



EXPLORING STRATEGIES OF TEACHING POETRY TO ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) LEARNERS IN GRADE 12

BY

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The work contained in this thesis was completed by the author at the University of KwaZulu Natal between January 2019 to September 2020. It is original work except where due reference is made to other writing. The work will not, and has not been, submitted for any award to any other university for any diploma or any degree, except to the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Signature 

Date: 04 November 2020

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

As the Candidate's supervisor, I agree to the submission of this thesis entitled:

EXPLORING STRATEGIES OF TEACHING POETRY TO ENGLISH SECOND
LANGUAGE (ESL) LEARNERS IN GRADE 12.

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Date: 04/November/2020

Professor Ayub Sheik

Dedication

To my late brother, Msizi Mondli Hlabisa.

To my parents Dumisani J. Hlabisa and Zibuyisile M. Hlabisa, and my siblings, Mhlengi, Menzi, Nokwethemba and Busizwe.

For believing in me and for their endless and enduring support.

But mostly, to me. For not giving up even when it was hard not to. For working tirelessly through all the hardships and remaining optimistic.

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Most importantly, to the Merciful, Gracious, and Messianic God I serve, uShembe, uNyazi Lwezulu. His abundant blessings are the reasons I live, He provides the strength to carry on.

To my ancestors: oBulawayo, Ngotsha, Sobakhethile, Mdinwa, Mhlotshana, Magayisa, Mangosuthu for guidance and protection.

List of acronyms and abbreviations

EFL:	English First Additional Language
ESL:	English Second Language
CAPS:	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
FET:	Further Education and Training
LiEP:	Language in Education Policy
KZN:	Kwa-Zulu Natal
UKZN:	University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
PC:	Practical Criticism
SCL:	Sociocultural Learning theory
DoE:	Department of Education

Abstract

Exploring strategies of teaching poetry to English Second Language (ESL) learners in Grade 12.

This study is an exploration of strategies that are of utility to ESL teachers to teach poetry in a South African context. It advocates a learner-centered approach to teaching and learning and closely aligns with the Department of Education's curriculum requirements. Given the paucity of poetic strategies available to teachers in rural, ESL contexts as evidenced in such studies as Lim and Omar (2007), El-Hindi (2008), Panavelil (2011), Juhlin (2018) amongst others, this study seeks to explore and provide enabling, unorthodox and innovative strategies that teachers can use to teach poetry in their ESL classrooms given the resource poverty typical to this demographic.

Maake (2017) points out that there is a decline in the teaching of poetry in the ESL classrooms in South Africa, even though the CAPS document (2011) clearly states that poetry should be taught like any other literary genre in the FET phase. The decline may be attributed to a number of factors, some of which are insufficient resources, negative attitudes towards poetry, overcrowded classes, language barriers, and inadequately trained teachers. This desktop study is consequently a review of methods the ESL teacher may have recourse to, given the contextual dynamics manifest in the South African ESL classroom. Practical Criticism informs the approach used in this study. The rationale for this choice is that ESL teachers consciously or unconsciously use some of the tenets of practical criticism in their classroom. This study therefore seeks to build upon this to add increased analytical rigor and expand the capacity for critical analysis.

This study uses desktop methodologies to advance its thesis. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, online peer reviewed articles, e-books and personal reflection are mostly utilized to inform this study. This study is embedded in the critical paradigm, acknowledges its own subjectivity and seeks to empower people.

This study also uses Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural learning, the central thesis of which is that knowledge is socially constructed. The theory is relevant in this study because it helps the teacher understand how learners acquire knowledge in an ESL context. The teacher understands his/her role as a facilitator of knowledge and not as the sole source of information. The sociocultural theory of learning insists on a learner-centered approach to teaching and

learning. It also promotes the contextualization of knowledge to the learners' understanding of their own world. This theory introduces the idea of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as a range between what learners can do (the known) and what they can do with the assistance of a teacher (the unknown).

Poetry in the ESL class is perceived as a necessary ordeal for examination purposes. This study contends that the intrinsic joy and the discovery of new knowledge as well as the aesthetic appreciation of poetry is what ESL teaching and learning of poetry should be foregrounding. The portrayal of poetry as an elitist genre has taken away left our learners with negative attitudes and experiences of poetry. Therefore, this study, by advocating different strategies of teaching poetry, seeks to reimagine poetry and rekindle interest in learners.

One of the key findings of this research is the use of cognitive reading strategies as the tools to teach poetry in ESL classes. Brumfit (1980) argues that reading is a very complex activity as it is composed of "perceptual, linguistic and cognitive abilities". Cognitive reading entails reading for understanding, an in-depth reading of the text which seeks to uncover the true meaning/s of the text. Using the words in the text, the reader is able to infer effectively with sufficient evidence to validate his or her argument.

The key findings of this study are cognitive reading strategies: pre-, during-, and post-reading strategies, paraphrasing, close reading, discussing the vocabulary used in poetry, and multimodality. These strategies provide an in-depth analysis of a poem and encourage a learner-centered approach to teaching and learning. Furthermore, they are compatible with Practical Criticism as a lens to poetry analysis because of their focus on the text. Understanding the congruence between these strategies and the sociocultural theory of learning, teachers can have effective poetry lessons.

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Chapter 1

Background and Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the study

This research study is an exploration of modern, innovative strategies that teachers may use to teach poetry in their ESL classrooms. It is derived from the decline of poetry teaching in ESL classroom contexts described in studies like (Khatib, 2011; Panavelil, 2011; Ahmad, 2014; Newfield & D'Abdon, 2015); D'Abdon, 2016; & Maake, 2017). Poetry is one of the literature genres in language teaching and learning alongside prose, short stories, and drama. However, it does not have the same status as its counterparts. This study wanted to explore works from different scholars and synthesise their work to provide a variety of strategies to poetry teaching and learning. In this chapter, I began by offering an overview of the background to the study and the rationale of the study. Thereafter, the purpose of the study, the research objectives and questions. I concluded the chapter by providing an overview of the structure of the thesis.

The CAPS document (2011) stipulates that poetry should be taught within the three years of the FET phase (grades: 10-12) in South Africa. Additionally, poetry can be used to develop language skills and increase learners' rate of second language acquisition. This is supported by Creely (2018, p. 66) who states that "poetry thus encourages a precision and economy with the use of words, not just in poetry writing, but in other forms as well". This, however, requires teachers to carefully select enabling approaches for the teaching of poetry which are innovative, learner-centred, and sustains the interest of learners. The theory which I propose for the teaching and learning of poetry is Practical Criticism. Annet (2015, p. 101-102) defines Practical Criticism as "a discipline that prioritizes attention to the words on the page when engaging in literary study as opposed to relying on established critical consensus, historical context, or pre-conceived beliefs". This theory considers the text alone and eschews the historical background of the text, the author, and feelings of the reader. It focuses on scrutinising the text and making meaning based on the merits of the text. This theory further matches the objectives of the current curriculum statement (CAPS) of driving a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. An emphasis on the text allows learners to develop competence by having substantive information for everything they raise about the text.

