.**

To my Dad, whom I love so much. He chose to sacrifice his own happiness for his children's sake. Thank you SOTOBE, we love you much.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore literacy teaching and learning in a 'mother tongue' language – isiZulu- at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The focus was on the literacy practices of one Grade 3 teacher, specifically speaking and listening, reading and expressive writing, and written language use, however the aspect of spelling was not included as part of this research stud.

The study was a qualitative case study undertaken with one Grade 3 isiZulu mother tongue literacy teacher at the school situated in the greater Durban area. A geographical lens was utilised to examine the spatialities of isiZulu mother tongue literacy teaching and learning, in particular reading, expressive writing, speaking and listening. Data production involved individual interviews, informal classroom observation, video-taping of lessons, and document analysis.

The study illuminated various contradictions in the teaching practices of the participant that negated her constructivist beliefs, and these included repetition, drill, and mechanical copying from the chalkboard as part of expressive writing lessons. Although the teacher did demonstrate sound practices in the teaching of reading, there was found to be a need for a range of fun and exciting materials and activities that would actively engage the learners in authentic meaning making within all facets of literacy, in a range of literacy contexts, and in literacy for different purposes.

The study highlighted that teachers need to understand that when children learn literacy in the mother tongue, they need exciting opportunities to practice reading, expressive writing and speaking and listening. Practice is not about repetition and drill but about giving learners a range of creative practice tasks and activities, and a variety of printed materials and other media to build a love of literacy in the isiZulu mother tongue. The study also points to the need for exploring and researching the use of digital educational tools for literacy learning in languages other than English. The study has important implications for isiZulu mother tongue teaching and learning and for teacher professional development.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1. 1   Introduction

The purpose of the research presented in this dissertation was to explore the geographies of literacy; taught and learnt, through the use of a 'mother tongue' language i.e. isiZulu, at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The focus was on the literacy practices of one Grade 3 teacher viz. speaking and listening, reading and expressive writing, and written language use. A motivating factor for this focus was the limited scholarly research on mother tongue literacy teaching and learning in the African context (for example, Khoza, 2012; Kamwendo, Hlongwa & Mkhize, 2014; Moya, 2009; Serfontein & De Waal, 2013). The study was also motivated by the Annual National Assessment (ANA) results in the 3 years prior to the commencement of this study, which showed that a large percentage of learners in South Africa have low levels of literacy in their mother tongue.

1.2   Rationale and motivation

Mother-tongue instruction refers to the use of a learner's mother tongue as medium of instruction. UNESCO (2003) explains the term 'mother tongue' as follows:

> *'The language[s] that one has learnt first; the language[s]one identifies with*
> *or is identified as a native speaker of by others; the language[s] one knows*
> *best and the language[s] one uses most.'*

'Mother tongue' can also be referred to as the 'primary' or 'first language' (UNESCO, 2003; p. 15). Moya (2009) states that the mother tongue is the language a child acquires and uses at home prior to school attendance. Kobia (2007) further explains that it is the language a child acquires in their early years and which has been used as the natural instrument or channel of thought and communication.

In my study, I embraced the prior mentioned definitions. Similarly, the Department of Education, South Africa states that the home language is the "language first acquired by

children through immersion at home; the language in which an individual thinks" (Department of Education, 2013, p.3).

Within the literature studied, the mother tongue is referred to in a myriad of ways: first language; home language; native language (Khoza, 2012).This bears importance as education, in particular, providing equal and quality education to all South African citizens was one of the major issues that came under review when South Africa achieved democratic status in 1994. In addition to fair and equal opportunities to learn, our Constitution sought to guarantee every citizen the right to receive an education in the language of their choice. Hence, eleven languages were bestowed the status of an official language, these were: seSotho saLeboa (sePedi), seSotho, seTswana, siSwati, tshiVenda, xiTsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Afrikaans, and English. Subsection 6(4) of the Constitution states that the government has to use and affirm all official languages in a fair and equitable manner (RSA, 1996) and Alexander (2003) asserts that all languages in the country are seen as "assets rather than problems"(p. 16). The Republic of South Africa National Education Policy Act (27/1996: section 4(a) (v)), stresses that the state must develop and protect the rights of every learner to be instructed in their language of choice, enforcing their Constitutional right to use their language and participate in their own cultural life within education institutions.

The Language in Education Policy (Department of Education, 1997a) directs that all sectors of society have to commit to creating an environment in which respect for all languages is assured. Thus, the Department of Education was tasked to encourage multilingualism in the country and the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (Department of Education, 1997a) was implemented which makes provision for the use of the Home Language i.e. the mother tongue, for teaching and learning. The LiEP endorses (1) multilingualism; (2) an additive approach to language in education, giving individuals the right to choose the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) at their school if it is practicable for the school to accommodate the choice of LoLT; and (3) the promotion of the use of learners' home language and at the same time to provide access to other languages (Department of Education, 1997a).

In 2013, the Department of Education (DoE) released the Draft Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL) policy (Department of Education, 2013) in which the DoE explained that the incremental introduction of African Languages (IIAL) policy aimed to

strengthen the use of African languages at Home Language level. The South African Constitution of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996), in Section 29 provides for linguistic choice within the education system, particularly at school level. In Section 29(2) it is stated that every citizen has the right to access education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where education in that language is reasonably practicable (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Thus, we see that the Language in Education Policy (Department of Education, 1997a), makes provision for the home language of learners be used as the language of teaching of learning in line with the Constitution, which guarantees linguistic choice. Serfontein and De Waal (2013) assert that the *Norms and Standards Regarding Language Policy* published in terms of section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act of 1996 appears to try to seek a balance between linguistic diversity, the protection of individual language rights, the rights and responsibilities of Public School Governing Bodies, and the rights and of provincial education departments.

Serfontein and De Waal (2013) explain that language-in-education policies have failed to build the status of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction. They argue that English is still the favoured language despite the fact that only 8.2% of citizens are English mother tongue speakers. The large majority of learners have an African language as their mother tongue. Although there has been much debate internationally on the issue, UNESCO (2003) argues that mother tongue instruction is valuable to the development of language competence in the first language, proficiency in the second language, and to achievement in other learning areas in the school curriculum (UNESCO, 2003). However, drawing on research, Serfontein and De Waal (2013) illustrate that within the South African context, a number of factors hinder the realisation of the right to linguistic choice in practice and promotion of the mother tongue, for example, inadequately trained teachers and shortage of teaching and learning materials.

Concerns about the poor literacy levels of learners at school level in South Africa have come from various investigations over the years. In a study conducted by the Unit for the Development of Language Abilities at the University of Pretoria, it was found that 2 000 out of 6 000 first-year students who were the Grade 12 learners of the previous year(s), had a language ability that was on the level of a Grade 7 learner or even lower (Rademeyer, 2001

cited in Davids, 2009). The study also indicated that some students had poorly developed reading and writing skills. The Department of Education (2013) conceded that meagre learning outcomes in South Africa are largely due to poor language proficiency and utility. The Department of Education argues that this is confirmed by the substandard results in the Annual National Assessments (ANA) and national and regional tests such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) and Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) over the years.

The Annual National Assessments are standardised national assessments for literacy and numeracy for the foundation phase (Grades 1 – 3), and for languages and mathematics in the intermediate phase (Grades 4 – 6). The tests are administered in all eleven official languages in the foundation phase (Grades 1 to 3), including isiZulu and in the two languages of teaching and learning within the Intermediate and Senior Phases.

The first large-scale ANA was conducted in February 2011, and included approximately six million learners in Grades 2-6. More specifically, ANA 2011 involved the assessing of all learners in Grades 2 to 7 during February 2011, the focus being on the levels of learner performance in the previous year, that is, in Grades 1 to 6 (Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b). The 2011 ANA results for literacy in the country showed that 48% of learners in Grade 3 did not achieve (attained a score of less than 35%); 16% of learners partially achieved (at least 35% but less than 50%); 21% achieved (at least 50% but less than 70%); and only 15% of learners had outstanding results (at least 70%) (Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b). The national mean literacy scores were 35% in Grade 3, and 28% in Grade 6.

In 2012, the second ANA was conducted in September 2012, seven million learners participated, including Grade 9, learners from more than 20 000 mainstream and special schools. Although the overall results for ANA in Grades 1 to 6 indicated a general improvement in the achievement of learners, the performance was below the desired 60% threshold of learners mastering the minimum Language and Mathematics competencies by the end of Grades 3, 6, and 9 set by the Department of Education. In 2012, the ANA results revealed that the performance of learners in language literacy was much poorer in the higher grades than in the lower grades, with 78% of Grade 1 learners obtaining 50% or higher in the test while the corresponding percentage for Grade 6 was 12%.

In September 2013, the ANA was conducted with approximately seven million learners in Grades 1 to 6, and Grade 9 in more than 24 000 schools. Although the results revealed an upward trend in most grades, the Department of Education conceded that it has to strengthen its efforts towards realising the desired 60% threshold of learners mastering the minimum Language and Mathematics competencies by the end of Grades 3, 6 and 9 (Department of Education, 2013). The average percentage marks for language achieved in 2012 and 2013 was is reflected in the table below:

GRADE	HOME LANGUAGE LITERACY	
	2012	2013
1	58	60
2	55	57
3	52	51
4	43	49
5	40	48
6	43	59
9	43	43

Table 1: ANA Home Language Results 2012 and 2013

The ANA results over the past 3 years thus reflects that a large percentage of learners in South Africa have low levels of literacy in the home language. An interesting finding is that for the small sub-group of learners whose home language is Afrikaans, performance was highest across all the grades. The isiZulu Home Language results for Grades 1 to 3 achieved in the 2011, 2012 and 2013 ANA are reflected in the table below:

GRADE	HOME LANGUAGE LITERACY		
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
2013	59. 1	56. 9	54.3
2012	56.3	56.7	53.1
2011	42	40	31

Table 2: isiZulu Home Language results in ANA 2013

Cummins (2000) has stated that learners the world over come to school at the age of five fluent in the language of their homes and Wa Thiong'o (1993) makes a significant point about the disarticulation of learners from their mother tongues in schooling contexts, arguing that while this may not impact negatively on their oral language, it can be detrimental to literacy development. Despite the large body of interdisciplinary research that now exists on literacy learning that has provided insight into the complexities of literacy learning in the early years, various scholars have drawn attention to the poor teaching and learning environments children enter in schools in many countries of the South (for example, Alexander and Bloch, 2004; Foley, 2008; Ball, 2010). These studies have highlighted the limited print resources available in the mother tongue language with which children can engage, the teaching of literacy in social and cultural vacuums, and the over-emphasis on the mechanical skills of reading and writing; literacy materials that focus on low-level skills and drills. In such contexts, children are denied the opportunity to develop literacy in meaningful, language rich, creative environments; and teachers who lack the pedagogical skills to teach literacy in the mother tongue effectively, and who have had poor training in language as a subject.

In view of the above trends and the poor performance of learners in Home Language in South Africa, I was keen to research the issue of literacy teaching and learning in isiZulu mother tongue at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. My aim was to explore the influences that shape, hinder or foster literacy learning. For me as a researcher, the argument this raises is: if learners come to school with good linguistic abilities in the mother tongue, how has the school or the education system advantaged or disadvantaged learners in the learning of their mother tongue and sound literacy development (that is, reading, writing, speaking, listening)?

1.3   Key research questions

The study I present in this dissertation, explored the following research questions:

- What are the literacy teaching practices of a teacher in a Grade 3 isiZulu mother tongue class?

- How does the teacher navigate the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy in her particular school context?

- What influences shape mother tongue literacy practices in the Grade 3 class?

1.4   Synopsis of chapters

Chapter 1 provides an overview of and the rationale for the study, the focus and the purpose (both academic and personal) for researching the three key questions.

Chapter 2 presents a review of related literature. The literature reviewed in this chapter deals with language policies globally as well as in South Africa. The tensions, dilemmas and debates surrounding the language policies are scrutinised in both theoretical and empirical literature.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the research design and methodology of the study. The methodology used was narrative inquiry. I also explain why a qualitative research study was undertaken within the bounds of the critical paradigm. I elaborate on the following design issues: study context and sampling; data generation and analysis; the issue of trustworthiness; limitations of the study, and ethical considerations. I also present my approach to data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents and discusses the key findings of the study in relation to the research questions and their interpretation, drawing on my conceptual and theoretical frameworks and current debates in literature.

Chapter 5   presents the conclusion and implications of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1   Introduction

The previous chapter presented the background, focus, motivation and rationale of the study. As stated, this study investigated the geographies of language teaching and learning in a Grade 3 classroom at a primary school. This chapter presents a review of related literature and highlights key focal points. Firstly, the definition of significant concepts in my study is presented. Secondly, I examine relevant legislation and policies related to the language question in South African schools. Thirdly, I review existing literature; theoretical and empirical, on language policies and practices in schooling contexts internationally, with a particular focus on mother tongue instruction. The review is in the form of an evaluative report of the information found in literature related to my selected topic of study. My review describes, summarises, evaluates and clarifies previously researched literature and provides the context for my own study.

2.2   Key concepts related to the study

There key concepts related to my research discussed below. I present my conceptualisation of the notions drawn from literature studied (for example, Ball, 2010; Kobia, 2007; Kosonen and Young, 2009; UNESCO, 2003).

- *Language of literacy* is a language through which the literacy learning takes place in the classroom, and includes learning materials and resources.

- *Language of Teaching and Learning (LoLT)* is the language (or medium) of instruction, that is, the language through which the content of the curriculum is mediated within a schooling system.

- The term *'literacy'* in my study refers to the four aspects of language, that is, listening, speaking, reading and writing, and the ability to use these in a range of contexts. I conceptualise language literacy as a flexible group of skills, processes and strategies that

are linked to context and purpose. Literacy involves the integration of speaking, listening, reading, writing and critical thinking, and includes the ability to recognise and use language appropriately for various social situations, for example, a Grade 3 learner should be able to write for different purposes.

- *'Mother tongue'* is conceptualised as the language that one acquires in the home through immersion. It is the language in which young children think and learn. It is the first language that a person learns as a child, rather than a language learnt at school or as an adult. The first language one acquires or the mother tongue is also referred to as L1, the native language, or the 'primary language'. Mother tongue has a very important role to play as a medium of instruction for most the school subjects in many contexts internationally. It can be a powerful vehicle for the acquisition, explanation, and construction of knowledge (Lieberson, Dalto & Johnston, 1975).

- *Home language*, refers to the language or languages spoken in a learner's home, and may not be the mother tongue.

- *Multilingualism* refers to the use, promotion or maintenance of more than one language in a certain context by an individual or a community of speakers of those languages. This is in contrast to *monolingualism* which is the use, and promotion of only one language.

- *An indigenous language* is the language spoken uniquely by an indigenous community and/or with origins in a given community or country.

2.3   The language in education issue: Legislation and policy imperatives in South Africa

2.3.1   Introduction

In South Africa, since the democratic government came into power in 1994, various legislation and policy documents that communicate the language in education policy of the country emerged, for example, South African School's Act (SASA) of 1996; Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996; Language in Education Policy (Department of Education, 1997a); and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (Department of Education, 2002). In order to address the marginalisation of mother tongue languages during the apartheid era which privileged Afrikaans and English, democratic South Africa adopted a policy of multilingualism.

Alexander (2003) stated that South African Language in Education Policy of 1997 is in essence, a mother-tongue based bilingual education in a multilingual context. Children switch from mother tongue as the medium of communication to a second or third language as the Language of Teaching and Learning (LoLT) after two or three years of schooling. This is referred to as a subtractive or transitional bilingual approach (Alexander, 2009), which aims to ensure that learners acquire high levels of proficiency in an African language as well as the main language of teaching and learning (LoLT) for example, English, and the goal is to develop bilingual and multilingual citizens. In the sub-sections below key language policies are discussed in further detail.

2.3.2 The Constitution of Republic of South Africa of 1996

A variety of interrelated clauses on the subject of language is dealt with in the Constitution of Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 1996). As stated in chapter one, the provision of this Constitution recognises eleven languages as the official languages of South Africa. They include Sepedi, Sesotho, and English, isiNdebele, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Setswana, SiSwati Afrikaans, isiXhosa and isiZulu. Sign language also has the status of an official languages. The Constitution recognises that all official languages must be treated equally (RSA, 1996). Furthermore, the Constitution highlights the need to promote the status, and develop the use of indigenous languages as a form of redress due to the marginalisation of them during the apartheid era. In other words, promoting indigenous languages is a means of transforming the social injustices of the apartheid era.

The Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution lays down the fundamental human rights of every South African citizen (RSA, 1996, Chapter 2) and foregrounds the right of ALL citizens to receive education in the official language(s) of their choice in public education establishments. The Bill of Rights also points to principles that should be in place to guarantee effective access to, and effective execution of this right, namely the need for practicability, redress and equity. The Bill of Rights also compels the state to consider all reasonable education strategies to promote the exercising of this right (RSA, 1996, Chapter 2).