Panavelil (2011) suggests that often, as in the case of ESL classrooms, teachers believe that poetry is too abstract for their learners, therefore, they see no need in teaching it. Some of those who do teach poetry in their English classrooms, as Maake (2017) concludes, only teach it for examination purposes, and because it is required by the DoE, that it must be taught. Therefore, this problematic and inconsistent teaching of poetry, raises concerns as to why teachers opt not to teach it. This study, as its warrant, surmises that ESL teachers mostly avoid teaching poetry because of the lack of strategies at their disposal. This is compounded by the large class numbers, different capabilities of teachers, and unequal distribution of resources in schools. Many rural and a few urban schools, lack textbooks and infrastructure for good teaching and learning.

Incorporating Practical Criticism as a theory for this research comes from the fact that in the ESL classrooms, teachers use principles of practical criticism consciously or unconsciously, knowingly or unknowingly. Because of the lack of resources such as access to the internet, lack of books and supplementary teaching material, most ESL teachers rely on words on the page to teach poetry to their learners. To ensure a proper understanding of the text, they have to critically analyse the words in the text because they rarely have other additional information about the text. Therefore, this study recognises these fundamental challenges the teachers face and seeks to provide them with strategies they can employ to ensure coherent, efficient, and effective analysis of poetry.

1.2 Problem statement

Through observations and experiences of being both an ESL learner and now a teacher, I have detected a growing negative response towards poetry by both teachers and learners. These responses and attitudes are borne out of less exposure to poetry, orthodox teachings of poetry (in the South African ESL context), which entails telling students what the poem is about, reading with little comprehension by merely glossing over the poem. Furthermore, there is an abundance of research to barriers to teaching and learning poetry, attitudes towards poetry, and strategies of teaching poetry. However, there is a dearth of literature on strategies of teaching poetry in the South African context, which is a multilingual nation, unlike most monolingual and bilingual countries. Jackson (2017, p. 1) states that “poetry instruction in the South African English Additional Language (EAL) classrooms is in sharp decline, while little empirical research exists to shed light on this situation”. With that come different learning barriers too. South Africa is a nation that should pride itself on so many great and rich poets such as

Mongane Serote, Oswald Mtshali, Dennis Brutus, and Antjie Krog, amongst others. As a nation, we therefore have a great legacy of poetry and are blessed with rich resources. These poets touch on topical issues that South African learners can recognise and meaningfully relate to. In addition, the vibrancy of the indigenous poetry genres, such as oral poetry, should also provide a basis for poetry understanding and enjoyment for learners.

1.3 Teaching poetry as comprehension

Fabien (1990) notes that poetry in many ESL contexts has been taught as a comprehension exercise. Teachers have been seen as the sole source of information. They are the ones who know the meaning of the poem, while learners are passive recipients of this information. Teachers just present the gist of the poem at the expense of the many important rhetorical devices used by the poet, which are simply ignored. Consequently, this aesthetic dimension is mostly absent yet is integral to a critical understanding of poetry. In subsequent assessment tasks, learners must regurgitate what the teacher gave them. If they add or omit certain information, they will be penalized for not ‘listening’ to the teacher. This deprives learners of the freedom of expression and an opportunity to think for themselves. Learning should really be about learners figuring out the text and relating it to their own understanding of the world they live in. Fabien (1990, p. 5) states that “at most they may consider poetry lessons to be dull and uninspiring. They are forced to discover answers to questions on a complex form of writing which has nothing to do with them and which they do not understand”. Hence, learners fail and show no affinity to poetry as a genre. Sadly, from my experience, this is the reality that is obtained in many ESL classes in South Africa.

1.4 Defining the scope of this study

This study centers on the rural South African ESL classroom context, which, in most cases, lacks infrastructure and resources of teaching and learning. Often you find that, as Maake (2017) states, poetry is not taught because of the teachers’ lack of competence and confidence in poetry. Most teachers share negative experiences of poetry because of the way they were taught poetry, and the choice of poetry that was prescribed for them. Even today, teachers feel that poems prescribed for learners do not relate to them, and therefore do not find it worthwhile to teach. They perceive poetry as a genre that is used to segregate and make their ‘lives difficult’ through its use of ‘big words’, figurative language, and alien structure. Therefore, learners do

not bother to try and understand why the same message communicated through poetry is not communicated through a short story or prose, in simple narrative. In some schools, teachers teach poetry in grade 10 and 11 and not in grade 12 because they do not want their learners to fail English because poetry is ‘difficult’. So, clearly a change in mindset is required.

1.5 Purpose of the study

1.5.1 Aim

This study aims to provide strategies that teachers can use to teach poetry in their ESL classrooms.

1.5.2 Objectives

- To determine viable strategies to teach poetry to ESL FET learners.
- To contextualise these strategies within Practical Criticism.

1.5.3 Research questions

- What strategies can teachers use to teach poetry to ESL learners in the FET phase?
- How do these strategies facilitate the teaching and learning of poetry using Practical Criticism in the ESL FET class?

1.6 The structure of the thesis

In Chapter One, I provided an overview of the study. The main interest of the study are strategies for teaching poetry in ESL classroom contexts. This comes from the decline in poetry teaching in high schools. The CAPS document (2011) provides little for teachers to work with regarding poetry teaching. It is therefore important that scholars expand the knowledge base of teaching poetry in an ESL context marked by a poverty of resources.

In Chapter Two, I provide a critical overview of the existing literature on poetry, the teaching of poetry and on practical criticism. Poetry is defined as a sophisticated form of communication which is often cloaked in ambiguities, figurative language and paradoxes. Practical criticism is explored here as a method to poetry analysis that employs close reading.

Chapter Three of this study offers the analysis of the approach employed in this study. Importantly, how PC adds insights to this topic and their potential use. This study uses practical criticism as an approach to poetry teaching and learning. This approach of close reading allows poetry analysis that is based solely on a poem in text. It does not allow for the use of other external information on the poem. This comes from the fact that the meaning of a poem is often missed in the reading phase, (Richards, 1929). This chapter therefore synthetically provides a critical overview of how advocates of PC view it and argue for it.

Chapter Four of this study provides a theory used in this study, which is the sociocultural theory of learning by Vygotsky. This theory offers and states that knowledge is socially constructed. In poetry teaching, it implies that the meaning of the poem there is no single correct meaning of the poem, rather, meaning making should be done in class, emanating from the knowledge of the learners. This chapter displays the perfect marriage between PC and sociocultural theory of learning.

In Chapter Five, this study critically explores the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (2011) by exploring what it offers for poetry teachers. Thereafter, it provides a profile of an ESL learners and the challenges they face regarding poetry. This is subject to the lack of resources in most ESL classrooms, poetry's difficulty in terms of language, vocabulary, diction and paradox. This chapter also raises issues of decolonising poetry.

Chapter Six of this study is the analysis. This chapter is the core of this study, it offers different strategies selected for this study. It is a critical synthesis of different strategies that teachers can use to teach poetry. Some of these strategies are the Pre, During and Post reading strategies of poetry teaching. Providing activities that can be employed in different stages of a lesson to achieve maximum understanding and engagement in poetry classes.

In Chapter Seven, I provide the summary of this study by reflecting upon the objectives and questions set for this study and the conclusions emanating from them. Additionally, this chapter offers limitations of the study and recommendations from the study. The conclusion of this study summarises the whole study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review is an overview of ESL poetry in a South African context, which includes a critical analysis of the work done by different scholars in poetry. It is therefore organised thematically and chronologically. The first theme is a brief history of South African poetry, which is then followed by a discussion of the concept of poetry. Furthermore, this literature review explores the critique of poetry and the CAPS document with its prescriptions for poetry in the FET phase. Thereafter, the challenges of teaching poetry in the ESL classroom and the challenges faced by students when analysing poetry are discussed. These factors are considered within a sociocultural approach as advocated by Vygotsky. Finally, this review surveys the theory of Practical Criticism in which I provide a critical analysis of the scholarship of Richards (1929), Cock & Dyson (1965), and Peck & Coyle (1995)- key scholars and advocates of Practical Criticism.

2.2 A History of Poetry in South Africa

South Africa is a multilingual nation which finds its unity through the appreciation of its pluralistic society. One of the contributions to the country's diversity is its appreciation for poetry, which predates colonisation. Poetry (praise) has, since the times of the Khoi and San people, been one of the most significant forms of passing information, entertainment, educating people, restoring culture, prophesising, etc. The book by Stephen Watson, "*Return of the Moon*," (1991) provides us with an insight into the poems of the Khoi and Xam people, amongst pioneering works by Bleek, Finnegan and Scheub etc. Poetry in Africa was mainly in the form of oral culture and took the form of praise poems, elegies, ritual incantations and songs of worship amongst other sub genres. Ruth Finnegan's *Oral Literature in Africa* (2014) provides a detailed and informative discussion of orality and the reader is directed to it. From orality, various sub genres of poetry evolved and became dominated by written verse forms with the advent of colonial intrusion and influence. A perfect example may be "Black Consciousness," which began as a poetry house, but was later understood as a regime fighting against apartheid led by Steve Bantu Biko, (Decker, 2017). Other poets who came from black consciousness went on to build another poetry house called 'white lyric', which introduced contemporary poetry. However, it was not only the 'Black Consciousness' that was oppressed by the apartheid regime. Brown (1995) looks at the Nazareth Baptist Church by Isiah Shembe,

whose poetic hymns showed resistance to colonialism and preserving the Zulu culture, because of that, the colonial regime suppressed it. Furthermore, Nyezwa (2018) argues that in the African communities, there are strong rituals that connect the living with the dead, and such ceremonies require certain poetic performances. Poetry remains relevant and an important aspect in the history and traditions of the African people. This is to show the role poetry played in the resistance to the regime that segregated and suppressed black people.

Furthermore, the Apartheid regime did not recognise Black African poets and their work, therefore, the poetry that was taught in schools was mostly European poetry. This expanded the gap between the ESL learner and the content being taught in class. Even the teachers themselves lacked the understanding of most of the poems because they did not resonate with them either. The legacy of colonialism and apartheid instilled alienation as western values were superimposed in education and Africans could not establish personal meaning in learning. African verse forms were devalued and marginalized. However, the Izibongo (praise poetry) remains a significant aspect of the culture of the South African people. Izibongo are for majesties and prominent people like the Zulu King (King Goodwill Zulu), Shembe (leaders of the Nazareth Baptist Church), the inauguration of the president and State of the Nation's Address (SONA) Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, Kgalema Motlanthe, and Jacob Zuma had praise poets like Zolani Mkiva who performed the praises for presidents. Izibongo comes from the eventful tragedies and beautiful moments in a person's life. In this way, the South African government is restoring the culture and appreciating the nations' pioneered artistic beauty. Therefore, the inclusion of such poetry in the South African curriculum creates relevance for the English Second language learner because students resonate with it, and although studying poetry is for assessment purposes, it also preserves and educates them about their culture. So as part of decolonising the curriculum, I am also advocating for its inclusion in the ESL curriculum in the FET phase as well.

Nonetheless, I continue to feel that the inclusion of native poets during these special national events only may give the impression that these poets are only for those special events and not for our everyday appreciation. Kruger (2014) states that South African poetry needs readers and listeners who will engage with it in their everyday lives. The South African curriculum makes clear claims on the teaching and learning of language and literature in schools. Furthermore, rich poetry by black South African writers is ignored and not used in English language teaching. Therefore, South African poetry continues to be dominated by English and Afrikaans poems, which then cripples the native language poems. The non-existent publication

markets for South African poems in sectors other than the educational market continues to perpetuate the unequal status between the African languages and English and Afrikaans. “Language is a tool for thought and communication. It is also a cultural and aesthetic means commonly shared among a people to make better sense of the world they live in” (CAPS document, 2011, p. 8).

2.3 The concept of poetry

To restrict myself to a single definition of poetry would be an underestimation of poetry as a genre in literature. The word poetry comes from a Greek word *poiesis* that means ‘making’. Numerous scholars and poets have defined poetry and their definitions have more commonalities than differences. Poetry is a sophisticated form of communication, which is often cloaked in ambiguity, paradox, and figurative language. Wordsworth defines poetry as “an overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquillity”. Boyd (1973) proposes that there should be an “agreement that poetry is more than the creation of meaningful arrangements of words and that poetry is more than verse; it is verse plus magic”. Lethbridge and Mildorf (2004, p. 142) state that “poetry is perceived as fictional, it uses specialised language, in many cases it lacks a pragmatic function, it is also ambiguous”. Trinya (2005, p. 5) sees poetry “as aesthetic (or artistic) expressions in patterned language; as patterned and figuratively condensed creative language”. Haraldsson (2011, p. 3) adds that a poem is “a text that creates its meaning through the poet’s use and placement of words within the text”. Poetry uses its poetic devices to create meaning of the words used by the writer. “Through its images (created by means of language), poetry appeals to thought or intellectual contemplation; through its music (achieved by means of rhythmic and phonic devices), it appeals to emotional contemplation” (Trinya, 2005, p. 5). “Poetry can help us see differently, understand ourselves and others, and validate our human experiences” (Thango, 2017, p. 1).