The provisions stipulated within the Constitution have important implications for the development and implementation of language policy in schools. Unfortunately, this right is diminished by the State's inability to provide adequate resources to enable the

implementation of this right. As a result, the majority of post-apartheid South African schools continue to experience major resource constraints, including lack of funding and resources to translate and replicate texts into the full range of indigenous languages (Tshotsho, 2013). Hence, the result is that language in education policy implementation at school level is slow, uneven, often unsound and unsustainable (Edwards and Ngwaru, 2011).

Current debates on the status of English as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in South African schools reflect that the English language continues to hold a dominant status over other indigenous languages. The plan to reproduce study texts in all mother tongue languages has not yet been effected successfully, resulting in the incongruence between policy principles on the one hand and school and classroom practices on the other.

To summarise, an inherent dilemma is that the State is unable to commit adequate resources to support the execution of the imperatives in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The South African Schools Act (SASA) will be discussed in sub-section below.

2.3.3   The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996

The South African Schools Act (SASA) prescribes to School Governing Bodies (SGBs), a number of requirements in relation to determining language policy in public schools. The Act assigns power to SGBs to define the language policy of schools in accordance with the Constitution, the language in Education Policy (Department of Education, 1997a), and any appropriate provincial law or policy related to a school's language policy. This power of the SGB is subject to the principles delineated in three clauses of the Constitution. I summarise these below.

- The State must put in place, sound measures to enable the advancement of languages considered to be historically marginalised and neglected, particularly indigenous African languages (RSA, 1996a, Chapter 1, section 6 [2]).

- Every citizen has the right to access education in the official language or language of their own choice in public education institutions, if it is practicably possible. However, the state must take into account and consider all reasonable educational options when exploring equity; feasibility; and the need to redress historical racially prejudiced practices of the apartheid era (RSA, 1996, Chapter 1, section 29[1and2]).

- Each individual has the right to use, and participate in social institutions in a language of their choice, but may not employ these rights in a way that deviates from any provision of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution (RSA, 1996, Chapter 1, section 30).

Thus, the SGB of a public school is guided by the above imperatives in defining the choice of school's LoLT from the eleven official languages. Section 29(2c) can be interpreted as an imperative to give serious attention to African languages which were marginalised under the apartheid administration. However, the reality is that lack of access to study material in African languages and the domination of the English language globally seem to impact the decision-making of the SGB regarding a school's language policy (Heugh, 2000; Maswanganye, 2010; Serfontein & De Waal, 2013).

2.3.4   The Language in Education Policy (Department of Education, 1997)

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) implemented in July 1997 is clearly within the imperatives of the Constitution. Its' provisions are further elucidated in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (NCS) of 2002 (Department of Education, 2002). The underlying principles of LiEP are to support the use of home language as the LoLT especially at primary school level, while providing access to an additional language(s). Discussed below are the significant proposals in the LiEP that were relevant to my study (Department of Education, 1997a).

- The choice of the LoLT must be made by learners on application for admission to a specific school;

- The school that offers the LoLT opted for by the learner, and where there is a place available in the particular grade, has to admit the learner.

- All learners shall be offered their LoLT and at least one additional approved language as a subject, from Grade 3 onwards.

- At least one official language has to be offered to learners as a *subject* in Grades 1 and 2.

- If there is no school in a particular district that offers the learner's selected language as a medium of learning and teaching, the learner may request the

Provincial Education Department (PED) to address the issue. The PED must circulate the request to all schools in the relevant school district.

- It is imperative that all language subjects receive time and resource sharing in a fair and equitable manner.

Schools should accommodate at least 40 learners per class in Grades 1 to 6 or 35 learners in Grades 7 to 12 to provide education in particular LoLT (Department of Education, 1997b). What this suggests is that whether a school provides a particular LoLT or not is dependent on the choices made by learners (or parents). Furthermore, if the LiEP is analysed in the context of SASA, one can see that there is a significant emphasis on choice, rather than strong control by the state in the determination of language policy at school level. There are however, complexities with schools' determining the LoLT and whether or not this decision aligns with the imperatives of the Constitution. For example, a study undertaken by the Department of Basic Education (2010) on the status of LoLT showed some interesting findings emerged. At the time of the study, the home language of the majority of learners (approximately 65%) was isiZulu, yet only 25% of this majority were learning via isiZulu as the medium of instruction (Maswanganye, 2010). This trend is mainly influenced by the decisions of SGBs (Maswanganye, 2010).

According to Herriman and Burnaby (1996), most indigenous languages in South Africa are under risk because of previous apartheid policies and practices as well as the view that English is the language of power. Extra and Maartens (1998) argue that South Africa's previous language policy, which focused on the institutionalisation of English and Afrikaans as the only official languages, protected a particular group of people, that is, first language speakers of these languages; who enjoyed political, educational and economic power, while speakers of other languages were marginalised. What was created was the perception that these dominant languages, English in particular, allowed for upward economic and social mobility hence, the hegemony of English was entrenched in that way. Herriman and Burnaby (1996) argue that English is still perceived as a language of admittance to a large array of resources nationally and internationally viz. higher education, technology, economic opportunities, and as a dialect both within the country and beyond its boundaries. Thus, one can see that the existing language-in-education policy exists in a context controlled by English as the dominant and governing language.

2.3.5 The National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) of 2002 prioritises the importance of additive multilingualism and promotes the need for African languages to be taught at schools (Department of Basic Education, 2002). When one reads the NCS in conjunction with the LiEP there emerges certain policy inconsistencies. Whilst the LiEP stresses that learners shall be offered at least one approved language as a subject in Grades 1 and 2, the NCS (DoE, 2010), on the same subject, states that:

- All learners study their mother tongue and at least one additional language as language subjects from Grade 1;
- All learners have studied an African language for a minimum of three years by the end of the General Education and Training (GET) band;
- Where learners have to make a switch from their mother tongue to an additional language as the LoLT, this should be carefully planned (DoE, 2002).

Thus, the two language documents stipulate the use of mother tongue as Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in the Foundation Phase. However, the LiEP adopted by the Department of Education i.e. the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (1997a), and further clarified in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) of 2002 (Department of Education, 2002), acknowledges at least one approved language is to be studied as a subject however, the lines of clarity with regard to whether this language should be mother tongue or second language is somewhat blurred. Furthermore, the Revised National Curriculum Statement does not specify whether the mother tongue will be studied as a subject. Thus, the NCS seems to assume the using mother tongue as LoLT is ultimately the same as to studying it as a subject. This poses contradictions with regards to the teaching of IsiZulu as a mother tongue.

2.3.6 Concluding thoughts

The South African government in accordance with the democratic principles of our Constitution has tried to avoid instituting 'top down' policies, as evidenced by the fact that language policy making at school level is shared by parents and the SGB as in the case of choosing a LoLT. There are however, complexities and according to Heugh (2000), the choice of one's own language in South Africa is impeded by two major factors. Firstly, study materials

in former official languages such as English and Afrikaans are available in abundance and secondly, although a majority of learners are fluently converse in African languages, due to limited text books and other supportive materials beyond Grade 3, the SGB tends to choose English as the LoLT. A further point to be made is that there is negativity associated with the Afrikaans language linked to past apartheid language policies. Thus, choice in this context becomes limited and SGBs opt for English as the LoLT.

2.4 Locating my study within language in education debates

2.4.1 Introduction

In this sub-section, I review African and South African empirical, theoretical, and conceptual literature related to my study.

Language in education has been an issue in educational debates ever since former colonies in Africa, Asia and South America gained political independence (UNESCO, 2004). Although there are many dynamics critical to the delivery of quality basic education, language is the key to communication and meaning making in the classroom (Njoroge, Mwangi, Ndung'u & Orwenjo, 2014). The Global Monitoring Report on Education for All affirms that the choice of the language of instruction and language policy in schools is crucial for good learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2006). The policy trend in many post-colonial countries has been multilingualism yet a single foreign language is generally prioritised in the education sector, for example, English in the classroom (Njoroge et al., 2014).

In most African countries, teachers use the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction for the first three or four years of primary education, while by and large a European language (English, French or Portuguese) is presented as a separate subject during the introductory years of schooling (Alexander, 2009). From Grade 4 or Grade 5, a European language becomes the medium of instruction (Kamwangamalu, 1995; Heugh, 2000). What is crucial is that teachers provide quality instruction in the mother tongue in the early years, however, in many contexts there are concerns raised about the quality of mother tongue literacy learning in particular (Benson, 2004). Foley (2008) asserts that schools need to develop language policies and organise their curriculum and instruction in such a way that

the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of children, families and communities are strongly acknowledged. Textbooks, readers, support material, teaching aids and resources must be made readily accessible in relevant languages, including the mother tongue and kept continuously up to date (Tshotsho, 2013).

According to Kamwangamalu (1995), English literacy cannot happen without first giving children a firm grounding in their home language, as this facilitates literacy development in the first and second languages. However, the quality of literacy learning in the mother tongue has to be carefully monitored and promoted.

2.4.2   The status of the mother tongue in African contexts

A key study on quality of education on African languages showed that the mother tongue is not given the status it deserves in most African contexts (UNESCO Institute of Life Long Learning, 2010). The benefits of mother tongue instruction in the early years of schooling has been a focus of much of the education debates (Alexander, 2009; UNESCO, 2009). Khejeri (2014) conducted a descriptive design survey in the study examining teacher attitudes towards the teaching, and use of mother tongue as a language of instruction in lower primary schools. The study was conducted in the Hamis District in Western Kenya. It included a sample of 12 schools that were selected randomly from 40 primary schools. The instruments used for data collection were observation and questionnaires. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Khejeri (2014) ascertained that mother tongue is given less value to English as English seemed to serve a more instrumental purposes.

Similarly, studies by Khoza (2012) and Lesupi (2015) in South Africa show that there were parents who supported English as a medium of instruction from the early years as they believed that a proficiency in English would enable their children to obtain better employment in the future. Khejeri (2014) recommended the need for the government to encourage the production of instructional materials for the teaching of mother tongue, and that the mother tongue be more actively promoted as both a language of instruction and a subject. This points to the need for political will on the part of governments.

This issue has been raised by other researchers and scholars in the field. Ouane and Glanz (2010) explain that in most of the countries on the African continent, the majority of children commence school learning in alien or foreign language, that is, English, Spanish,

Portuguese, Arabic or French. Moeketsi (2014) alludes to the fact that in South Africa, the Sesotho language has been extremely stigmatised to the extent that the speakers between the ages of 15 – 30 cannot speak and write the language properly. He further laments that the mother tongue languages of indigenous Africans are becoming extinct and that languages perpetuated by colonialism have taken precedence. Skutnabb-Kangas (1995) stressed that the right to maintain, develop, speak, learn, read and write in the mother tongue is undeniably a basic linguistic human right.

In this sub section, I review these studies, and other literature highlighting scholarly debates on the issue. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) has argued that teaching and learning through a language that learners do not speak is a form of "submersion", analogous to holding learners under water without giving them instruction on how to swim. Njoroge et al. (2014) explain that this kind of classroom experience is compounded by other factors such as poor professional development of teachers, inappropriate curricula, inadequate learning and teaching materials etc. According to UNESCO (2012) it has been evident that in many contexts where a foreign language is the language instruction, the language is also foreign to the teacher. In South Africa, the majority of teachers are expected to teach through the medium of English, which is also the teachers' second language. The result is that the language of learning and teaching, which may be a second or third language, can become a problem, often causing a barrier to learning.

Moving on to the issue of mother tongue instruction, scholars and researchers have argued that it is critical for children to master mother tongue before they begin learning in any other language (Brock-Utne 2007; Hakuta, Butler & Witt, 2000). Hugo (2008) states that learning one's mother tongue serves as a springboard for mastering other languages. Hugo further asserts that basic concepts and learning skills should be mastered in the mother tongue before a second language can be introduced, and even then the second language should not be the language of instruction (2008). In other words, for a learner to be proficient in the second language, he or she needs to have mastered his or her own language first.

In view of these debates, mother tongue teaching and learning is of paramount importance, particularly in the early grades to enable learners to master what is being taught at school and access the whole curriculum. Alexander (2009) argued that the mother tongue is the language a "children know best and in which all their powers of imagination, their

creativity, their sense of complexity and generally, their ability to think and play with words find expression most effectively" (p. 1). Kyeyune (2003) stresses that through the medium of instruction, learners reflect on various facts in order to construct new views of the world. Thus, the mother tongue must be taught effectiveness with sound research based principles underlying its teaching and learning.

In the same vein, Noormohamadi (2008) and Moshman (2003) stress the importance of the mother tongue to children's cognitive development in the early years. Weinberger (1996) explains that language and literacy skills begin at home in the mother tongue, suggesting that it is essential that literacy learning in schools link to this natural process of language learning in the mother tongue. Furthermore, as children grow up learning and valuing their mother tongue on entry to school, it is critical that learners see that their mother tongue is affirmed. Cummins (2000) argues that schools should build on the experience and knowledge that children bring to the classroom, including their language. It has been also argued that using a child's mother tongue for the beginning stages of learning fosters literacy and content learning (Cummins, 2000).

In contrast to the above debates about foregrounding the mother tongue in the early years of schooling, there is a body of research that argues that the mother tongue does not have much relevance to teaching and learning in schools. For example, English (as the second language) is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in most of South African schools and Howie, Venter and van Staden (2008) point out that proficiency in English or the lack thereof is a powerful contributing factor to inequalities in learner outcomes in South African schools.

Similarly Fishman (1997), argues that learner competency in LoLT is closely linked to socio-economic status. The result is that children from social backgrounds where the mother tongue is not English face disadvantages in schooling contexts where English is the medium of instruction. Fishman's (1997) observation is reflected in the poor achievement of South African primary school learners in literacy skills in regional and international surveys (see for example, Moloi & Strauss, 2005).

However, despite the complexities and contradictory views on the importance of early mother tongue literacy learning, in view of current policy in South Africa, my intent was to

research literacy learning and teaching in the mother tongue in a South African schooling context. Hence, my study examined literacy learning and teaching in the mother tongue, that is isiZulu (L1), in a grade 3 class at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal.

In the final sub-section of my literature review, I examine recent empirical studies that have focussed specifically on literacy learning in the mother tongue, in countries of the South, including South Africa. My aim was to critically analyse what the research revealed about factors that hinder and support quality literacy learning in the mother tongue.

2.5　What is research indicating about sound, quality mother tongue literacy learning?

In this section, I highlight key themes that are evident in empirical studies reviewed. Research by UNESCO (2009) suggests that mother tongue based multilingual programmes are often poorly formulated and organised, facilitated by teachers who have inadequate professional development in language and literacy teaching in the mother tongue, and limited, poor quality teaching and learning materials. The situational analysis conducted by Ramabenyane (2012) in the first phase of her action research study in South Africa highlighted the many challenges and tensions teachers face in teaching and facilitating reading in Sesotho which include inadequate teaching and learning materials, frequent curriculum change, lack of clear guidelines on lesson planning, and the poor quality of professional development workshops which are often conducted in English. Furthermore, there is often limited time allowed for learners to build a strong foundation in the mother tongue to enable a sound bridge to the LoLT (UNESCO, 2006).

Alexander (2009) stresses that political will and commitment by professionals, including school leaders and managers at all levels, teachers, provincial and district education personnel are crucial factors for success in mother tongue based instruction. Professionals need to create a conducive environment for mother tongue learning, have the vision and energy to deal with complexities and challenges that may arise. There has to be forward planning to ensure sound, ongoing professional training and high quality, creative teaching and learning materials.

In the Qwaqwa region, Free State Province, Lesupi (2015) explored the experience of eight Grade R practitioners using Sesotho as the medium of instruction. The findings showed

that the practitioners were very positive about using Sesotho as the medium of instruction as it was a tool of cultural pride and related to the identity of the Basotho people. However, teachers lamented about the poor support they receive from the department of education in respect of their professional development. They have had to rely on their more experienced and competent colleagues to build their professional and pedagogical skills in teaching the African language. Although the Department of Education did provide some curriculum materials, the teachers voiced the difficulty they experienced in translating these into Sesotho. In general, the study showed that there is a lack of adequate and sound learning and teaching materials. Further, the teachers stressed that Grade R teachers need to be consulted in the design of teaching and learning materials for literacy learning in Sesotho.

In a study conducted in the Sidama Zone, Ethiopia by Bachore (2014), the perceptions and attitudes of teachers, parents and students about the teaching and learning of the mother tongue were examined. Regarding the language policy in Ethiopia, Section 3.5.1 of the Education and Training Policy (1994) cited in Bachore (2014) stipulates that primary education will be provided in nationality languages. The policy stresses the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their own languages, and the pedagogical advantage to children of learning in the mother tongue in the early years. The study employed a mixed methods research design. Data generation tools were questionnaires and interviews. Participants were 70 students, six parents and 11 teachers who were chosen through cluster and random sampling. The results of the study showed that most parents and almost half of the student sample group had negative attitudes towards, and perceptions about mother tongue as a medium of instruction. However, the teachers' attitudes and perceptions were more positive. The study highlighted the challenges teachers and students face related to mainly, the shortage of reference materials and text books in Sidama language. The quality of language learning was also a problem. Students' written work reflected that they have serious writing problems. Additionally, the Sidama language is used in their local context only, and Bachore's study seems to suggest that students may face economic and social marginalisation and exclusions in the future (2014).

From an analysis of research on a Mother Tongue/Bilingual Literacy Programme for Ethnic Minorities in eight Asian countries, UNESCO (2006) highlights some critical principles and insights for a successful literacy programme in the mother tongue in the early years of

schooling. Learners need to both the mechanical skills of reading and writing such as the alphabet, sound/symbol relationships, syllables, and on whole words and sentences with a focus on the meaning of what is being read in texts. Inn other word, teaching must emphasis accuracy and meaning in a carefully balanced programme. The table below provides a picture of such a balanced programme.

	EMPHASIS : ACCURACY AND CORRECTNESS FOCUS ON PARTS OF THE LANGUAGE	EMPHASIS : MEANING AND COMMUNICATION FOCUS ON WHOLE TEXTS
Listening	Recognize and distinguish sounds Recognise parts of words Follow directions	Listen in order to understand Think critically about what is said
Speaking	Use language correctly (pronunciation, grammar)	Speak with understanding in order to communicate thoughts, ideas, needs and experiences.
Reading	Decode words by recognising their parts (letters, syllables, tone marks, etc.)	Read for meaning and understanding
Writing	Form letters properly and neatly Spell words accurately Use correct grammar	Write creatively in order to communicate thoughts, ideas, needs and experiences

Table 3: Activities for a balanced literacy programme emphasising both accuracy and meaning (UNESCO, 2006, p. 55).

UNESCO (2006) suggests teacher beliefs about how best children can learn is critical to the development of mother tongue literacy. Trudell, Dowd, Piper and Bloch (2012) draw attention to two models of literacy: the 'autonomous' model and the 'ideological' model (p. 9). From the perspective of the autonomous model, literacy is seen as a set of technical,

mechanical skills that are independent of the social context. The key focus is on mastery of skills from simple to more difficult, for example, decoding skills. On the other hand, the ideological model foregrounds literacy as social practice, and social-cultural in nature. Reading and writing take place and are used in meaningful contexts. Although technical skills have a place, these must develop in meaningful ways and contexts. A teacher who believes that children should be actively involved in their own learning, and are meaning makers would use various creative strategies to teach reading and writing in meaningful ways (Trudell et al., 2012). Further, Trudell et al. (2012) stress that children's literacy learning must be integrated into, and linked with their family and community socio-cultural practices. Such an approach enables holistic literacy teaching and learning in the mother tongue.

UNESCO (2006) and Trudell et al. (2012) highlight some elements of sound literacy learning in the mother tongue:

- Teachers should have in the classroom a variety of short, easy reading materials in the learners' mother tongue, in a range of forms such as teacher made and commercially available books, cultural poems, music, stories and songs, posters, pamphlets, real life objects such as cereal boxes etc. that reflect topics of interest to learners.

- Teachers should create many opportunities for learners to listen to teachers read, and to interact with texts and materials and teachers can create a variety of picture stories and add texts to pictures that could be produced with learners.

- Teachers should give learners the opportunity to be active as they interact with materials through questioning and discussion to build their critical thinking skills and their understanding that reading is a sense making activity. This suggests that rote and repetitive learning should be avoided.

- Teachers can engage learners in producing their own stories and share these with peers so they learn to understand that oral language can become a written text and can be ready by others.

- Learners must be given the opportunity to write creatively and for a number of different purposes (e.g. shopping lists, logos, letters, greeting cards) even if spelling is invented in the early stages of literacy learning.

- The teacher needs to be able to design lesson plans and make attractive and effective learning resources to facilitate literacy learning, drawing on the local, cultural environment.

- The teacher should be able to assess the individual learning needs of learners and design learning experiences that are relevant to those needs.

- It is critical that teachers are fluent in the mother tongue if they are teaching literacy in a particular mother tongue.

- Teachers need to access home and community resources to enhance literacy learning, for example, including indigenous knowledge in the curriculum.

Teachers need to assess teaching and learning effectiveness by engaging with questions such as:

- Do the materials match the learning objectives set for learners and align with the learners' level of literacy skills?

- Are learners actively involved in their own learning?

- Is literacy developed in ways that are meaningful to learners?

- Are children learning in an authentic and purposeful literacy based context?

- Do the materials and teaching methods used reflect the learners' local environments and socio-cultural contexts?

- Are materials creatively illustrated?

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed key language policies in South Africa and explored empirical and theoretical arguments on the importance of mother tongue teaching and learning. In the review presented, I gathered that not much attention and interest is given to the teaching and learning of mother tongue in research emanating from the African continent. It is evident from the local and international literature reviewed that mother tongue language still faces challenges and resistance in the schooling system in many post-colonial contexts. Hence, I argue that my study is a worthy contribution to research and educational discourse on mother tongue instruction. In the next chapter, I present the research methodology and design of my study and also provide justification for the design choices I made.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology of my study. I present the study context, the participant, data generation methods, data analysis, issues of reliability and validity in qualitative research, ethical issues, and the possible limitations of the study design. The main focus of my research was to gain insight into the literacy practices and experiences in an isiZulu mother tongue Grade 3 class hence the following key research questions were formulated:

- What are the literacy teaching practices of a teacher in a Grade 3 isiZulu mother tongue class?

- How does the teacher navigate the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy in her particular school context?

- What influences shape mother tongue literacy practices in the Grade 3 class?

3.2   Methodological issues

Methodological principles require that the most appropriate paradigms, theories, approach, research method and data generation instruments are selected for a particular research project. Accordingly, my study adopted a qualitative research approach. A qualitative research design assumes that there are multiple constructed realities, understanding is both time and context bound whereas in quantitative research, the search is for generalisations and universal truths. My study was an interpretive inquiry as the aim was to gain an understanding of mother tongue literacy practices and experiences in a particular context, including the contextual and situated influences that shape literacy learning and teaching.

In this study the notion of 'geographies' was drawn on as I aimed to investigate the spaces and places of literacy teaching and learning. Hence the notion of 'geographies of literacy teaching and learning' (Vasudevan, 2009). "Children's geographies" is an area of study

in human geography that explores place and space in various magnitudes and levels. In other words, my study sought to explore in depth the everyday spatialities in the life of the teacher as she enacts and experiences mother tongue literacy learning and teaching (Wyness, 2003). The school and more specifically, the mother tongue literacy class is a particular geographical space, with its own particular meanings shaped by contextual and situated influences. It is a site where complex issues converge, and it is a power laden space where relations of power play out (Collins and Coleman, 2008).

In my study, I view 'geography' as space, place and the landscape of mother tongue literacy learning and teaching - the spatial dimensions of literacy teaching and learning (Hull & James, 2007). I began my study with the assumption that the teacher enacts her literacy practices according to the different spaces that she has to navigate. These power laden spaces can include the curriculum spaces; policy spaces; pedagogical spaces and places; different school spaces and places such as the spaces of teaching and learning materials; social spaces, spaces and places of professional development; and economic, political and social spaces and places of teaching. These spaces intersect with teacher's personal and professional identities, her sense of self, her agency and how they chooses to navigate her literacy teaching practices. In my study, I viewed 'place' as the physical locations such as the classroom, the school as a whole, and the school library. In my study, I zoned in on the literacy class as a particular geographical place that has power laden spaces with their own spatial meanings.

This particular lens incorporates 'the social' space which includes relations between learners and teachers and other adults (Van Blerk, 2005). The concept '**place**' in my study refers to a physical space in which a child finds him or herself, for example, the classroom or playground. In other words, 'place' is the social-spatial surroundings to which human beings attach meaning. '**Space**' on the other hand is not just a location – but incorporates 'the social', which includes learners and the teacher's relationships with each other, with other adults and institutional settings such as the Department of Education, and intrinsically involves power and power relations (Weller, 2006). For example, Van Ingen and Halas (2006) suggest that exclusion and inclusion processes are deeply embedded in various schooling spaces which are often spaces of inequality and inequity. Thus, space is not a neutral location where social action happens, it is socially produced in unique ways (Barker and Weller, 2003). Studies have

explored the everyday spaces of the home, school, the street etc. (Barker and Weller, 2003). The stance I took as I approached this research was that the teacher and her learners are social actors who can make their own meanings and they actively construct their social realities.

The study was a qualitative case study. In a case study, the case is unique and specific - in my study the unit of analysis was the Grade 3 isiZulu mother tongue literacy class which is a 'bounded reality' (Merriam, 1988, p. 8). A qualitative case study enabled me to gain a rich description of the case under study, and is an empirical inquiry within a real-life context where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear (Yin, 2010). To probe the case in its entirety and particularity, a case study requires the researcher to access multiple sources of evidence to enable triangulation and maintain a chain of evidence (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that a case study is both a process of inquiry and the product that emerges from that inquiry.

3.3   Design of the study

3.3.1 Context of my study

My study took place at the Isibani Primary School[1] situated in the Pinetown district in KwaZulu-Natal. The learners are isiZulu speaking and the majority come from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The education system categorises schools according to quintiles for the purpose of allocating funds. The ratings range from quintile one up to five. Schools within the quintile one and two brackets are regarded as the poorest and are no-fee paying schools, whilst quintile three, four and five are fee paying schools. Quintile five schools are regarded as the most economically advantaged as parents can afford and set high fees to access better human and material resources (CREATE, 2009). The school at which I conducted my research is a quintile three school and therefore, fee paying. However, this rating has been questioned by the school and community as the school serves mostly economically disadvantaged learners, many from homes where there is a high incidence of unemployment, single parent households, and grandmothers as caregivers. Approximately

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[1] Pseudonym to protect the identity of the school

one third of the learner population live in households where the grandmother is the primary care giver.

The selection of the school was largely due to convenience as I am a teacher at the school and envisaged that data generation would be easier for me. Sampling can also be said to be purposive as I wanted a primary school that enrolled learners whose mother tongue is isiZulu. The school has a strong Christian ethos and values. At the time of the study, it had an enrolment of 960 learners and a staff of 25 teachers and three non-teaching stuff. The school has a poorly resourced library - the majority of books available for learners are old text books.

3.3.2   Research participant of study

The participant in my study was the Grade 3 teacher responsible for teaching isiZulu mother tongue literacy. I chose a Grade 3 class (Step 1) because I was interested in ascertaining how learners were progressing and experiencing isiZulu literacy in the year prior to the switch to English as the medium of instruction; as stipulated in South African language policies (explained in chapters 1 and 2). I was also interested in the teacher's views on learners' progress and the goals she had set to achieve good literacy levels in preparation for Grade 4.

Sampling is the selection of participants from a population requires that certain eligibility criteria are set and met (Strydom & Delport, 2011). In focusing on Grade 3 for the study, I used purposeful sampling as explained above in step 1. Step 2 involved selecting the particular class and its allocated teacher through random sampling. The school has three grade 3 classes with one teacher responsible for each class (3 teachers).

 A simple random sampling procedure was used to select the particular teacher for my study, from the pool of 3 teachers. Thus, the selected teacher thus had an equal and independent chance of being selected (Cohen, et al., 2007).

Figure 1: The research site – a primary school in Pinetown

3.3.3 Data generation

The study involved multiple data sources:

- informal classroom observation;

- video-taped lessons;

- teacher reflections on the lesson observed and digitally taped;

- document analysis

- semi-structured interview with the teacher.

Wengraf (2001) explains that the advantage to using semi-structured *interviews* is that they enable the researcher to probe and gain clarity on issues regarding the phenomenon being investigated. In other words, flexibility is possible (Fontana & Frey, 2003). I conducted semi-structured interviews with the teacher over two days. The interviews, which were conducted in English were digitally audio-taped to make ensure that responses were captured as precisely and accurately as possible.

To facilitate *document analysis,* I engaged with children's books, materials, and resources in classroom e.g. reading materials, curriculum materials, teacher lesson plans and records, children's work books, and projects etc. This expedited the process of knowledge production.

In addition, I used *lesson observations.* Four isiZulu mother tongue literacy lessons were videotaped for analysis. The lessons were based on four content areas in literacy, that is: listening and speaking, reading and writing, and language structure and use. These lessons were video-taped and thereafter, the teacher and I reviewed the video materials and discussed them so as to gain an understanding of key points and critical incidents in the lessons.

Two reading lessons were videotaped. The first one was shared reading, whereby the teacher sat down all her learners on the floor at the front of the class while she sat on a tall chair. The teacher then conducted a reading ring after which, she posed questions at the end of the lesson. The second reading lesson was a whole class, group, and individual reading activity. The whole class had a turn to read; some sections were read by groups and some sections individually. The teaching aids or resources that were used were posters, the chalkboard, a 'big book' with large pictures and print. The duration of each lesson was one hour. Grammar and language lessons were also observed. The teacher taught a lesson focusing on nouns and verbs respectively. Teaching aids that were used were flash cards and the chalkboard. Each lesson lasted for one hour. I also observed four literacy language lessons in the classroom, sitting unobtrusively in the classroom while the lesson went on, taking took notes. The following were the foci of the lessons:

Lesson 1: Reading: focus on sounds (letter 'qhw')

Lesson 2: Language (the descriptive noun)

Lesson 3: Speaking and listening: Topic - nutritious foods

Lesson 4: Shared reading

Teacher reflections on lessons (both the video recordings and the lessons observed by me, the researcher) took place between the teacher and myself. The reflections were also digitally audio-taped and later transcribed for authenticity and validation. During these interviews, I

requested for the teacher to tell me about the lesson, her aims and objectives, and the teaching-learning activities. She also evaluated the strengths and limitations in the lessons.

Finally, I commenced with my *informal observations* of the classroom to assess the features of the physical space and the quality of available resources and learning materials.

3.3.4   *Data analysis*

A case study tells a story, and so the first step in my data analysis was to develop a case description of the literacy practices of the teacher, and how learners experienced isiZulu mother tongue literacy teaching and learning. Thereafter, I began thinking about possible explanations, contradictions and complexities in the case. My aim was to raise questions and arguments for other researchers to ponder over and develop further research around. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe qualitative data analysis as three co-existing flows of activity, that is, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The data yielded from the video material and interview data were examined to uncover patterns that pointed to a theoretical understanding of the literacy practices in the classroom. Coding the data and the relation of concepts was key to this process. I started by examining recurring topics that emerged within, and across the different data sets, for example, teacher values and beliefs; language policy; limited resources; poor quality teacher development workshops; motivation; care and caring; meaning making; accessing support; etc. From these topics, I was able to identify the themes and patterns that illuminated my research questions.

Developing patterns involved trying to understand the complex links between contextual influences, literacy spaces, teacher beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and actions. Generating patterns in the data meant searching for recurring ideas, concepts, issues, perspectives, and descriptions that depicted mother tongue literacy classroom (Muthukrishna, 2006). The patterns were both data driven, shaped by literature I reviewed, and theory driven. The process was inductive as the findings emerged from the dominant and significant actions, enactments and events in the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

I used content analysis to scrutinise the documents I gathered. There were various issues I explored in the documents for example, I was interested in how the teacher drew on policy documents to inform her teaching. I also examined to what extent her beliefs and values as a mother tongue literacy teacher were reflected in the design of her lessons and the tasks she set for learners. The content analysis was guided by my research questions.

Overall, I wanted to understand the isiZulu mother tongue literacy practices in the Grade 3 classroom. According to Babbie (1998), a researcher looks at the meanings and relationships of words, ideas, principles and concepts, then makes inferences about the messages within the texts, and even the cultural and temporal context of documents. I broke the different documents into manageable categories, for example, curriculum policy; lesson design; pedagogical knowledge; assessment tasks; learner tasks and activities, then searched for patterns or themes that reflected the nature of literacy teaching and learning, and influences that shape the process.

3.3.5 Ethical issues

According to de Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011), ethics in research is a set of moral principles or standards and rules of behaviour accepted by an individual or group. It is about acting responsibly, having respect for truth and the human rights of all participants, it is about being accountable, and about the commitment to avoid harm and exploitation. Ethics involves a critical and reflexive approach at all stages of the research (Cohen et al., 2007; Simons and Usher, 2009).

The research presented in this dissertation was part of a larger project in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, titled, '*The geographies of children's schooling experiences in six Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries: Narratives of children, parents/caregivers and teachers'.* Ethical clearance for the project was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Appendix 2) prior to the commencement of the data collection process of the study, permission to conduct research was sought from the district level of the Provincial Department of Education (Refer to Appendix 1).

Additionally, I obtained permission from the principal of the school (Appendix 3) and informed consent from the teacher participating in the research study (Appendix 4). During the introductory meetings with participant, I explained the nature, focus and aims of the

study. I also assured the participant, as well as the principal of the school, that appropriate measures would be taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity to both the school as well the participant. In these instances, pseudonyms were used for the participant and the school concerned and the identity of the school is not revealed in this dissertation.

All data collected during the course of the study has been submitted to my supervisor and will be stored safely at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and once an appropriate period of time has passed, will be destroyed in a manner deemed fit by the university.

3.3.6   Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, reliability and validity is about authenticity and trustworthiness. An underlying issue is whether the researcher's account of the context, observation, reporting, and interpretation of what is going on is accurate, dependable and credible? (Shenton, 2004). In other words, the issue is about whether findings reflect the social reality.