Sihna (2017, p. 247) argues that poetry “can be defined as a text which has a network of linguistic signs, constructed within the parameters of poetic discourse and employing certain non-literal devices that characterize poetry”. “Poetry is a wonderful tool for self-expression and it doesn’t always have to be about the gentle art of love or the beauty of flowers”, (Baker & White, 2013, p. 32). The beauty of poetry is that it does not come in a singular form, there is no one definite way to define and understand it. Poetry is a mixture of different colours mixed together to accommodate diversity. Ollila & Jantas (2006) see poetry as “any kind of verbal or written language that is structured rhythmically and is meant to tell a story, or express any kind

of emotion, idea, or state of being”. Poetry expresses the inexpressible, allows emotions to flow, which the writer has no say in how the reader perceives them.

Irmawati (2014, p. 35) notes that “the meaning of words in poetry can be interpreted based on the various points of view and the ability of readers to interpret it”. All the meanings may even be different from that of the writer. This shows the distinction between poetry and its ability to unite all diversities. However, not every ordinary writing can be seen as poetry. Parra (2000, p. 63) comments that “only when a craftsman of poetry employs all the linguistic devices of the language, and then displays such skill that the assembly of the components is so perfect that we cannot see the separate units forming it, but only the beauty of the overall effect, can we talk of poetry”. Ciardi & Williams (1975) argue that for a person to appreciate poetry and its poetic devices, they should interact with it. “Every reader of poetry is different from every other, and the same poem will affect each reader differently” (Boyd, 1973, p. 1).

Ainy (2008, p. 3) suggests that “the ambiguity of a poem evokes individual interpretations which are not necessarily shared by all readers, thus opens up the opportunity for discussion”. It is unfortunate that some continue to feel that the ambiguity, paradoxes, linguistic devices are very difficult and unwelcoming, hence, their disapproval for poetry. Some even feel that poetry has no value to language learning, (Cetinavci & Tutunis, 2012). Brooks & Warren (1976) define poetry as “a kind of saying. It is, however, a kind of saying that many people, until they become well acquainted with it, feel is rather peculiar and even useless”. Boyd (1973) compares poetry to art (whether it is painting or music,) that its main aim is for the audience to enjoy. He adds that “poetry, like life itself, depends on the balance between the intellect and the senses, between thought and action” (Boyd, 1973, p. 2). This statement provides a summary of engaging with poetry for educational purposes, as poetry needs individuals who can think and be critical in their own thinking. People who will use a poem to their lived experiences and lessons to create a better understanding of the world they live in. Boulton (1953) argues that poetry has both physical and mental forms. With the physical form being the sound of poetry and the mental form being the content.

2.4 Critics of poetry

It is however important to note, hence, the warrant of this study that most students in my experience, find poetry irrelevant to the study of language, especially, in second language learning. Brook and Warren (1976, p. 1) feel that there are two reasons people feel this way about poetry. The first is “the way of the saying and the nature of the said”. These authors look

at the sophisticated linguistic devices, diction, vocabulary that poetry uses to manifest itself to the reader, which, if the reader is unfamiliar with, finds it hard to comprehend. Some feel that unlike prose, short stories, and drama, poetry does not build any suspense or provide useful information, therefore, it is irrelevant. Ainy (2008, p. 1) adds that poetry is not favored in classrooms because of its “deviant and densely metaphoric use of language”. Nica (2011, p. 125) comments that learners find poetry “intimidating and scary, as they find themselves in the position of not being able to grasp any meaning of it, thinking that it is too complex a mystery for them to break through”. This is the reasoning behind the resistance of learning poetry by most learners. They find it very intimidating; therefore, they will not even try to study it. Students find it difficult to find the point of contact between poetry and its meaning, hence, the reluctance to study and appreciate poetry.

2.5 Classism in poetry

As an ESL student and having learnt English and poetry in a second language, I have always felt that poetry excludes ‘us’. The ‘us’ is a representation of all black/African ESL students whose proficiency in English is moderate, if not below par. The use of sophisticated words that needs me to now and then refer to the dictionary, that I sometimes did not have, made it very difficult for me to understand poetry, not to mention appreciating it and its aesthetic beauty. If you look at different definitions of poetry, you still find them defining poetry as a genre only for the few, elite group of people, that possess certain select skills to appreciate it and you must be in their class too for you to understand poetry. This portrayal of poetry perpetuates the negative stereotypes that poetry suffers from and deprives people of different background to appreciate poetry. The Eurocentric conception of poetry hindered me from seeing an African praise poetry (Izibongo) as poetic for example. The portrayal of poetry in school curricula privileges certain sub-genres, especially western poetry over native oral poetic forms and has its antecedents in colonial oppression. However, the same poetic devices are applicable in an aesthetic appreciation of all poetry. This study seeks to raise consciousness of the ESL learners and teachers that when defining poetry to the learners, it is important that the diction used enhances understanding and appreciation rather than hindering it.

2.6 The CAPS document on poetry

The CAPS document (2011, p. 11) suggests that “learners also need to use their Additional Language frequently for a range of purposes. They need opportunities to speak the Additional Language for interpersonal reasons”. One of the interpersonal reasons is to develop a learner’s

creativity that poetry provides. Poetry allows learners to think outside the box, think subjectively and use their imagination. It fulfils one of the key elements of education, which is not about passing to the next grade, rather, to learn in class what can help you develop a better understanding of the world in which you live and thrive in. The document states that the First Additional Language (FAL) should enable learners to “use their Additional Language and their imagination to find out more about themselves and the world around them”. Sinha (2017) is right to say that the teacher holds the responsibility of taking his/her learners through the parameters of poetry and help them to identify and interpret the poetic devices until they gain full competence in poetry analysis.

The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) clearly states that poetry must be taught during the three years of the FET phase. CAPS document (2011, p. 14) states that “in Grades 10-12 learners should study a range of literary texts. For example, a teacher could choose a range of poems over the two years (Grades 10 and 11), short stories from different countries, novels and plays from different periods or films by different directors”. This document provides teachers with the discretion to choose which literary texts they want to teach in each grade. However, all three text types must be taught in the three years of the FET phase. Maake (2017, p. 3) asserts that teachers “see poetry as only a recitation which is a waste of their time”, hence, “denying learners the opportunity to explore and love poetry”. This provides a warrant for this study to compile the strategies for teaching poetry for ESL FET teachers to employ when teaching poetry to their English Second Language students.