In my study, I addressed trustworthiness in different ways. There was triangulation of data generation tools: individual interview, video-taping of lessons, classroom observations, and document analysis. A process of member checking was important in my study in all stages of the data analysis process, that is, lesson analysis, transcribing, translation into English, and coding and analysis. My supervisor, a teacher colleague and a peer in the cohort programme at the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, assisted with critiquing my data analysis and interpretation process.

The study was a small scale study and thus, the question of transferability may be brought under scrutiny and viewed as a limitation. To address this, in my dissertation, I have explicitly presently the details of my research design and methodology, include a paper trail, and provide detailed description of the phenomenon under study, as advised by Shenton (2004).

3.3.7   Limitations of the study

It may be argued that a qualitative case study is limited as it examines a particular and unique context, and cannot be generalised. I wish to stress that generalisation of the findings was not my intended goal. My aim was to tell a story of literacy practices in a unique context, and in a nuanced, contextual way and to let the story unfold in its complexity. I do not intend

'closing' my case study but rather, the aim is to keep it open and raise questions that other researchers could engage with. As suggested by Flyvbjerg (2004), the aim of my study is to leave space for different researchers across disciplines to draw diverse interpretations and conclusions around the question: What is the case a case of?

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research methodology and design of the study. I justified the decision to engage in a qualitative case study to explore the literacy practices in an isiZulu mother tongue literacy class. In the next chapter, I present a discussion of the findings from my study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4. 1   Introduction

This chapter presents, and discusses the findings of the study in attempts to correlate with the literature reviewed in chapters one and two. A geographical lens was used in addition to my conceptual framework, to illuminate and make sense of the spaces and places of literacy teaching and learning. My discussion in this chapter will remain focused on elucidating my research questions:

- What are the literacy teaching practices of a teacher in a Grade 3 isiZulu mother tongue class?

- How does the teacher navigate the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy in her particular school context?

- What influences shape mother tongue literacy practices in the Grade 3 class?

The chapter is structured in the following way. Firstly, I provide some insight into who is the isiZulu literacy teacher, and what is the nature of the mother tongue literacy classroom – the teaching and learning space. Secondly, I discuss the key issues that emerged from the data related to the different facets of mother tongue literacy teaching and learning. Finally, I share my reflections on the findings of my study.

4.2   Who is the isiZulu mother tongue literacy teacher?

Research has shown that a teacher's personal history and her individual characteristics of identity influence, and shape her pedagogical practices, pedagogical beliefs and her motivation (for example, Dorman, 2007). These influences can include past teaching experiences, interactions with peers over the years; past participation in professional development activities; her own experience as a learner; and her own socialisation within family, community and professional institutions etc.

In the following sub -section I provide a profile of the teacher. I examined various places and spaces of her professional and personal life, relevant to my study. I obtained this data by means of the semi-structured interview (refer to question 1, Appendix 7, interview schedule).

Ms Duma[2] is 43 years old. She has eight (8) years of teaching experience at a primary level in the foundation phase (Grades 1 to 3). She has taught isiZulu literacy and all other foundation phase subjects and learning areas viz. Maths and Life-skills with isiZulu as the language of Teaching and Learning (LoLT). She completed her initial professional qualification, a three year Junior Primary Teacher's Diploma in 1999 at the Umbumbulu Teacher Training College, specializing in isiZulu and English. She was trained to teach isiZulu mother tongue literacy but Ms Duma stated that many changes in the curriculum have taken place since then, and that she has had very limited ongoing professional development. In 2009, she completed an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) offered by the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, specialising in the subject, Life Orientation. After completing her initial teacher education qualification, she taught for eight years at a rural primary school in northern KwaZulu-Natal. In 2005, Ms Duma took up her current post at the school at which my study was undertaken.

When I approached Ms Duma about participating in my study, she appeared rather dubious, reluctant and sceptical. I gaged that she was suspicious that my aim was to evaluate her and that the findings would be shared with the Department of Education. Furthermore, she was averse to the video-taping of her lessons as she was a nervous person and she feared she may make mistakes while being recorded. I assured her that this was a research project and I explained to her the rigorous ethical principles and standards I would adhere to. My aim was to illuminate the strengths in her teaching and challenges she faces as a teacher. I informed her that there was very limited research on the teaching of mother tongue literacy, and that her involvement would be a contribution to both the field and to professional development in South Africa.

After listening to me and seeking clarification on a few issues, she agreed to participate in the study. She indicated that her main motivation was that she believed that this was important research and it would provide insights into improving professional practice

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[2] A pseudonym is used to protect the identity of the teacher

and pedagogy in isiZulu mother tongue literacy teaching. She was also hopeful that the findings from the study would contribute to her own professional development. During our interview Ms Duma spoke of her feelings about teaching as her career. She informed me that she was in a difficult space at the time in that she was extremely de-motivated and demoralised as a teacher. She stated that she was seeking 'greener pastures'. She shared that she was particularly disgruntled about the constant changes and policy shifts within the education system, in particular curriculum changes. She shared that there was little support from the Department of Education for teachers of isiZulu mother tongue literacy teaching.

4.3   Teacher beliefs and values

In my study, I was interested in the beliefs and values of the mother tongue literacy teacher, and how these influenced her teaching (refer to interview question 2, Appendix 2). UNESCO (2006) asserts that teacher beliefs about how children learn in the most effective way is crucial to the development of mother tongue literacy. Xu (2012) also stresses that teachers' beliefs are important for understanding the educational process a teacher crafts. Beliefs shape the teaching strategies a teacher uses, teacher attitudes towards learners, how the teacher structures the learning context, and teacher motivation. In respect of language teaching, Xu (2012) explains that a belief is consciously or unconsciously held, it is emotional in nature, is considered true by the teacher, and guides teacher thinking and behaviour.

During the interview, Ms Duma shared her beliefs and values that guided her teaching and interactions with learners. It was clear that she values the policy of literacy learning in the mother tongue in the early years. Her view is that learners need to start literacy learning in their mother tongue and then transition to English - the language favoured as the second language by parents and the community. In the interview she argued that,

> *When a learner is young, she has to learn in her mother tongue language first*
> *before learning in English or any second language.* (Individual interview)

A limitation in my interview process here is that I did not probe her thoughts on the issue as succinctly as I should have, thereby not gaining as deep an understanding in hindsight. However, her beliefs seem to concur with those of Brock-Utne (2007) and Hakuta et al. (2000),

who stress that it is critical for children to master literacy learning in their mother tongue first before they begin literacy learning in any other language.

Cummins (2000) supports this and claims that development of the mother tongue (L1) through primary education and strong support for the L1 fosters academic success. Cummins (2000) again stressed that the mother tongue is a valuable resource which allows a child to arrive at school with knowledge on which future learning will be built – as a sound oral language base in the mother tongue is critical for learning to read and write in the early years. Similarly, Markee (2002) stresses that school systems have shown over and over again that when young children are submerged in a foreign language effective literacy learning is negatively impacted.

Ms Duma's view of her learners is evident in the following excerpt:

> *The child is not an empty vessel, the child is a "thinking-being" - children have to voice their own opinions. Sometimes, I ask learners to bring any pictures and they then paste them, I then ask them to tell me or talk about them. In my language lesson you observed, I was teaching about verbs, I asked them to give me their own verbs. I then requested them to think on their own in constructing their own sentences.*

It became evident during our interviews and reflections that Ms Duma values the active participation of learners in her lessons. An important objective for her is to create space in her lessons for learners to share their own ideas, opinions and thoughts as they are 'thinking beings'. It is clear that she sees the classroom as a social space and learning as a social activity. She values teaching learners to become independent thinkers and to be actively involved in their own learning. Ms Duma also alludes to the fact that she aims to create independent learners and thinkers evident in her words, she wants them to "think on their own". Her narratives seem to suggest elements of constructivist beliefs about teaching. Giesen (2004) explains that constructivists argue that individuals have the capacity to construct their own understanding and meanings of the world through their experiences and through reflecting on those experiences. Ms Duma seems to believe that her role is to facilitate learner's own inquiry, to give them opportunities to find solutions to problems, and that thinking is more important than the direct transmission to learners of specific curriculum content and facts.

In her narrative below, we see that she tries to create a classroom space that is responsive to diversity amongst learners, and creates a supportive classroom environment, in particular for those learners who have difficulty learning or those learners who are not at the same level as their peers. In this regard, peer support and cooperative learning is valued in her class. However, large class size makes catering for the learning needs of all learners and providing the necessary support very difficult for Ms Duma.

> *I make sure I group them according to mixed abilities. The extroverted ones will assist those who are lagging behind. I usually find out that those that were lagging behind are being boosted and the later gain confidence in reading independently at a later stage.* (Individual interview)

From my discussion, it seems that her conceptualisation of the 'extroverted learner' is the learner who is confident and above average or high functioning. Her strategy is to use these learners in a kind of 'buddy system' to support other learners. Ms Duma is a caring teacher and values all her learners. She voiced her concerns about learners from difficult backgrounds with virtually no learning resources and support. She shared that parental involvement with the school was limited. Her concern was that parental involvement is very poor in the case of learners who experience learning difficulties.

> *Some learners are happy and some are sad. Some children come to class with no pencils. More time is wasted trying to find a pen.*

> *Some are experiencing problems at home, parents are not all cooperative. We are still experiencing difficulty in getting parents to cooperate at school. The parents of backward learners are the ones that are not involved. When called to school, only parents of extroverted and coping learners are cooperative. So you find that learners only learn at school and when they go home they won't be assisted. So learners experience more problems at school.*

> *Parents should also assist their learners with their homework for them to accelerate their reading abilities.*

Ms Duma stated that a goal is to develop in learners a love of reading and she highly regards the skill of reading. She explains,

> *In my isiZulu class, I value reading. Reading is a springboard for all the isiZulu aspects. So it is important that a learner reads daily for them to get more practice. If the learner cannot read, she also cannot write.* (Individual interview)

She values repetition in her class and argues that it is necessary when teaching young learners.

> *When we teach, because we teaching young learners, you can't just teach an aspect once. We have to do a lot of repetition to make sure learners grasp and comprehend what has been taught, especially those that take long to grasp lesson taught.*

Ms Duma's narrative above appears to be in contradiction with her apparent constructivist beliefs evident in previous comments. The thinking that all young learners '*take long to grasp lessons taught'* and that all young children need '*a lot of repetitions to grasp and comprehend'* is a concern. She tends to homogenise learners and engage her class in a kind of deficit construction of them. Research emanating from New Childhood Studies or the sociology of childhood would challenge Ms Duma's thinking about the competences and capabilities young children (Holt & Holloway, 2006; Prout & James, 1990). New Childhood Studies criticises this kind of hegemonic representations that construct children as 'less than' adult and as adults in-the-making rather than individuals in their own right (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998; Prout, 2000). With this kind of view, it is argued that childhood is essentialised, patronised and 'othered'.

Alternately, it is argued that children are competent, active agents who can shape and participate their own learning and have the capacity to construct meanings (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998; Prout, 2000). Children are agentic and learn through active interaction with learning experiences. Thus, one needs to devise and provide learning opportunities and teaching strategies that enable even young learners to actively and personally construct knowledge and evaluate their learning in a social context (Prout, 1998; Sorin, 2005).

In my interview with Ms Duma, she suggested that the only way to reinforce learning is to 're-teach' the concept.

Mmmm… when we teach, because our learners are still young you can't just teach something and go ahead. You have to make sure they have grasped a concept before going ahead with your teaching. You have to teach something and reteach it for them to grasp content taught.

If you just teach once and go on, you might find that you leave some behind because there are those that are lagging behind and always have a problem in grasping work taught, you have to teach and re-teach. Once you see that they have understood, you can go on to teach another concept.

She again shows a concern for all learners in her class, and a commitment to be responsive to diverse learning needs. However, her approach to reinforcing learners seems again to contradict her seemingly constructivist beliefs as re-teaching suggests a teacher dominant approach. Ms Duma has limited knowledge of how to reinforce learning, and provide learners with practice and application in creative ways. Some ideas can include: decreasing teacher talk by getting learners to work in pairs and groups to apply what was learned; and using games. Yolageldili and Arikan (2011) state that "games encourage learners to direct their energy towards language learning by providing them with meaningful contexts" (p. 219). These researchers also assert that games provide an opportunity to reinforce learning and practice concepts, for example, in grammar in a creative, meaningful and communicative context. They should not be used to fill time but to reinforce learning in interesting and motivating ways.

Games are learner focussed activities and arouse the interest of learners. It is well known that if grammar teaching merely focusses on rules and memorisation, learners lose interest and become de-motivated. This suggests that professional teacher development programmes need to interrogate dominate discourses embedded in teacher beliefs about children and childhood, and in teacher pedagogical practices for example, what teachers believe about children and childhood and how children learn best will influence pedagogical practices (Xu, 2012). Xu emphasises that sound, effective teacher beliefs about learners are crucial to effective teaching (Xu, 2012). For example, viewing children as agentic rather than

as incompetent and immature would shape particular kinds of classroom practices, and therefore should be the first step towards transformation of pedagogical practice (Sorin, 2005).

In the preceding sub section we gained a glimpse of the teacher, Ms Duma's beliefs and values. Further discussion on teacher beliefs in respect of literacy learning, specifically, will be presented in the sub-sections below as will an insight into her beliefs in respect of literacy learning in particular.

4.4   Looking at the classroom space

To offer a sense of physical space of the classroom I present a description, drawing from my informal observations. The Grade 3 class was excessively crowded with 52 learners, comprising of 33 girls and 19 boys. Overcrowded classrooms in African schools is a common feature and happens despite the fact that according to the Department of Education (1997b) policy, schools should have at least 40 learners per class in Grades 1 to 6 or 35 learners per class in Grades 7 to 12.

Internationally, in more developing countries, class size and class organisation have been debated, especially in relation to quality education. UNESCO (2012) explains that it is generally accepted that larger classes result in lower educational achievements, particularly in the early years of schooling. Teachers generally find large class sizes difficult to manage and often this results in ineffective pedagogical practices (UNESCO, 2012). Ms Duma indicated that large class size together with limited available resources negatively impacts her teaching and learning.

According to Ms Duma, large classes make teaching difficult as she is unable to respond to individual needs. She also indicated that she is unable to pace and complete the curriculum because of the large number of learners in the class. She has had no training on how to manage literacy teaching in large classes. Large classes and limited resources are barriers to teaching and learning.

The challenges I face is lack of resources, which affects their learning. I find it
difficult to teach, I had to borrow from other class to be able to do my lesson as

I don't have enough books so my learners share reading books. Learners sometimes come to school with no pens, no exercise books. The parents are also not co-operative and the child then face difficulties in learning. It will also be better if SMT assists us educators in making sure we get resources

From my observations, each desk seats two learners. The desks are in groups of three, resulting in six learners per group. There is little space for easy movement between the rows of desks (Refer to Figure 2).

Figure 2: A view into the classroom

At the time of the study, the classroom walls were bare. Ms Duma explained that all charts, posters and other displays had to be redone in preparation for Annual National Assessments (ANA) that were soon to be conducted. I did gain the opportunity to examine the charts and materials that the teacher displayed on the walls of the classroom. Ms Duma does try to make the classroom stimulating and attractive. However, I did note that much of the displays for isiZulu literacy depicted language use, vocabulary, grammar and spelling.

Examples are shown in Figure 3a and Figure 3b and as evident, there was very limited evidence of children's creative writing, for example, or interesting reading materials such as posters.

Figure 3 a: Displays on classroom walls
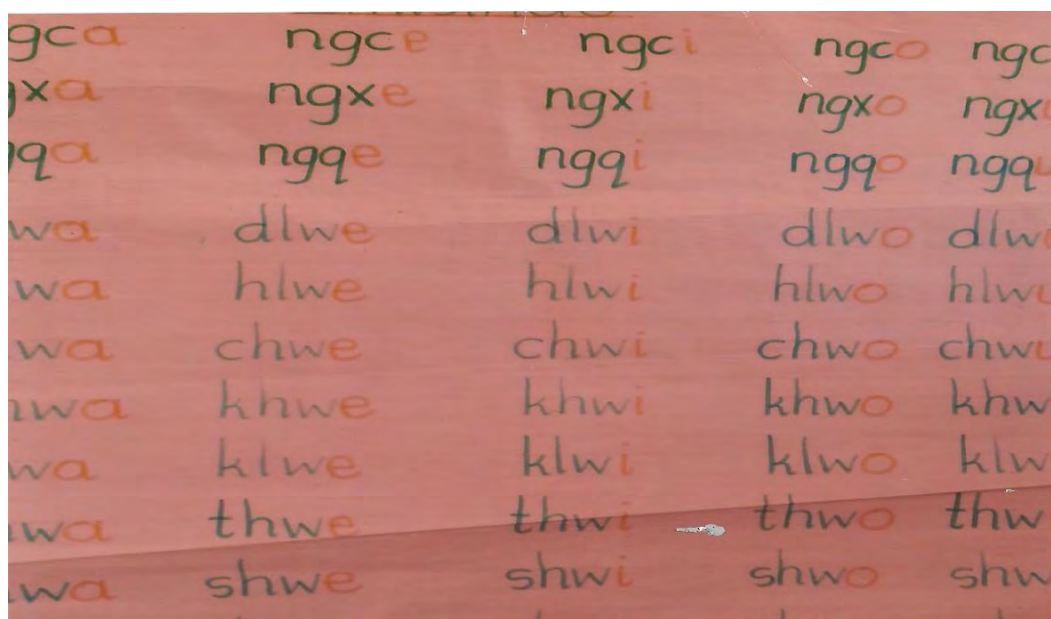
Figure 3 b: Displays on classroom walls

In general, the classroom had limited teaching and learning materials. I could gage that textbooks and learner workbooks were available although there was a shortage of learner workbooks. I observed learners share these workbooks and reading books (Refer to photograph below).

Figure 4: Learners' sharing literacy material

Ms Duma explained that she tries her best to expand on the limited resources provided by the Department of Education through teacher produced materials and using newspapers and magazines in creative ways.

I use charts, posters, big books like the one I used in my lesson about goats. Like when we learn, I ask them to cut or draw pictures, or learners find pictures in the magazines on their own without me always telling them everything. I like it when learners find something out on their own without. Yes… I do develop love for literacy in my class for the child to get used to reading. Like I encourage parents to buy newspapers and give it to their children and they can bring it to class so we can all read it. If other learners don't have newspapers, we cut the ones that was brought by others, share it amongst those that do not have and make short stories. If there is a picture in a newspaper, learners get excited and thus understand what the story is about.

When questioned about what she would like to change about her literacy practices and her teaching context (refer to Appendix 7, question 4), she explained

I would make sure that in isiZulu classes, I have a minimal number of learners and not an overcrowded class. If learners are minimal, you are able to attend to their individual needs and cover a large range of work. I would ensure that educators get all the resources they need on time. I would ensure that workbooks are delivered on time, like at the end of the year for the coming year. Readers also must be delivered on time. I think if you have a small class of 35 learners you are able to give individual attention to each and every learner. I currently have 50 learners in my class. If children are less in number you are able to give individual attention. If the class is overcrowded, it is difficult to move around the class and monitor their reading levels.

It is a concern to Ms Duma that literacy learning materials are not delivered timeously at the school by the Department of Education. This is the experience in many provinces in South Africa and continues to impact teaching and learning, and teacher morale. Most important, this situation continues to violate learner right to a basic education, dignity and equality.

4.5   Examining the literacy learning spaces

The aim of my study was to interrogate the geographies of isiZulu mother tongue literacy practices in the Grade 3 class (refer to interview questions 4-6, Appendix 7). This data was also obtained from document analysis and from involving the teacher in reflections on her lessons I observed and videotaped. The questions explored were:

- What are the literacy practices in the classroom?
- What are the different facets of literacy that are being developed?
- How does the teacher navigate these literacy practices?
- What shapes literacy practices?

I examined literacy learning and teaching in a holistic way, that is, in terms of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Ms Duma stated that her key aim is to develop a love of literacy in her learners.

I do develop love for literacy in my class. I usually ask learners to bring newspapers from home. This assists that all learners, even those that don't have. We make cuttings of pictures so that they can relate a picture to the story on a newspaper. Looking at a picture stimulates their reading they get excited because they then know what the story is all about.

They do read at home by watching the television and listening to the radio and they come back to class and talk about what they saw on TV and on radio. They also listen at home. At school we also sometimes play the radio and listen to the news and retell the story, to see if they can listen.

Ms Duma's literacy curriculum seems to be guided by the Department of Education *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement - Grades R-3 – isiZulu Home Language* (Department of Education, 2011b).

4.5.1   Opportunities for speaking and listening

Ms Duma stated that she places a high priority on developing learners' speaking and listening skills (oral language). The interviews with Ms Duma suggest that the development of speaking and listening occurs and is integrated into all language lessons and is encouraged in activities and tasks. She explains,

I value listening and speaking, learners must know how to listen because listening is very important. Most of the times our learners experiences problems and are scared to talk but if they are made to speak more often in class, learners become confident in sharing their own personal feelings. I prefer that learners should do most of the speaking. I believe that learners have to air their views… not only me telling them what to do. I believe I should give learners opportunity to speak. Some learners end up being too shy to speak because they are not given a chance to speak. (Individual interview).

They must also be able to listen and to speak. If a child is having a problem at home, if she is given a chance to speak, she is able to talk about the things that affects them even at home (Reflections on lesson).

Poetry reading and recitation is used to the maximum in lessons and serves different purposes. Ms Duma believes that poetry and songs can be used as a strategy to build confidence with regards to speaking in learners who are reluctant to do so in class. Participating in a group builds their self-confidence and engages them in a fun activity. Ms Duma explains,

I use poetry and songs in my class to collect their thinking and to make them focus and to have an idea on what they are going to learn about. The learners like to jump, play and do active things. I have to prepare them for the lesson that is to be introduced. The songs and poetry I choose are related to the lesson I'm going to teach. The reason I chose a water poem is because I was introducing them to a lesson about water. (Reflections on lesson)

I use songs and poetry in my IsiZulu lessons, depending on the topic of the lesson I'm going to teach. I start my lessons with a poem to enable the introverted learners to loosen up and those who cannot answer can feel included in a lesson. (Reflections on lesson)

Ms Duma also gives learners tasks to complete at home that can develop listening and speaking.

I tell learners to go home and listen to the current news on the radio and also on the television. During the first period learners are given a chance to tell their own news they listened to. In that way I can assess and ascertain if the learners did do their homework and to see if they know how to listen. Even in class, we tune in to the radio and listen to the news, and we turn it off again and I ask them questions to assess if learners can listen (Individual interview).

This emphasis is in line with a CAPS objective: "*Listens to stories, poems and songs and expresses feelings about the story, poem or song, giving reasons.*"

<table>
<tr><td>

Be careful! Be careful!

Be careful, be careful

Children have been too harshly abused

Stand up, talk and don't keep quiet.

This is your body, and yours alone
Say "no" to the one who wants it.

Stand up, talk and don't keep quiet.

Blow a loud whistle!

Inform teachers and parents.

Inform nurses and policemen.

This is your body.

Stand up, talk and don't keep quiet.

</td><td>

QAPHELANI, QAPHELANI

Qapelani, qaphelani!

Sebephelile abantwana,

isihluku sokuhlukunyezwa,

Sukuma, khuluma ungathuli!

Umzimba wakho lo,

ungowakho kuphela,

Ithi 'Qha!" kowufunayo.

Sukuma, khuluma ungathuli.

Shaya ikhwela kakhulu!

Bikela othisha nabazali

Bikela amanesi namaphoyisa.

Umzimba wakho lo,

Sukuma, khuluma ungathuli.

</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 5 a: Reciting a poem in isiZulu and English translation

<table>
<tr><td>

Come Rain

Come rain, to sprinkle us, with your cold drops

We love you, we as children, when we play

"Cabhayiyane",

Drop, drop, Cabhayiyane.

The wind informs us when you are

about to come.

Rivers overflows, valleys overflows. Where are

we going to sleep?

We will sleep on the trees and feast on

berries"

</td><td>

Woza Wemvula

Woza wemvula, uzosithela we!

Ngawo amathonsi, abandayo qa!

Siyakuthanda , thina bantwanyana, uma sidlala
"ucabhayiyana"

Co, co, uCabhayiyana

Umoy' uyasitshela ukuth asilindele.

Kugcwala imifula, kugcwal' imihoshana.

Sizolalaphi na?

Sizolal' ezihlahleni, sidle izindoni.

</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 5 b: Reciting a poem in isiZulu and English translation

From my observations, I gathered that the teacher was developing the skills of speaking and listening as during my stay at in the classroom, I observed that on arrival in the morning, the teacher asks her learners to tell her what happened at home and they then discussed the weather before lessons commenced. During class discussions, Ms Duma stressed that the children listen to each other and give one other a turn to speak. However, I found evidence of a great deal of choral reading and repetition especially through poetry and songs.

The findings suggest the need for more creative ways to develop speaking and listening, in particular related to real life, authentic situations e.g. CAPS isiZulu Home language Grade 3 suggests that learners should be given opportunities to use language creatively (e.g. tells jokes and riddles), and engage in dialogue for a specific purpose (Department of Education, 2011b). The CAPS isiZulu Home Language curriculum suggests some interesting and interesting activities such as the learner. Group gospel singing is done merely to keep learners occupied while the teacher is busy marking books. Generally these songs are unrelated to the learning objective.

- Reads book and discusses the main idea, the characters, the 'problem' in the story, the plot and the values in the text,
- Answers a range of higher order questions based on the passage read,
- Reads different poems on a topic
- Uses visual cues to talk about a graphical text, e.g. advertisements, pictures, graphs, charts and maps
- Finds and uses sources of information, e.g. community members, library books
- Engages in conversation as a social skill, accepting and respecting the way others speak – e.g. role playing a telephone conversation; reporting a crime; role plays a TV advert; etc.

There is limited evidence of using the Zulu culture to enhance literacy lessons. Ms Duma mentioned that traditional dancing is done in the Life Skills curriculum and that the main aim is to build the confidence of introverted learners. Guvercin (2010) states that "every language spoken in the world represents a special culture, melody, colour, and asset and to everyone the mother language is certainly one of the most precious treasures in our lives" (p. 1). Guvercin also states that through the mother tongue a learner connects to his parents, family,

relatives, culture, history, identity and religion (2010). Further, the mother tongue connects a learners to the culture of the community or society they come from and more importantly it shapes their identity (Craig, Hull, Haggart and Crowder, 2001). Teachers need to make every effort to bring into the literacy classroom the culture of learners for example, religion, beliefs, history, etc. Ms Duma needs to expand on this in her classroom as it is a way to motivate learners to a love of the mother tongue and mother tongue literacy. For example, the teacher can invite individuals from the community or parents and grandparents to tell stories and discuss interesting topics, such as celebrations, to develop listening skills, and oral and vocabulary skills (Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b; Guvercin, 2010).

4.5.2 The reading space

Ms Duma's approach to the teaching of reading is guided by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for the Foundation Phase: isiZulu Home Language. CAPS divides the requirements for reading into:

- Shared Reading (including Shared Writing)
- Group Guided Reading
- Paired / Independent Reading
- Phonics (including Phonemic Awareness)

(Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b).

CAPS focused on developing phonemic awareness; word recognition (sight words and phonics); comprehension; vocabulary and fluency. CAPS states that each of the above five components must be taught and practiced every day in an explicit manner.

Ms Duma pays a great deal of attention to developing learners reading abilities. She explains,

I value reading. Learners have to do more of reading activities because there a lot of things if the child cannot read it is difficult for a learner to write. They have to know how to read first before they are able to decode that in a written text. Learners has to know all the sounds for them to read. So I think reading is very important and they must do it every day. (Individual interview)

It is important that a learner reads daily for them to get more practice on sound. They must read fluently and read without stammering. Listening and speaking is also important during the reading lesson. If reading is done more often, their confidence level is increased. (Individual interview)

Because of the large class size, I observed that Ms Duma prefers grouping learners and moving around the groups to see if they are reading '*correctly*'. The focus is on phonic sounds and word recognition as she believes that the mechanics of reading are very important in the early stages of learning to read. Thus, reading is done as a group activity with learners taking turns to read a story.

The learners read in groups and I go around the groups to observe as they read individually. Some learners struggle to recognise sounds so I make sure I give them more sound training so that they can be able to read. If they don't know sounds they will struggle to read. The leaners reads in groups, then with the teacher which we call shared reading and they then read individually or independently (Reflections on lesson).

In shared reading, it's when we read together with learners. I wanted to assess if learners know how to read and the pictures were also assisting them to connect text to pictures. So it becomes easy for learners to read if they look at the pictures (Reflections on lesson).

Although much attention is paid to sounds and words, there is a focus on comprehension of the story.

It is also important that learners learn in their sounds to enable them to read. When I read a book to them, I want to assess their listening skill if they did read with comprehension. That I can assess when they give me correct answers. I was assessing their listening skills in the lesson. (Reflections on lesson)

The reading lesson that was digitally video-taped reflects that the teacher tries to make the lesson interactive and to get learners actively involved in meaning making. Her key strategy is questioning about the text. In this lesson, the following story was read (Refer to Figure 6).

Zitha and the Dangers of Cholera

Zitha is a popular man in the place of Bishini. A wealthy man indeed. He had a very large herd of cows. He had herds of goats, sheep, ducks, even turkeys. One day Mr. Hlophe was heard shouting "What wrong have we done, that the cows were not taken to graze in the field. We are going to drink mud today?"

The cows were in the dam drinking water with their hoofs deeply immersed. When the water was dirty it became difficult for the people of Bishini to obtain clean water. Previously the place was plagued by the illness or condition called Diarrhoea. People were pacing up and down because of diarrhoea. They were suffering from the disease, Cholera.

They had run out ideas as what they were now supposed to do. People were warned that they should purify water before drinking it. They were supposed to boil it or pour a spoon of bleach to a 20 litre bucket of water. They had to also boil water before drinking it.

Cholera is indeed dangerous. You must rush to clinic if you discover that you have a persistent stomach ache. There at the clinic you will get assistance. Don't drink raw maize meal milk and other concoctions.

Figure 6 a: Zitha and the Dangers of Cholera - English

Uzitha Nobungozi Bekholera

Uzitha ngumnumzane owaziwayo lapha endaweni yasoBishini. Isiqumama uqobo. Izinkomo zibulala inyoka. Ufuye wena zimbuzi, zimvu, zinkukhu, mahansi ngisho namagalikuni imbala. Langa limbe wezwakala uHlophe ememeza ethi "kodwa soneni kangaka izinkomo azisiwe ngani edlelweni namuhla sophuza udaka?"

lapho-ke izinkomo zazingene ngamanqina emthonjeni wamanzi. Uma amanzi engcolile kwakuba nzima kubantu basoBishini ukuthola amanzi ahlanzekile. Phela kuke kwahlasela isifo sohudo. Abantu kwakubutatata bekhishwa izisu. Ingani phela base bephethwe ikholera. Babengasazi okwakumele bakhenze. Baxwayiswa abantu ukuthi kumele bahlanze amanzi, ngaphambi kokuba bawaphuze. Kwakumele bawabilise noma bafake isipuni sikajiki emanzini angamalitha angu 20. Nokuwabilisa amanzi ngaphambi kokuwaphuza. Phela isifo sekholera siyingozi.

Kumele uphuthume emtholampilo uma ukhishwa isisu ongasiqondi kahle. Laphaya emtholampilo bofika bakusize. Ungalokothi uphuze impuphu nokunye.

Figure 6 b: Zitha and the Dangers of Cholera- isiZulu

The story was clearly within children's experience and meaningful to them as it related to events in their own communities. Moreover, it had the potential to increase vocabulary and general knowledge necessary for their life skills development. The whole class read the story, and then Ms Duma requested groups to re-read it. This was followed by a discussion on the story. The aim was to engage children in meaning making. Teacher questions: Can you give the story a title? We read about cholera in our story. What is cholera? Is it ok to share water with the cows?

However, much emphasis was placed on vocabulary, basically the meanings of individual concepts in the story as can be seen in the lesson excerpt to follow.

Ms Duma also focused on vocabulary: ikewu (geese); idamu (dam); izidladla (hoof); idlelo (pasture). As learners responded, the teacher wrote their responses on the chalkboard. At the end of the lesson, learners were told to read the responses and then copy down the answers in their exercise books. My observation was that the learners knew all the answers (refer to excerpt from the lesson below in Figure 7). This seems to have been a review lesson. It is important for teachers to give learners opportunities to practise reading comprehension as this leads to better fluency and with each practice learners learn more and engage at a deeper level from what they read.

The question arose as to whether she could have handled a review lesson in a different, more creative, fun way giving more control of the lesson to learners. For example, questions could have been posed by learners themselves; or they could be engaged in reading games and role playing activities based on the story; collaboratively teacher and learners build a poem based on a character in the story etc.