The curriculum document argues that “poetry should be taught, not poems” (CAPS, 2011, p. 17). This is an important statement that is worth noting when teaching poetry. Most teachers tend to teach different poems instead of teaching their learners poetry, which will empower them with skills to study and analyse any poem they come across. It is not only about learners having the ability to read, comprehend, and analyse poetry, but also, their ability to write their own poems. In that way, learners learn to appreciate poetry much better because they develop a better understanding of poetry and how it helps them discover the target language and the world they live in. Teaching Shakespearean sonnets, Wordsworth, John Donne, John Milton, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Emily Dickson, is a visionless mission if all learners have to do is to receive what they are told and regurgitate it for the teacher to mark and not learn a thing about these poets and their writings. Learners should not only learn poetry in an English class. They should be able to search for poetry, in their own homes, community, languages and cultures. Ciardi & William (1975, p. 2) adds that “for poetry, the concern is not to arrive at a

definition and to close the book, but to arrive at an experience”. This statement gives the most significant aspect of teaching poetry, that it is not about arriving at the correct meaning of the poem, rather, to arrive at the experience of the learner, how they relate to the poem and what they can learn from the poem, that is, to personalize meaning. One can conclude that “there will never be a complete system for understanding or for judging poetry” (Ciardi & William, 1975, p. 2).

The time allocation for reading and viewing in the CAPS document (2011): comprehension and literature are four (4) hours per two-week cycle, which is the most time allocated for the language skills to be learnt. This allows a teacher to have more time for literature. In grades 10-12 learners should have two (2) of the approved/prescribed genres (Novel, Short stories. Drama, Poetry). As stated, in grades 10-11, learners should have done all the four literary genres which are left at the discretion of a teacher in which she chooses to teach and in which grade. In grade 12, learners should study the nationally prescribed set work. The document tries to provide a synopsis of what to look for when analysing a poem. “Explain choice and effectiveness in poetry of how elements support the message/theme. Elements may include figures of speech, imagery, structural elements and sound devices, e.g. rhyme, refrain, rhythm, alliteration” (CAPS, p, 32). This gives a teacher some direction of what is expected from him/her when teaching poetry. The CAPS document clearly states that learners have to study six (6) poems in grade 10, eight (8) poems in grade 11, and ten (10) poems in grade 12.

2.7 Why teach poetry today?

There are numerous reasons why we still teach poetry today, even though the centre of literature has shifted in the past from poetry to novels, grammar, and other literary genres. One of the reasons for teaching poetry as advocated by Widdowson (1992, p. 74) is that “it still clings on in the curriculum with the tenacity of tradition, protected by some vague notion that, like religious education, it is somehow morally uplifting and good for the soul”. He also suggests that “you cannot understand poetry directly, but only through the mediation of those who have been initiated into its mysteries” (Widdowson, 1992, p. 84). My understanding of the people who are initiated into the mysteries of poetry are teachers because they are taught how to teach poetry in their pre-teaching years. Lim & Omar (2007, p. 4) states that “poetry, if it is chosen carefully and exploited creatively, may help the students in the affective, communicative, cognitive, and educational aspects of their development”.

According to El-Hindi (2008, p. 1) “language teaching is a process during which students' competencies are developed through integrating learners' acquired skills”. El-Hindi (2008) believes that poetry is one literature genre that has the ability to teach those language skills. The continuous teaching of poetry is grounded in its ability in “developing a rich understanding of language and refined language use and with its role in developing an aesthetic appreciation and critical analysis” (Cui, Hubbard, and Gleeson, 2015, p. 273). Poetry can be used to develop EFL learners' language skills and awareness (Hu, 2011). “Another justification for teaching poetry in the curriculum lies in the common acknowledgment of poetry as the unique embodiment of aesthetic and literary value” (Cui, Hubbard & Gleeson, 2015, p. 273). El-Hindi (2008, p. 1-2) believes that “while learning poetry, learners interact with authentic material, discover others' thoughts, feelings, cultures or histories, and have a chance to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions”. It is because of such robust arguments that poetry continues to have a space in the curriculum and as a genre in literature.

2.8 Teaching poetry in ESL classrooms

Teaching poetry to learners provides them with an opportunity to explore the rich prospects of language. Chemwei, Kiboss & Cheruiyot (2013, p. 24) asserts that “poetry is taught in literature because it provides students with the opportunity to explore linguistic and conceptual aspects of the written text without necessarily concentrating on the mechanics of the language”. Poetry raises the consciousness of the world that we live in and uses its sophistication to educate about certain phenomena. “The critical importance of poetry in the English language syllabus is due to the fact that it provides the student with intellectual, emotional, social, and linguistic development” (Chemwei, Kiboss & Ilieva, 2005, p. 25). Moreover, poetry assists learners to “develop a sense of awareness of the self in the mainstream culture through dramatic interpretations of poems” (Chemwei et al, 2013, p. 24).

Most scholars find teachers guilty of the decreasing affinity of poetry by students because of the way they teach poetry. Vala, Doubalova, Sladova & Rerichova (2012, p. 1259) feel that “teachers themselves are often afraid of dealing with poetry, they lack confidence and avoid teaching poetry”. This concurs with Cetinavci & Tutunis (2012) who state that poetry is one genre in language teaching that English teachers do not like teaching because they also do not appreciate it as value to language and art. “Many teachers are handicapped by the lack of flair needed to inspire a genuine appreciation of poetry due to certain instructional traditions followed in poetry teaching that are not cohesive with the practices currently felt” (Chemwei et al., 2013, p. 24). Most teachers still follow the traditional ways of teaching poetry to their

students, where a learner is a passive recipient of the information and the teacher is the main source of information, (Dutta, 2001). Education thus becomes a passive process, in which learners are the recipients and the teacher is the main source of information.

When looking at teaching poetry in senior secondary English, Weaven & Clark (2013) found out that poetry in general intimidates teachers, and teaching poetry in particular scares them even more. This observation was made from the first language teachers and speakers of English, and so you can imagine the state of ESL teachers then. Chemwei et al. (2013) put forward that the way in which poetry is taught in schools brings about negative attitudes towards poetry. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat” (Freire, 1970, p. 1). Chemwei & Somba (2014) found that “...the teacher-oriented method of teaching is the most commonly used method of instruction in most secondary schools”. Such ways do not enhance the levels of thinking and engagement from the learners; especially with poetry, where learners need to be fully in charge of the analysis of a poem.

A learner’s attitude is an important factor to consider when achieving the set objectives in any curriculum. The attitude that students show regarding poetry plays a significant part in whether they will learn poetry or not. Chemwei, Kiboss & Ilieva (2005) feel that in most of our schools, the development of positive attitudes remains an ongoing challenge for teachers of poetry, because students lack the right attitude and motivation to learn about this genre. Chemwei et al. (2013) state that the correlation between student achievement and student attitude can be addressed through collaborative learning (CL). “CL is a comprehensive approach to teaching that encompasses key assumptions about what students should learn and how they should learn it” (Chemwei et al, 2013. P. 25). According to Chandra (2015, p. 1) “collaboration is a way of interaction and personal attitude where individuals are responsible for their actions, learning, their abilities and contributions of their peers as well”. This kind of teaching and learning method will allow learners in every poetry class to know they are responsible for their own learning and that of their peers.