Teacher:	What does a dam mean? We learnt that…. .
Learner:	it's a water dam
Teacher:	water dam, somebody else, what is a dam? We read that they were drinking from a dam.
Learner:	a water dam its where water spring from the ground.
Teacher:	what is the meaning of the word hoof?
Learner:	it's the cow's feet.
Teacher:	very good. Isn't we were reading about animal called a cow. Hoof is the feet on a cow. We also learnt about pastures. We call them hoofs. What is the meaning of the word pastures?
Learner:	A pasture is where animals graze.
	cont…

Figure 7: Reading Lesson

…cont	
Teacher:	very good, it is where animals graze. We read that animals graze in the pastures. Animals get their food in the pastures. OK, let us look at the picture, is what is happening in the picture good or bad? Can we all see? Is it good, why? Please raise your hands, don't give me chorus answers. Is it good?
Learner:	No.
Teacher:	why? Tell me why you say it is not good. Why is that not good?
Learner:	because they leave water tap on.
Teacher:	very good, because they leave water tap on. What happens when they leave water tap on?
Learner:	Water is wasted.
Teacher:	very good. Is it ok to share water with the cows?
Learners:	it is not good
Teacher:	why?
Learner:	because the cows will dirty the water and we will get sick from drinking the dirty water"
Teacher:	and we end up what?
Learner:	we end up getting stomach ache

Figure 7: Reading Lesson

However, the shared reading lesson observed revealed some sound practices. Learners were actively involved in meaning-making. Ms Duma used some creative strategies to develop understanding e.g. predicting what the story was about from the tile; stopping reading at key places and requesting learners to predict what was going to happen next; drawing attention to the pictures in the book to enhance comprehension. There is some indication that Ms Duma is focusing on the reading process as she is teaching them certain reading strategies e.g. predicting outcomes. She is developing learners' ability to think and talk as they read in their native language. She is making them aware that reading is a skill that requires their active engagement and that it is a meaning making process. In addition and important she is developing their communicative confidence in the reading lesson. She is supportive and rewards children with praise for responses she feels are sound.

Examples of shared reading of story: Sizwe the naughty goat

Excerpt 1:

Learner:	Siziwe is a naughty goat.
Teacher:	That means this goat is naughty?
Learners:	yes teacher
Teacher:	let us read to find out if this goat is really naughty. Now I'm going to read. As I read you are going to keep quiet, is it?
Teacher:	you will keep quiet until I'm done reading. "Siziwe is a naughty goat and was one of the (amaphahla). He and his sister were born on the same day and at the same time in the morning at sunrise. (The teacher shows learners picture of the goats)…. Do you see that?
Learner:	yes teacher.
Teacher:	That means that this is Siziwe and her sister. Do you see that?
Learners:	yes teacher.
Teacher:	Siziwe's mother had insufficient milk to feed both her children, he could not stay with his mom and sister, he used to come back to stay with us in the farm house. He then became our responsibility.
Teacher:	Do you see the picture of a house Siziwe was staying?
Learners:	"Yes teacher"

Excerpt 2

Teacher:	They say she was a responsibility. What is a responsibility?
Learner:	Its luggage.
Teacher:	Is it luggage? What is responsibility?
Learners:	It's a young person.
Teacher:	Is it young person?
Learners:	If somebody is a responsibility it means he is a burden
Teacher:	A responsibility is a person that has everything done for her. Like yourselves, you are your parent's responsibility. If you need a pen you go to your parents, a ruler you go to your parents or clothes you go to your parent's responsibility which means you are your parent's responsibility. Like Siziwe she was the responsibility of the family she was placed under in the farm, isn't it?
Learner:	Yes teacher.

Excerpt 3

Teacher:	One day when mother was hanging her washing, Siziwe came behind her and pushed her. She fell on the hanging rope and the rope broke.
(Teacher: points at the picture to show learners images of what she was reading about. How can you describe Siziwe?
Learners:	Naughty.
Teacher:	That's brilliant class
	"He tip-toed behind my sister Zethu, who was carrying a basketful of eggs. Zethu fell and the eggs fell and were all over"
	(Teacher shows them picture)
Teacher:	Can you see the eggs spilling over?
Learner:	yes teacher.
Teacher:	Ok, can you predict what is going to happen?
Learners:	Siziwe is going to push Dad with his carriage, carrying milk.
Teacher:	Someone else, what do you think is going to happen?
Learner:	Siziwe is going to apologize, they are going to chase or send Siziwe away

It was apparent that Ms Duma needed to build on her competence and good practices observed in the teaching of reading. For example, there are other reading strategies she can develop in her learners i.e. activating prior knowledge of the topic; imagining; speculating; verify predictions and check for inaccurate responses; ask for help; reread to check comprehension; guessing from context: using prior knowledge of the topic and the ideas in the story to work out the meanings of unknown words; using self-correcting strategies when reading; paraphrasing: stopping at the end of a section to check understanding; rereading a section to ensure understanding; teacher and learners ask questions at beginning of a story to set a purpose for reading (Adler, 2004; Department of Education, 2011a; N'Namdi,2005). The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for Grade 3 Home Language suggests the following pedagogically sound reading strategies and activities:

- Reads silently
- Reads own and others writing
- Uses diagrams and illustrations in text to increase understanding.
- Reads enlarged texts such as fiction and non-fiction big books, newspaper articles, plays, dialogues and electronic texts (computer texts).
- Draws pictures and writes sentences to show understanding of a story
- Uses visual cues to talk about a graphical text such as a photograph and discusses what it is about, where it was taken.
- Listens to a story and works out cause and effect in response to questions such as what would have happened if the dog had not been found? (p. 28).

N'Namdi (2005) stated that the quality and variety of reading materials in classrooms in many more developing countries is a key barrier to developing reading competence. This most likely remains the situation even today. Ms Duma's class is reflective of this lack of reading resources. The potential of computer based technology has not been explored due to a lack of funding for such resources.

The National Capital Language Resource Centre (NCLRC) (no date) however, stresses the importance of authentic reading materials, that is, activities must be related to or resemble real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. Some examples could include learners writing shopping lists and reading each other's lists; drawing a map of their school

environment or their immediate neighbourhoods and locating places on the map – writing their names and reading them; developing a class newspaper. Reading for pleasure materials pitched at their independent reading level is lacking in Ms Duma's class.

4.5.3   Making the writing space

For the purpose of this study, I conceptualised writing as inclusive of expressive writing, handwriting, grammar and spelling. However, for the purpose of my small scale study I did not focus on spelling and handwriting.

4.5.3.1 Expressive writing

In structuring her writing curriculum, Ms Duma is guided by CAPS: isiZulu Home Language policy statement (Department of Education, 2011b). From my observations and examination of documents such as lesson plans, children's books expressive writing is done daily. But I could gauge that a large number of learners experience major problems with writing. Ms Duma explains that writing is done daily.

> *Writing is done daily as learners still experiences major problems in writing,*
> *they mostly write unreadable handwriting, so I feel they must do writing for the*
> *whole week. Most of learners still struggle some are doing great.*

Examples of expressive writing activities and learners' work are provided below:
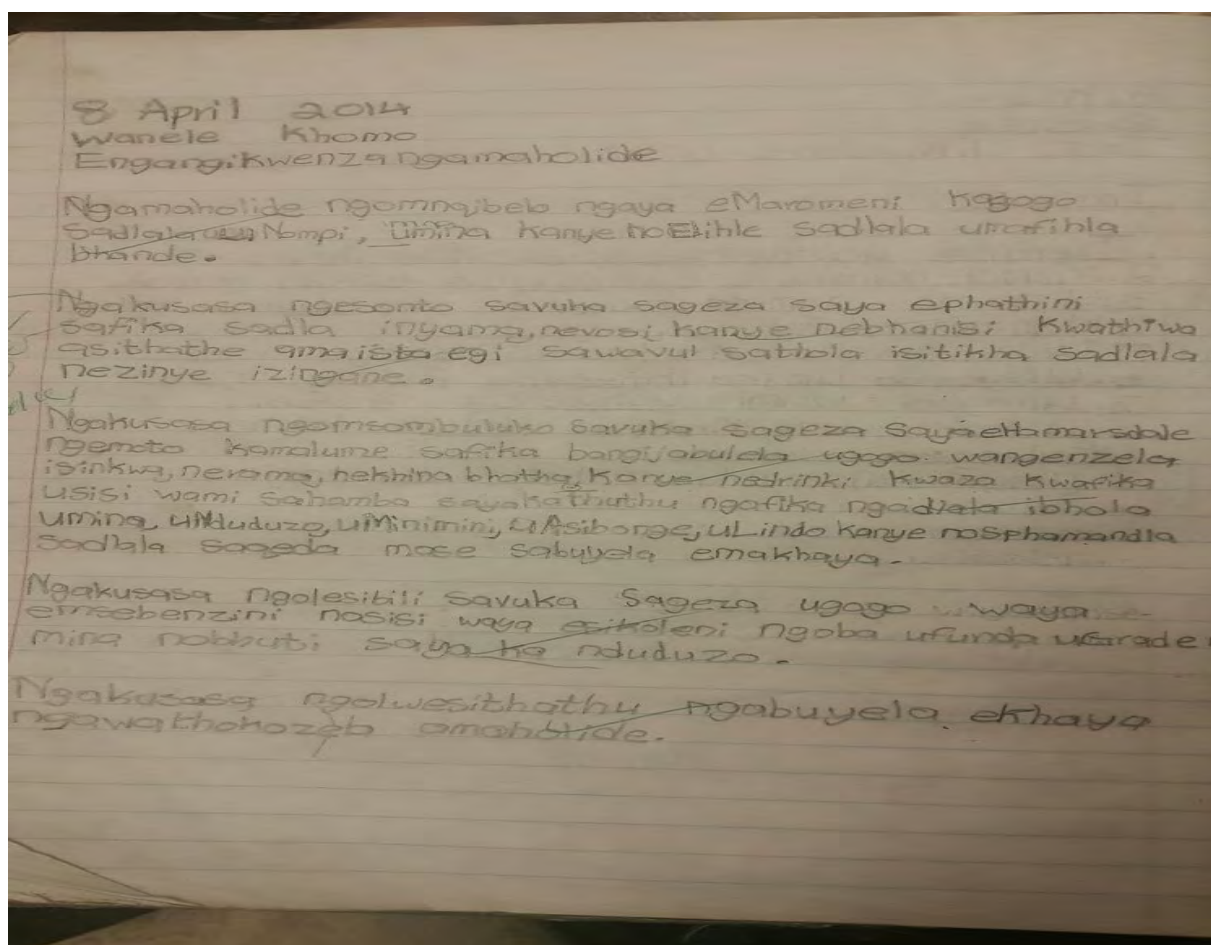
Example 1: What I did during the holidays

English Translation

> During the holidays on Saturday, I went to a Roman place with my gran and we
> played at Nompi's, we played "hide the belt" game with Elihle and myself.

> The following day on Sunday we woke up, washed and went to a party. We ate
> meat, sausages and rolls. They said we must take Easter eggs. We opened them
> and found stickers inside and we played with other children.

> The following day on the Monday we woke up and washed and left for
> Hammarsdale by my uncle's car and they were very happy to see me and my

gran made me a peanut butter sandwich and a drink. My sister arrived and we went to visit Thathu and we played football myself, Nduduzo, Minimini, Asibonge, Lindo and Sphamandla. We played and after we finished we went back to our homes.

The following day on Tuesday we woke up and our gran got up and left for work and my sister went to school because she is in Grade 12 me and my brother we went to visit Nduduzo.

The following day on Wednesday I went back home. I enjoyed my holidays.

Example 2: An invitation card
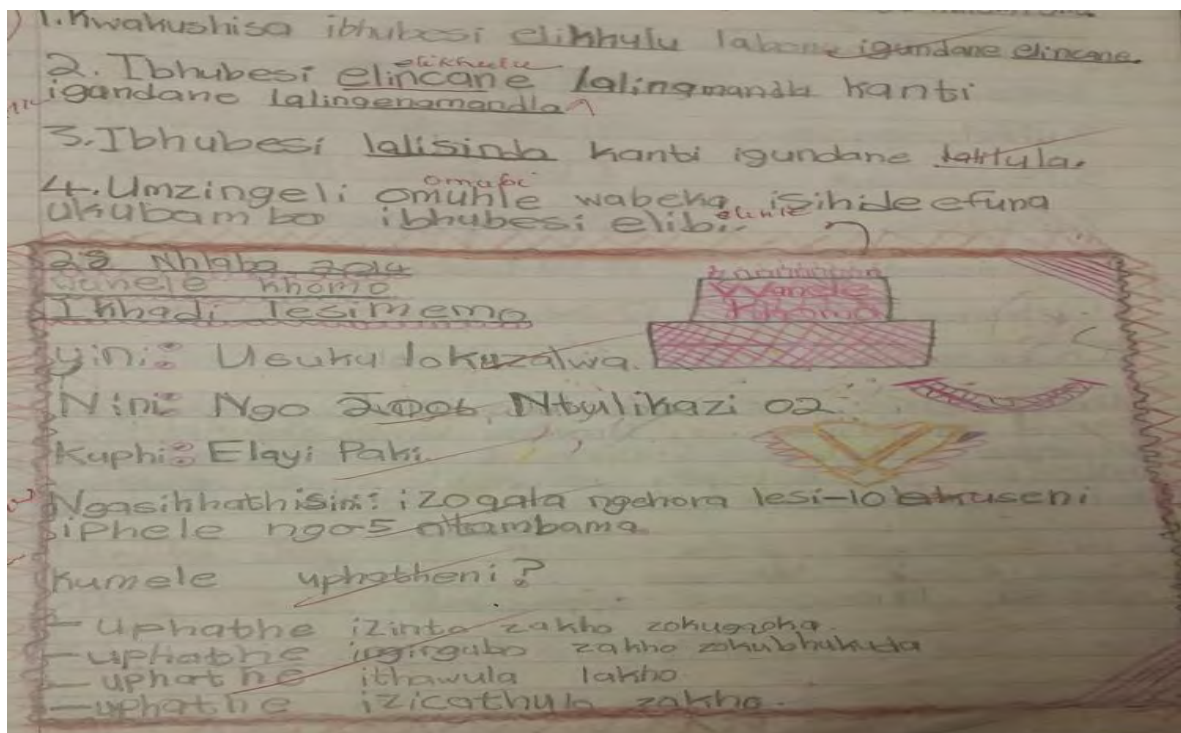
English Translation

INVITATION CARD

What: Birthday Celebration
When: on 2006 of July 02*
Where: Laheer Park
What time: it will start at 10 in the morning until 5 in the afternoon.

What to bring:
- Bring change clothes
- Bring swim wear
- Bring bath towel
- Bring your shoes

* *Learner wrote his date of birth instead of date of the occasion*

During my lesson observations, I observed much valuable time is spent on senseless copying from the chalkboard board.

Example 3: Copying from chalkboard task
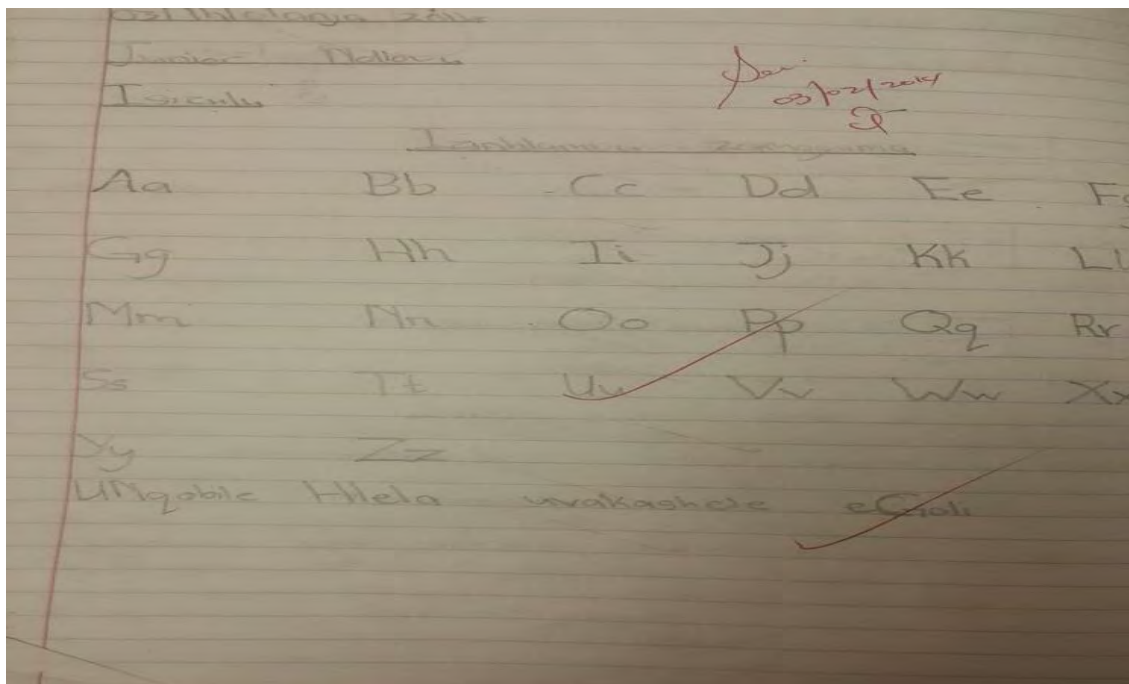
Learners copy letters of the alphabet from the board in their exercise books.