One of the advantages of collaborative learning (CL) is that this approach is a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. Chandra (2015, p. 1) asserts that it promote “increases in student retention, self-esteem, and responsibility”. This allows the teacher to focus more on students that are lacking and assist them. This strategy allows for learners themselves to help each other in developing an understanding of poetry and its richness in language literacy. In

their conclusion, Chemwei et al. (2013, p. 29) state that “the findings of this study have shown that the use of collaborative learning interventions holds a great promise for becoming a powerful instructional tool that can positively influence students’ learning outcomes in areas where attitudes and motivation and/or interest is lacking”. Collaborative learning (CL) permits learners to discuss, recite and dramatize poems for a comprehensive understanding of the literary text provided to them.

Poetry continues to suffer from the stereotypical assumptions from those who are poetically illiterate by perceiving it as a difficult genre in literature. Fleming and Stevens (2015) as cited in Xerri (2016) argue that “poetry has been identified as being especially susceptible to the demands of assessment given the fact that it is sometimes misconceived as a difficult genre”. Panavelil (2011), Ardesbir & Shirkhani (2015), note that in the ESL classrooms, poetry has been described as a sophisticated form of literature, therefore, too abstract for an ESL student to comprehend. These kinds of assumptions question the importance of poetry as a genre in literature and its significance in our contemporary education.

Poetry continues to suffer from marginalization because some teachers feel that it deviates from the standardized norms and the aims and objectives of teaching English. Panavelil (2011) introduces an integrative and communicative approach to poetry teaching in an ESL class as a strategy that ESL teachers can use to teach poetry in their classrooms. Panavelil (2011) states that teachers suppress poetry by ignoring the fact that poetry is rich in language use, and for ESL students, learning poetry can increase their language experience and vocabulary. Furthermore, poetry gives students room to get practical and creative. The more they engage with different poetic genres, the more they can be able to use the skills of poetry writing in their language learning. This deficit by teachers is brought by the lack of the strategies of teaching poetry available at their disposal, hence, this gap provides a warrant for this study.

Khatib (2011, p. 164) points out that “it is commonly assumed that English poetry is too difficult for foreign students to cope with and therefore it will be out of their reach”. Some of the teachers who do teach poetry teach it because it must be taught within the three years of the FET phase, but not for educational purposes. In her research, Maake (2017) states that out of 11 secondary schools in the Shiluvane circuit, only four schools teach poetry in grade 10. This provides us with an insight into the stigmatizations attached to poetry by teachers. Akyel and Yalcin (1990) found that students and teachers feel that poetry has no significance in their

language skills development as ESL speakers. This provides curriculum designers with an insight into the causes of the failure of the curriculum, that teachers do not follow the curriculum, hence, some of the objectives are not met.

According to Ahmad (2014, p. 124) “meaningful learning of language skills would take place if poetry was chosen carefully and taught properly in the ESL classroom”. Poetry should not only be read for enjoyment and for the sake of teaching it. Poetry can be used to teach other parts of language and language proficiency. Maley and Duff (1989) as cited in Ahmed (2012) state that “poetry offers a rich resource for language learning... a poem offers a ready-made semantic field for learners to enter”. Different scholars have come up with different strategies that ESL teachers can employ to teach ESL students poetry.

Some of the strategies proposed by researchers do not require sophisticated learning tools and environments. They only need dedication and determination from both the teachers and the learners. Ahmad (2012, p. 124) states that “most of the tried and tested activities such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar can also be effectively taught by introducing a stylistics-based instructional approach to poetry”. This is one strategy that can be used in teaching poetry to ESL students which does not only focus on understanding the poem, but on enhancing language skills in the learner.

Habitually, students get to the FET phase with little or no knowledge of poetry and therefore tend to be hostile to it. El-Hindi (2008, p. 15) states that “since EFL learners mostly do not have this proficiency, it is much more likely they show less productivity because anxiety levels are high”. This shortcoming can be improved if teachers employ different and meaningful strategies that can enhance the teaching and learning of poetry. ESL students face various problems regarding poetry. Some of which can be “their linguistic approach of the text, in comprehending the text or both” (El-Hindi, 2008, p. 15). These hindrances can be eliminated by employing different strategies for teaching poetry. El-Hindi makes reference to the constructivist approach as one of the theories that can be used to teach poetry. According to Hein (1991, p. 1) “constructivism is the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves”. This theory is one of the theories that teachers can utilize when teaching poetry, especially for ESL students.

Poetry uses a lot of linguistic devices for effective meaning, that which, if poetry teachers can use, may help ESL learners understand the target language easier. “If one discovers the benefits that poetry has as a tool, one will have a huge source of various materials to bring into one's classroom” (Juhlin, 2018, p. 5). ESL teachers need to understand that poetry is language, by teaching poetry, you are empowering your learners with language tools, more vocabulary, and being more sophisticated in their use of a second language, (Titus, 2017; Juhlin, 2018). The lack of strategies of teaching poetry at the disposal of the ESL teachers warrants this study.

2.9 Benefits of teaching poetry

Poetry teaching offers both learners and teachers with an opportunity to study language in a more open and freer environment. Poetry teaching extends its proximities by offering poetry readers comfort and a better understanding of the world they live in. Creely (2018, p. 66) states that “through poetry all dimensions of human experiences and engagement with self and the world can be accessed and shared”. “Moreover, poetry employs language to evoke and exalt special qualities of life, and suffices readers with feelings” (Sugandi & Husnaini, 2015, p. 55). Simecek & Rumbold (2016, p. 309) argue that “if we are to make the case for poetry's role in education, we must address the issue of how we can measure such benefits and why they are particular to poetry rather than other art forms”. Creely (2018, p. 66) suggests that “in reading and writing poetry, in using and exploring the language forms of poetry, we code and decode these shared human meanings and explore what is quintessential in our experiences of life”. Because of its rich language use, poetry readers begin to grow in their second language acquisition and language use. Creely (2018, p. 67) states that “in writing and reading poetry there is quite a unique focus on the gradations and the intricacies of language and on the impact of individual words (their connotations and inflections), unlike, arguably, any other genre of writing”. Poetry occurs in different expressions and forms, therefore, caters for learners' diversities. Therefore, teachers need to carefully select different poems to include all the learners outside the prescribed poems.

Creely (2018) suggests that in the psychological and therapeutic domains there are numerous benefits of using poetry. The result of reading poetry and using it as a therapeutic means often results in the creating of new poems. Recognising that today's world revolves around the psychology of the learners, how they learn and the difficulties they face during the teaching and learning, it is therefore important to capacitate learners with writing skills and encourage them to write. Also, to provide learners with a platform to share their writings. Poetry is not

only a tool used for examination only, learners with the potential to grow into it should be encouraged and be guided through the opportunities that poetry can offer.