Example 4: Copying from Chalkboard task
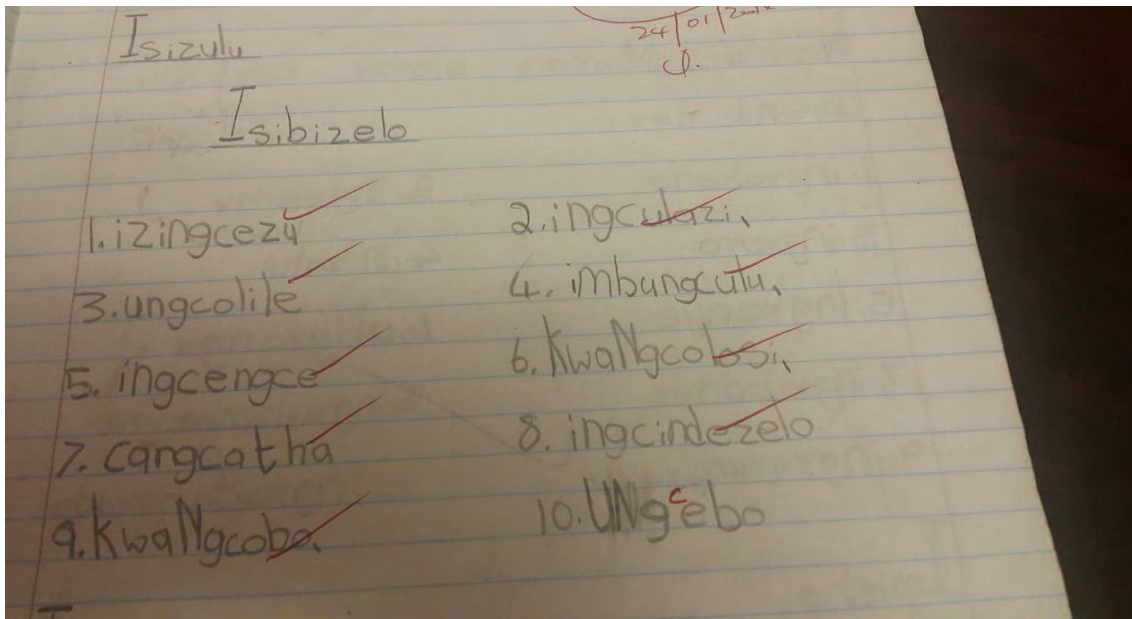
Here the teacher taught 'ngc' sound. Learners were given work to copy from the board.

They copy in their exercise books spelling words written by the teacher on the chalkboard.

Example 5: Copying from chalkboard task
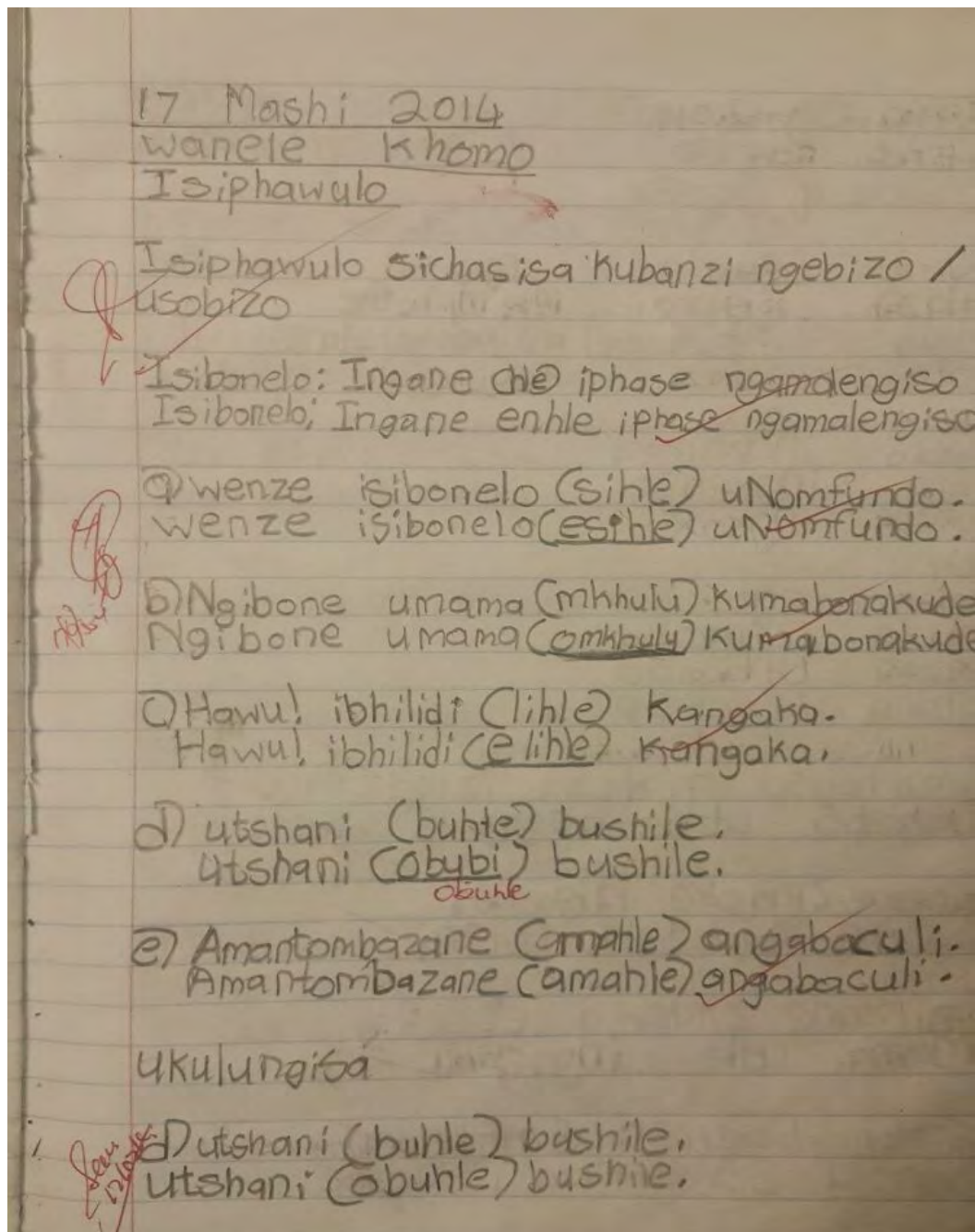
In this activity learners were copying language work written by the teacher on the chalkboard-based on the work taught in the lesson. This kind of writing activity is also illustrated in my notes of the lesson, excerpts to follow (Lesson observation notes 1 and 2).

Lesson observation note 1 – Writing activity

> In this lesson learners' spent 80 mins of class time copying a text from a poster that was in rather small print and located at the front of the class. Ms Duma did try to justify this task by stating that it was a policy requirement and that the Head of Department would monitor whether sounds are taught in the context of sentences of a meaningful paragraph. Ms Duma is aware of the pedagogical principle that the different facets of writing, such as phonic sounds and spelling, should be taught in context. However, it is the nature of the task that is questionable. Teaching of grammar, spelling, phonic sounds can be done in context in many creative ways instead of passive copying. Ms Duma clearly needs professional development in the development of writing skills in her learners. (Researcher observation)

There are many sound, creative writing activities suggested for Grade 3 learners in CAPS: Home Language (2011a, p. 30) are:

- Contributes ideas, words and sentences for a class story (Shared Writing)
- Writes a selection of short texts for different purposes, e.g. writes recounts, dialogues
- Writes about personal experiences in different forms, e.g. writes a short newspaper article.
- Drafts, writes, edits and 'publishes' own story of at least two paragraphs (at least 12 sentences) for others to read
- Writes and illustrates six to eight sentences on a topic to contribute to a book for the class library
- Uses informational structures when writing, e.g. experiments, recipes
- Keeps a diary for one week
- Writes a simple book review
- Summarises and records information e.g. using mind maps
- Write rhymes and poems.

Lesson observation note 2 – Writing activity

The children were introduced to a lesson by a recitation with the sound 'qhw' - this was repetition of the sound. Learners were asked to sound the sound "qhw". Then they were asked to give words with the letter 'qhw', and they did. I observed that some learners formulated their own words that were not in the IsiZulu vocabulary. They also gave words like iqhwa (ice), iqhwagi (caterpillar), qhweba (call by touching), qhwiqhwiza (meaningless word), qhweqhweza (meaningless word).Learners were then asked to formulate their own sentences using the words given - to see if they understood the word in context. I noticed that most of the learners experienced challenges in formulating a proper sentence with correct grammar.

The teacher then asked learners to read and re-write a paragraph with a passage with sound 'qhw' that was on a poster. The poster was written in small print. I was concerned if all learners could see and read the text. The teacher did not seem to be aware of this difficulty as she learners were not asked to go closer to the poster in front of the class. On asking the teacher why did she requested learners copy such a long passage, since my observation was that her learners could not complete the task on time. Ms Duma told me that the department policy now requires that they do not teach IsiZulu sounds or language in isolation, it has to be taken from the passage or a story that the learners did in class. She really did not answer my query.

I asked her why did not she at least made copies for them which they could paste in their exercise books as opposed to re-writing it? She told me that her Head of Department checks learners' exercise books and she wants to see evidence that the spelling was not done in isolation. Further, the school does not have a photocopying machine. She told me that she does her photocopying at a local library using her own funds. At the time, she was low on funds. Learners started writing that passage from 9:10 am until tea break at 10:30 – 80 mins. Many did not complete the task. I noticed by examining learners' work that at Grade 3 they still had a huge problem in copying the written work. There were numerous errors – I surmised that this could be due to boredom or the fact that the print size on the poster was too small.

Ms Duma also gets learners to copy sentences and paragraphs which she and the learners have co-constructed in lessons. Such tasks may be in her understanding the pedagogical practice of shared writing, suggested in CAPS – Home Language (Department of Education 2011a, 2011b). According to the Department of Education (2011a; 2011b) in the shared writing activities model, learners learn how individual letters form a word, how separate words form a sentence, the importance of spaces between words and the use of punctuation etc. Learners also develop an extended vocabulary and learn how sentences can be made more interesting by the use of adverbs and adjectives. This approach is a process approach to writing. The aim is to engage children as young as Grade 3 in drafting, writing, editing and presenting text for others to read. However, a grave concern is that there is little evidence of learners being actively involved in drafting, editing and presenting orally and discussing the written sentences and paragraphs. More class time is spent on copying from the chalkboard.

This suggests that learners must be given opportunities to write for different purposes in authentic contexts. e.g. shopping lists; greeting card message; designing a logo; writing a simple newspaper article; advert; taking down a telephone message; writing poems. Unfortunately there was little evidence of such innovative expressive writing activities in Ms Duma's class.

4.5.3.2 Teaching language use and grammar

Ms Duma does focus on the teaching of grammar and language use, and believes that grammar must be formally taught and not dealt with incidentally. Researchers in the National Capital Language Resource Centre (n.d), Washington, DC asserts that the communicative competence model recognizes that explicit grammar instruction helps learners to acquire the language more effectively, but it also stresses the importance of grammar teaching and learning in the context of giving learners opportunities to *use* language in authentic ways.

*In my third lesson, I needed my learners to know demonstrating pronouns. I needed learners to know that when we point at an object or a person, we use different words depending on the distance of an object. (*Reflections on lesson)

*In teaching Verbs, I asked them to give me examples of verbs. They knew that a Verb is a doing word and they were able to give me their own examples for Verbs. When I ask them to give me sentences, they are then able to give me their own sentences. My aim was to assess if they can make their own sentences using Verbs. (*Reflections on lesson)

The excerpts below reflect a grammar lesson I observed. I translated this into English. Included below is also the isiZulu version.

Excerpt 4: Lesson on verbs

Teacher:	A verb is something you do or somebody else is doing" what is a verb?
Learner:	it is something you do or somebody else is doing" what is a verb
Teacher:	what do we say that is?
Learners:	A Verb.
Teacher:	let us all say it loud.
Learners:	it's a Verb.
Teacher:	what am I doing now? (Teacher walks)
Learners:	You are walking.
Teacher:	Now I'm making a sentence using my verb "Granny is <u>walking</u> with the child. Can you see I have used a verb in a sentence? Now I want you to give me your own verbs, you are all going to give me verbs. Please raise your hands and give me a Verb.
LEARNER:	(PHEKA) – COOK
Teacher:	Cook, please help me write this word. Yes and another one?
Learner:	(DLALA) - PLAY
Teacher:	Yes play, please help me write this word.
Learner:	Dlala (play) – *as he writes*
Teacher:	Yes we have the word "play" on the board. Please give me another
one.	
Learner:	(CULA) - SING
Teacher:	sing
Learner.	(GIJIMA) - RUN

Excerpt 5: Lesson on verbs

(Teacher then asked learners to give her sentences based on the words they gave her.)

Learner A: (Umama u<u>yapheka</u>) - Mother is cooking

Learner B: (Izingane <u>ziyadlala)</u> - The children are playing.

Learner C: (Izingane <u>zicula</u> emthandazweni). - The children are singing at the assembly.

Learner D: (Ubaba uyalala ebusuku) – Father is <u>sleeping</u> at night.

Teacher: -   Yes, He is right. Father is <u>sleeping</u> at night.

Learner: (Umfana u<u>phuza</u> amanzi).-The boy is drinking water.

Teacher: Yes, The boy is <u>drinking</u> water. What is the boy doing? Class help me write this

                sentence.

Learner: The boy is <u>drinking</u> water.

Teacher: Thank you my children. Let us all read what is written on the board. Let us all read,

                we will first read the topic. What does the topic say?

Learners: A verb is something you do or somebody else is doing.

Teacher: Now read my example on the board. What is the word I have used for my example?

Learners: Hamba

Teacher: Now read the sentence I have written based on the word "<u>hamba</u>" (go).

Learners: Granny is <u>walking</u> with the child

Teacher: Now let us read the words only.

Learners: (Whole class reads)

                (PHEKA) –   Cook

                (DLALA)- Play

                (CULA)- Sing etc.

Excerpt 6: Lesson on verbs

Teacher: Now let us read sentences on the board.

LEARNERS READ:

1. (Umama u<u>yapheka</u>)- Mother is <u>cooking</u>

2. (Izingane <u>ziyadlala</u>). - The children are <u>playing</u>.

3. (Izingane <u>zicula</u> emthandazweni). - The children are <u>singing</u> at the assembly.

4. (Ubaba <u>uyalala</u> ebusuku) – Father is <u>sleeping</u> at night.

5. (Umfana <u>uphuza</u> amanzi).-The boy is <u>drinking</u> water.

Thank you my children you read so well. Please give yourselves a clap.

Learner: Thank you, very much, keep it up and shine!

Teacher: Now write the words I haven't used to construct your own sentences, don't write the sentences that I have used. Write your name and the date and the topic and don't write the example I have given. Write your own sentences. That means you are going to write six sentences. Please do not write the sentences that I have written.

(The teacher then checked and marked individual learner's work as they were writing.)

Learners were actively involved in this lesson. Ms Duma uses examples to facilitate understanding. In her lessons as evident in the above lesson, she works to develop independent learners. In this lesson, she stressed that they had to formulate their own sentences.

Ms Duma taught another lesson on "demonstrative pronouns". She explained to learners,

Demonstrating pronouns are divided into 3. When we point at something or someone from the distance, we use different words. When we point from near we use different word, when we point from further distance we use another word and when we point at a far distance we also use a different word. Do you understand?

Then she requested three learners to rake positions at different distances from her: "near", "further", furthest". She then introduced the respective pronouns and did the same task using a chair. It is clear that she tried to contextualise learning of the pronouns and make the task meaningful to learners. Ms Duma then presented different nouns to learners: cow, table, car, door, house, bicycle, stick, shop, and hand and requested learners to provide the correct pronoun. She wrote learner responses in a table on the chalkboard. Learners were then told to complete the last six items on the table in their exercise books.

NOUN	NEAR		FURTHER		FURTHEST	
1. Umfana (boy)	Lo	(this one)	loyo	(that one)	lowaya	(that one over there)
2. Isitulo (chair)	Lesi	(this one)	leso	(that one)	lesiya	(that one over there)
3. Inkomo (cow)	le	(this one)	leyo	(that one)	leyaya	(that one over there)
4. Itafula (table)	leli	(this one)	lelo	(that one)	leliya	(that one over there)
5. Imoto (car)	le	(this one)	leyo	(that one)	leyaya	(that one over there)
6. Isicabha (door)		(this one)				
7. Indlu (house)						
8. Ibhayisikili (bicycle)						
9. Uthi (stick)						
10. Isitolo (shop)						
11. Isandla (hand)						

Table 4: Lesson - demonstrative pronouns

Learners were again actively involved in this lesson. In both the lessons she used actions. This is a sound strategy as children learn best with a multi-sensory approach (N'Namdi, 2005). However, Ms Duma needs to develop competences on how to make grammar fun for learners, particularly in the practice and review phases of learning. From classroom observations, her teaching appears to lean towards being rather rule based. More should be done to contextualise learning.

Ms Duma also has to work hard to ensure that grammar is taught for communication purposes, as stressed by the researchers from the National Capital Language Resource Centre (NCLRC) (n.d). The researchers at NCLRC argue that argue that mechanical drills in which learners are requested to substitute pronouns for nouns or alternate the person, number, or tense of verbs focus on memorisation as a strategy.

Using such activities does not give learners the experience of ***using*** grammar correctly in oral and written communication. Drills divorce grammar from meaning and from how it is used in communication. Learners generally find these activities boring. The NCLRC researchers suggest learners be given opportunities to use grammar structures in communication – written or oral. For example, to practice the past tense, learners and the teacher can pose and respond to questions about activities they participated in one the previous day.