Creely (2018, p.67) states that “poetry is everywhere – in songs, raps, commercials, novels, blogs and children’s books, to name but a few. It is the most ancient and enduring form of literature. Perhaps it is the language that is closest to our consciousness as a species”. Hismanoglu, 2005, p. 61) also explains the educational benefits of poetry as follows:

Literature provides readers with a different viewpoint towards language use by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary; literature triggers unmotivated readers owing to being so open to explorations and different interpretations; literature evokes feelings and thoughts in the heart and in mind; literature makes students familiar with figures of speech (i.e. simile, metaphor, irony, personification, imagery,) due to their being a part of daily language use”. Learners begin to understand the complexity of language, but also how language is manipulated to make your meaning.

Hadaway, Vardell and Young (2001, p. 799) provide the benefits of teaching poetry in a language class by summarizing the ideas of the following writers:

The reading and re-reading of poetry through read-aloud and choral reading activities promotes fluency (Gasparro & Falleta, 1994).

Poetry's brevity and short lines appear manageable and therefore not so intimidating to the reluctant or struggling reader (Christison & Bassano, 1995; Cullinan, Scala, & Schroder, 1995).

Beginning readers more easily decipher the meaning of poetry because of the rhythm, repetition, and rhyme and the fact that the accent falls on meaningful words (Christison & Bassano, 1995; Richard & Amato, 1996).

Poetry serves as a brief but powerful anticipatory set for other literature as well as for the introduction of concepts and content across the curriculum (Chatton, 1993; Cullinan, Scala, & Schroder, 1995)

Poetry provides a source of brief character sketches, scenes, and stories that can prompt narratives from students (Vogel & Tilley, 1993). The variety of poetry formats... offers

wonderful beginning writing opportunities (Fagin, 1991; Tompkins, 1994).

2.10 Students' attitude towards poetry

Students come with different conceptions to class based on their socialisation. Some of these are misconceptions based on the experiences of other people, especially in the case of poetry, (Ghazali, 2008). Such misconceptions build negative attitudes around poetry as a genre in literature. Ghazali, Setia, Muthusamy & Jusoff (2009, p. 51) state that “students’ attitudes are one of the main factors that determine their success in language learning”. Haraldsson (2011); Khatib (2011); Vala, Sladova, Rerichova & Fic (2014); Ardeshir & Shirkhani (2015) maintain that students have negative attitudes concerning the teaching and learning of poetry regardless of the advantages that it has for language learning. Vala, Doubalova, Sladova & Rerichova (2012, p. 1259) assert that “the students consider their emotions and feelings evoked by a poem as being too vague and hardly graspable and find it difficult to verbalize them”. This leads to students lacking the will to try and make an understanding of their own emotions and that of the writer. Teachers who do not have enough strategies, then find it hard to help learners verbalise their feelings and emotions.

Vala et al. (2012) note that most learners who do not understand poetry are quick to give up or not express themselves at all because they do not want to make mistakes, forgetting that poetry gives voice to the voiceless. Haraldsson (2011, p. 4) notes that there are even mature readers who think that poetry analysis should “be constructed automatically and as directly as possible”. However, if that would be the case, then poetry would not be different from prose and short stories. Students’ attitudes affect the rate of development at which ESL students acquire language and proficiency in the target language, (Ghazali, 2008). Nonetheless, it is important to note, as Ardeshir & Shirkhani claim, (2015) that attitude is not a rigid phenomenon. By employing the right strategies and engaging with students, their attitudes towards poetry may change for the better. Students can overcome such preconceptions if the teacher can apply the method of teaching incorporating the underlying factor of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by Vygotsky, where the teaching and learning stems from what the learners already know (the known) to what the learners do not know but have the ability to comprehend provided the assistance of a teacher (the unknown).

2.11 Challenges faced by students when analysing poetry

The process of teaching and learning itself requires that the environment in which the process takes place is to be a safe environment. A safe environment, in this case, does not only refer to an environment where learners will not be physically harmed. Rather, it refers to an environment conducive for learning, where learners can make mistakes, take chances. A sensitive yet sensible environment that seeks to benefit a student. Teaching and learning of poetry require the same environment, where students can explore poetry without the fear of being wrong. Trinya (2005) states that most of the time when you ask students about their perceptions of poetry, it is likely to find that most of the time they will say poetry is very difficult. This “is the result of the inappropriate teaching methods of the subject at the secondary school level” (Trinya, 2005, p. 1).

Sometimes learners may not have enough poems to read and analyse. Teachers do not provide learners with enough poems to study and analyse because they want to get over teaching prescribed poems. Trinya (2005) asserts that even in some teacher training colleges, poetry is taught less than other forms of literature. In her research study of high school teachers’ experiences with teaching poetry, Young (2016, p. 75) found that her participants “were trained only to the barest extent or not at all” to teach poetry. Hence, the teachers that are produced are not confident enough to teach poetry in their own classes. He also provides that “this diffidence about poetry may also be described as the teacher’s own confusions transferred to the secondary school students; confusion derived from the doubts with which they themselves had also apprehended poetry while they trained to teach”. Trinya (2005, p. 2) argues that in the College of Education that she teaches, “usually, about 85% of topics would be on the novel or prose narratives, about 13% on drama, and about 2% (or sometimes even less) on poetry”. This provides an insight into the marginalization of poetry.

Students, especially beginners, are easily alienated from the study of poetry by teachers who assume that they have a prior understanding which they bring to the content. Such misconceptions hinder the students’ ability to engage with poetry and an exploration of its richness. Trinya (2005) puts forward that especially for a second language learner, it is difficult for them to comprehend poetry if they are not nurtured and scaffolded in the study of poetry. “Poetry would be better enjoyed if it were shown to be the universal art that it is, with species relative to time, to people, to places” (Trinya, 2005, p. 4). Teachers fail to contextualize poetry in the social context of the learners, especially, second language students. Hence, the ESL students find it difficult to comprehend and appreciate poetry and to see its significance in the

education and application to their everyday lives. “Poetry is no more European or American than it is African” (Trinya, 2005, p. 4). This is to say that when looking at poetry, we should not instantaneously think of Western poetry, nor should we be affirmed of poetry only if it comes from Europe or America. African and South African poetry contain rich literature within itself. Poetry is inclusive and helps provide an understanding of the rich diversity of the world and our common humanity.