For example, Yolageldili and Arikan (2011) point to the value of games in grammar lessons "as they are motivating, contextualising, and natural activities that make learning meaningful" (p. 219). Games bring real-life situations into the classroom and gives learners the opportunity to use language. In other words, children practice language in a communicative context. Ms Duma used a form of role playing in this lesson which served a similar purpose as she introduced a real situation to demonstrate how the pronouns were used. In practice lessons, using games would be a valuable strategy rather than just use repetition as a strategy and a rule based approach. There are various ideas for grammar games on internet that can be adapted for the mother tongue literacy class, for example, the Hot *Verb-tato Game* (see Figure 9).

Hot Verb-tato (variation of the school yard game "Hot Potato").

- Arrange students in a circle. You will need a ball, balloon, bean bag or potato to be tossed around. Keep time. Fifteen seconds is a good starting time, but it helps to vary the time from ten to thirty seconds.
- On start, each student must say a verb and pass the 'potato' to another student.
- When time runs out the student holding the 'potato' loses and is subjected to some light-hearted punishment (e.g. do a dance, sing a song, and answer three questions).

Each Learner:

- May only pass the potato after saying a verb. Verbs may not be repeated in a round, if they are, the student is a the loser
- Must take the potato when it is passed to them
- Must not throw hard
- Pick up the potato if they drop it, say a verb and only then pass it on.

Figure 9: Creative grammar activities (Busy Teacher, 2012)

N'Namdi (2005) states that grammar and sentence structure and themes should be taught using children's literature. This shows learners how language is used in stories. Busy Busy Teacher (2012) provides examples of how grammar can be taught using songs, rhymes and games. It is also a good strategy to let children see patterns in grammar, and group similar grammatical structures in particular ways, for example, group adjectives and adverbs together as they both "add" something to a noun (Schoolrun.com, 2015). The teacher may make the game more difficult, learners may be told to give the letter or sound that each verb must start with (example: "A": act, ask; "S": sing; sit etc.). Grammar games can be fun and very motivating rather than using just the strategies of repetition, memorisation, and mechanistic drill exercises.

4.6   Researcher reflections on the findings of the study

Kyeyune (2003) stresses that through the medium of instruction learners reflect on various facts in order to construct new views of the world. Alexander (2009) argued that the mother tongue is the language a "children know best and in which all their powers of imagination, their creativity, their sense of complexity and, generally, their ability to think and play with words find expression most effectively" (p. 1).

In this study, I examined the teaching of mother tongue isiZulu literacy in a Grade 3 classroom. Although one can agree with the views of the above scholars what is crucial is the *quality* of mother tongue literacy teaching and learning. Although Ms Duma has embraced some elements of a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, there is evidence at times of contradictions in her teaching approach. Although her aim is to create active, independent learners who construct meanings from learning experiences, often there is evidence of teacher control of the learning process, mechanical drill, repetition and rather passive copying large amounts of text written from the chalkboard. This copying comprises a large percentage of expressive writing by learners.

Ms Duma's classroom is sadly lacking in exciting, creative literacy materials and resources. Children need a print rich classroom environment. N'Namdi (2005) asserts that an effective reading programme has to deal with limitations such as inadequate materials, lack

of teacher professional development, poor parental involvement, limited reading resources in the home environment, in creative ways.

Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall and Tower (2006) argue for authentic literacy materials which can be developed in exciting ways by the teacher and learners. Authentic literacy materials and activities reflect reading and writing activities that occur in the lives of children outside of the learning context. An authentic literacy activity has a writer and a reader—a writer who is writing to a real reader which may be parents/caregivers, the teachers and peers. In addition, the activity must serve a *real-life communication purpose.* Examples could be informational texts about the habits of an owl, or using a snake skin to generate reading materials about a snake; learner made greeting cards for special occasions; listing birthdays of learners; writing and posting letters; learner produced books for class library; writing captions for pictures; sharing riddles and rhymes and songs; drawing and writing logos and advertisements. Ideas can be obtained from print in the environment. It is crucial that Ms Duma understand that writing and reading must be done for a variety of purposes and audiences.

N'Namdi (2005) argues that teachers need to see it as their responsibility to inform parents and caregivers about how important their role is in developing reading competence in their children, and have to work out creative ways to collaborate with parents as children spend much time with parents and family. Additionally, Ms Duma would also benefit from ongoing professional development for example, working collaboratively with colleagues in the school or across a cluster of schools may be a valuable route to follow to find creative ways to address limitations in the educational context. Such a space could be a valuable opportunity to critique their own pedagogical practice and gain pedagogical content knowledge about the teaching of all facets of literacy.

Peer collaboration is valuable as teachers can jointly develop and share resources they make. Jones (2014), stresses that building relationships amongst colleagues is very valuable as teaching can be an emotionally draining task. There is limited evidence of collaborative working with colleagues at the school on the part of Ms Duma. Time has to be set aside for collaboration and team work in the development of resources and planning of lessons. My view is this kind of initiative should be led by the Head of Department at a school. Collaboration involves sharing responsibility and dividing tasks based on teacher strengths and interests. For example teachers can develop games for the different aspects of literacy to

reinforce in a fun way, for example, word games; games to reinforce phonic sounds; grammar games; spelling games.

The Department of Education (2014) *Foundations for Learning* materials for Grade 3 (refer to p. 3 – The *Throw, Read and Keep* game) do emphasise the invaluable ways in which games can be used to make learning fun, and how they can help the teacher to shift from a sole reliance on strategies such as mechanical drills and repetition for practice and review. If not a teacher such as Ms Duma can stagnate in her own professional development.

I gained the impression from lesson observations that Ms Duma sees grammar as a fixed set of word forms and rules of language. She teaches the forms and rules first and then gives them practice, often drilling learners on them. Myhill, Jones, Lines and Watson (2012) research shows that some of her practices reflected in lessons observed may be unsound. This suggests that Ms Duma may need sound declarative (what she knows about grammar teaching and learning) and procedural knowledge (knowing how to teach it) related to the teaching of grammar in the isiZulu language.

Concern is the amount of passive copying from the chalkboard that happens in Ms Duma's classroom. In the phonic lesson described above, learners spent 80 minutes on what seemed a senseless task aimed at teaching and reinforcing a phonic sound. Yet the Curriculum and Assessment Policy for Home Language Grade 3 specifies 15 minutes per day for four days should be spent on writing (60 mins a week), and 15 mins a day for three days on handwriting (45 mins per week) (Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b). CAPS specifies that 15 mins a day for five days be spent on reading and phonics (75 mins a week). It is evident that what Ms Duma is doing is contrary to policy.

4.7   Conclusion

In this chapter I presented and discussed the findings of my study, drawing on related literature. I also critically reflected on the findings, drawing out the key findings to illuminate my research questions.

The final chapter of this dissertation presents the conclusions and implications of the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore literacy teaching and learning in isiZulu mother tongue at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The focus was on the literacy practices of one Grade 3 teacher, specifically speaking and listening, reading and expressive writing, and written language use. I did not include spelling as part of this research.

My research questions were:

- What are the literacy teaching practices of a teacher in a Grade 3 isiZulu mother tongue class?
- How does the teacher navigate the teaching and learning of mother tongue literacy in her particular school context?
- What influences shape mother tongue literacy practices in the Grade 3 class?

5.2 Methodological Reflections

I used a geographical lens to examine the spatialities of isiZulu teaching and learning through the practice of a Grade 3 teacher at a primary school in Durban. Social geographers have undertaken various studies through this lens, for example, space of playground in which acculturation of children occurs, school spaces; the geography of playtime in a school (refer to Thomson, 2005). Vasudevan (2009) has researched the 'constellation' of teaching and learning practices within pedagogical practices, and "confluence of relationships, practices, interactions" (p. 357). This was what I attempted to do in my small scale study, and I gained rich research experience and insights from my engagement.

However, I merely focussed on the teacher. Upon reflection I believe that a Limitation in the study is that I did not include the voices of learners themselves. This would have enhanced the study. Vasudevan (2009) states that educational geographies is a concept that enables a researcher to illuminate the everyday, lived moments that happen during teaching

and learning interactions, across space and time. I believe had I engaged in a more sustained classroom observation process, and video-taped more lessons my data would have been richer. Sadly, my own teaching commitments at the time did not allow for this.

The study was a qualitative case study. Through multiple data sources I was able to illuminate my case: the teaching and learning of isiZulu mother tongue by one teacher in one class. Through my study I was able to explore a phenomenon within its real life context, where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly visible (Yin, 2010). My cast study enabled me to get a fairly deep understanding of a "case" or a bounded reality, which involved understanding people, an institution, events, activities, and processes.

5.3   Synthesis and Implications of the study

Duston (2013) asserts that when children in primary school have the opportunity to develop strong reading and literacy skills in their mother tongue, they are better equipped to acquire academic language in their mother tongue. Furthermore, children with a stable base in their first language (L1) are better positioned to acquire a second language, with which they can receive further education. Enabling children to access educational tools in their mother language will motivate early learners to gain literacy skills by making them more relevant, enriching their cultural identity, supporting the survival of minority languages, sharpening their critical thinking skills and strengthening their community by establishing a literacy conducive environment. But Duston (2013) stresses that the quality of mother tongue teaching and learning is crucial to achieving the above goals. Dunston states that teachers have to build creative and innovative ways to develop mother tongue literacy, and models that emphasis drill and repetition are damaging to literacy learning. Teachers have to use exciting, problem solving, activity based, and interactive approaches to develop all facets of literacy, as my study alludes to in chapter 4.

While undertaking this research journey and through observation, I found Ms Duma to be a committed, caring teacher who valued the active engagement of her learners in their own learning. Furthermore, alongside positive constructions of learners as agents in their own learning, Ms Duma's deficit constructions do emerge, for example, she tends to homogenise learners with respect to their abilities and competences in literacy. The study

illuminated various contradictions in her teaching. Although she values the active and meaningful engagement of her learners in learning, her teaching practice emphasises repetition, drill and mechanical copying from the chalkboard as part of expressive writing lessons. Although she does have sound practices in the teaching of reading, there is need for a range of fun and exciting materials and activities that would engage learners actively in meaning making in all facets of literacy, and in various literacy contexts. N'Namdi (2005) asserts that the quality and variety of reading materials available to children in many developing countries is a major handicap for ensuring reading competence as seen in the present study. UNESCO (2004) asserts that "literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts"(p. 13).

Ms Duma and the school as a whole had no access to digital literacy technology for isiZulu mother tongue. Duston (2013) stated that internationally "there is a shocking absence of digital educational tools for literacy in languages other than English" (p. 32). It is likely the situation is the same today. The Department of Education needs to make such technology available to teachers as it fosters a problem solving, activity based, interactive educational approach to literacy teaching and learning. In Ms Duma's class practice is "more of the same" e.g. merely re-reading a story in the same way or repeating a lesson rather than having interesting ways to mediate stories etc. in a variety of ways and modes. There has to be political will on the part of governments to venture into this kind of digital learning and teaching. Using digital educational tools in isiZulu Mother tongue literacy is an innovative area for future research.

N'Namdi (2005) argues that parents, caregivers, and the family environment can play a crucial part in early literacy learning as such a partnership also brings into the equation, the cultural dimension as Ms Duma has very limited interaction with families of her learners. There needs to be in place, a whole school approach to accessing this important resource to support isiZulu mother tongue literacy development. Promoting a positive attitude towards literacy learning in the mother tongue in the home and school and linking literacy to learners' culture and their socialisation in their homes – norms, values, and traditions- is key to the achievement of learners. Local literacies and oral traditions can be brought into the classroom, for example, in the form of folk tales, songs, poetry. A whole school approach will

enable school leadership and staff to find innovative ways to deal with possible obstacles such as absent parents, grandmothers as caregivers, lack of resources in the home etc.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Permission from Department of Education

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

| Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar | Tel: 033 341 8610 | Ref.:2/4/8 |

Prof. N Muthukrishna & Dr P Morojele
P O Box X03
ASHWOOD
3605

Dear Prof. Muthukrishna and Dr Morojele

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **THE GEOGRAPHIES OF CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING IN KWAZULU-NATAL: NARRATIVES OF CHILDREN, PARENTS/CAREGIVERS AND TEACHERS,** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 May 2013 to 31 March 2014.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education:

Umlazi District	Othukela District
Sisonke District	Pinetown District
Zululand District	Illembe District

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 19 November 2013

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa

PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 Fax: 033 392 1203

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WEBSITE: www.kzneducation.gov.za

...dedicated to service and performance **beyond the call of duty**

Appendix 2: Ethical clearance from UKZN

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

26 April 2013

Professor A Muthukrishna 845
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0250/013
Project title: The geographies of children's schooling in six Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries: Narratives of children, parents/caregivers and teachers

Dear Professor Muthukrishna

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)

/px

cc Dr P Morojele
cc Academic leader researcher Dr MN Davids
cc School administrator Ms B Bhengu

Appendix 3: Letter of Consent: School Principal

<div align="right">
Faculty of Education

School of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Edgewood Campus

P. Bag X03

Ashwood 3605

___/_____/ 2014
</div>

The Principal

Ukukhanya KweAfrika Primary School

Lower Langefontein

MOLWENI

3652

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for permission to conduct research at your school

I plan to undertake a study titled: **The geographies of literacy teaching and learning in isiZulu mother tongue in a Grade 3 classroom.** I kindly ask your permission to allow your school to participate in the above mentioned project. The participant in the study will be a teacher from Ukukhanya KweAfrika Primary School.

Please note that

- The school and participant will not receive material gains for participation in this research project.
- The school's identity will not be divulged under any circumstances.
- All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used (your real name and the name of the school will not be used throughout the research process).
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, the school and participants will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them. They will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what they do not want to tell me
- Audio- recording of interviews will only be done if you give us permission.
- Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed.
-

Yours sincerely

Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my supervisor or myself:

Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko

Cell no: 073 167 6170

Email: sindi446e@hotmail.com

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna

muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

_____

CONSENT FORM

If you agree to take part in this project, please fill in your full name and sign the form below.

I, ………………………………………………………………………….., (Full Name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I hereby agree to allow the study to be undertaken at my school. I understand that the school and participants can withdraw from the project at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____/_____/____

Appendix 4: Letter of Consent: Participant

<div align="right">

Faculty of Education

School of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Edgewood Campus

P. Bag X03

Ashwood 3605

____/____ /2014

</div>

Dear participant

Re: Request for your participation in a research project

I plan to undertake a study titled: **The geographies of literacy teaching and learning in isiZulu mother tongue in a Grade 3 classroom.** I kindly ask your permission to participate in the project. I value what you think about your school and teaching practices. You will be required to allow me to interview you individually and as well as conduct observations during lesson times. The interviews will be approximately 90-120 minutes, at your convenience.

Please note that

- The school and participants will not receive material gains for participation in this research project.
- You will be expected to respond to each question in a manner that will reflect your own personal opinion.
- Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstances.
- All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used (your real name and the name of the school will not be used throughout the research process).
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, you will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them. You will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what you do not want to tell us.
- Audio- recording of interviews will only be done if you give us permission.
- Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed.

Yours sincerely

Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my supervisor or myself:

Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko

Cell no: 073 167 6170

Email: sindi446e@hotmail.com

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna

muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

_____

CONSENT FORM

If you agree to take part in this project, please fill in your full name and sign the form below.

I, …………………………………………………………………….., (Full Name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I hereby agree to take part in the project at my school. I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time I want to.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____/_____/____

Appendix 5: Letter from language editor

V HARIPERSHAD
10 BENEVOLENT STREET
CROFTDENE
CHATSWORTH
4092

vaneshree@wisbygroup.co.za
Cell: 072 467 2797

06 October 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to record that I have:

- Carried out language editing, formatting etc.
- And made suggestions to student to address at his/her discretion

On the following disseration :

The geographies of literacy teaching and learning in isiZulu mother tongue in a Grade 3 classroom

by

Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko

_____

V Haripershad
Language Editor

99

Appendix 6: TURNITIN Report

Turnitin Originality Report

THE GEOGRAPHIES OF LITERACY TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ISIZULU MOTHER
TONGUE IN A GRADE 3 CLASSROOM

by Sindisiwe Petronella Sibeko

-
- Processed on 06-Oct-2015 1:02 PM CAT
- ID: 580687370
- Word Count: 25959

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Internet Sources: 10%
Publications: 5%
Student Papers: 6%

Appendix 7: Semi Structured Interview

Guiding questions:

1. Tell me about yourself, your background, career history and career development.
2. What are your beliefs and values about literacy teaching? What beliefs and values guide your teaching?
3. What are the key instructional strategies you practice regularly in your classroom – teach: reading, listening, writing, and oral language? What are the strengths and limitations of these strategies?
4. Tell me about the materials and texts do you use in your classroom?
5. Do you include student lives, cultures and experiences during literacy instruction? Give me examples.
6. What opportunities to do have for professional development?
7. Do you work as a team with other grade 3 teachers?
8. Do you involve parents/caregivers in your teaching?
9. Tell me about how you assess your teaching and children's learning.