Poetry may be a broad genre because it encompasses different genres within itself. However, diverse as those genres may be, they still have similar components that qualify them to be under the scope of poetry. The pluralistic nature of this genre should not be seen as a shortcoming, rather, as an adventure that wants to be explored. “In spite of the differences between poems, all poetry possesses fundamental characteristics that define them” (Trinya, p. 4). Poetry classes should be entertaining because that is one of the primary aims of poetry. The strategies that teachers use in class are fundamental in ensuring that poetry classes do not end up boring.

One of the strategies that hinder the process of teaching poetry is ‘teaching poetry as comprehension’. This method of teaching deprives learners of the opportunities to be part of constructing the meaning of the poem. “This method gives the teacher the role of ‘keeper of the poem’” (Fabien, 1990, p. 5). The teacher asks all the questions and has the correct answers to those questions. As a teacher-centred approach to teaching and learning, it does not motivate learners to want to know more about the poem being discussed in class. Learners “are forced to discover answers to questions on a complex form of writing which has nothing to do with them and which they do not understand” (Fabien, 1990, p. 9). This approach does not take students, especially the second language learner, on a step-by-step journey to learning poetry.

Another method of teaching poetry that teachers use in schools, but disadvantages the learners, is paraphrasing exclusively. This is if critiquing a poem is only confined to this. Paraphrasing is writing the text using different, much clearer words to achieve meaning. “The form of a poem is important to its meaning and so the paraphrase robs the poem of an integral aspect of its being” (Fabien1990, p. 11). Only paraphrasing a poem takes away the rich language the poet puts together for a specific reason to enhance the meaning of the poem. It takes away the artistic abilities of a writer and devalues the work produced by the writer. Although paraphrasing is an aid to poetry teaching, it derails the beauty of form and diction in a poem.

Rote learning is another method used by the teacher to teach poetry, which has a tragic effect on students, especially, if it does not come naturally. Some teachers want their students to

memorise a poem and recite it without them fully understanding the meaning of the poem. This results in students rendering words without meaning because they are doing it for marks and because the teacher said so. Furthermore, some only teach prescribed poems that are relevant to them or those they understand better because they are familiar with. Fabien (1990, p. 15) comments that teachers “do not have the courage to develop their own aesthetic values and seek to stifle the pupils’ natural inclinations towards their own tastes and values”. The teacher should expose their learners to various texts, texts of different times, and authors. This will allow learners to have choices and engage more with poetry.

In the past centuries, poetry had been understood as the fundamental and the core of literature. According to Showalter (2003, p. 62) “teaching poetry offers the literature instructor some of the fundamental, immediate, active, even physical ways to engage in learning”. This is to say, poetry is so complex and important in literature. “...and most poems are, indeed, not for passive consumption; they invite and require engagement” (Steinman, 2008, p. 3). Poetry requires focus and full engagement from both the instructor and the student. “My assumption is that one can read poems in multiple ways, but that one should be clear about whether and to what extent one is reading with or against the grain” (Steinman, 2008, p. 5).

While Lewis (2012) fills the gap between curriculum and students and advocates for ‘found poetry’ to be used in class, a gap of strategies of teaching poetry to ESL students remains unfilled. Found poetry is one means of learning content by students, where they take phrases and big words in their content subjects and reframe them to poetry. This strategy for content learning may be productive for the learners, however, regarding the South African context, where learners fear and do not understand poetry, it can be a disastrous activity. Teaching poetry requires certain strategies, especially in the ESL classroom. The lack of strategies that are at the disposal and contextual experience of the ESL teachers warrants for this study.

2.3 The theory of practical criticism

2.3.1. Introduction

Practical criticism has long been distinguished from biographical, theoretical, textual and historical criticism by its emphasis on evaluating and interpreting the literary text from the inside out and by focusing on how the reader might understand the text on its own terms. Hence, ‘practical criticism’ is an approach to poetry that prioritises attention to the ‘words on the page’ when engaging in literary study. This suggests a close reading of the text. For many students, the process of understanding and coming to terms with English is neither smooth nor straightforward as they struggle to overcome the difficulties associated with a target language mostly used in academic contexts and to which they have had little print exposure. It is therefore suggested that practical criticism would be of benefit to these students and teachers, especially in rural ESL contexts in South Africa.

2.3.2 Richards (1929)

When you begin to talk of practical criticism, the first person that comes to mind is I. A. Richards who is the founder of this approach. Richards experimented with his students by giving them poems that had no title and author's name. The reasoning behind this was that he wanted his students to concentrate on the words of the poem and not be influenced by the author's name. The responses he got from the students warranted his criticism of the then literary criticism. From the criticism and the responses from his students, he birthed practical criticism, which concentrates on scrutinising every word the author provides in order to understand the text. In his book, Richards (1929) explores what he calls the “chief difficulties of criticism” in poetry.

The first is “the difficulty of making out the plain sense of poetry”. In this criticism, Richards (1929) looks at the fact that even good readers of poetry often encounter the problem of not understanding a poem. In the words of Richards (1929, p. 13) “they fail to make out its prose sense, its plain overt meaning, as a set of ordinary, intelligible, English sentences, taken quite apart from any further poetic significance”. He extends this to the idea that they even misinterpret the feeling, tone, and attention. Richards (1929, p. 14) argues that this does not only happen to the most complex poems. He claims that “no immunity is possessed on any occasion, not by the most reputable scholar, from this or any other of these critical dangers”.

Equivalent to the first critical danger that Richards (1929) puts forward “are the difficulties of sensuous apprehension”. Sensuous apprehension is the inability of a reader to appreciate the sound of poetic words. In poetry, rhythms, rhymes and other euphonic devices play a significant role in understanding and analysing a poem. The second difficulty is imagery, that is, appreciating the visual imagery in poetic reading. Regarding this difficulty, Richards (1929, p. 14) adds that “they arise in part from the incurable fact that we differ immensely in our capacity to visualise, and to produce imagery of the senses”. Imagery is a vital aspect to the understanding of poetry. However, it requires that people appreciate the art in poetry for them to recognise the imagery and their definitive aspect to poetry, its comprehension and analysis.

The third difficulty is “mnemonic irrelevance”. Poetry evokes emotions from the reader, which sometimes may overwhelm the reader and takes the focus away from the poem. He continues to say that relevance is not an easy concept to define and apply, but irrelevance is easy to note. The fourth difficulty is what Richards calls “stock responses”. This difficulty deals with the gap/opportunity that poems leave for the reader to give their opinions. Richards states that frequently you find that readers already have prepared their minds, “so that what happens appears to be more of the reader's doing than the poet's” (Richards, 1929, p. 15). The fifth difficulty is sentimentality, which covers the emotional direction of the reader relating to the poem. This difficulty aligns itself with the sixth difficulty which is inhibition. An interesting difficulty is the doctrinal adhesions, which look at most religious poetry. Richards (1929, p. 16) views that such poetry “contains views and beliefs, true or false, about the world”. Some of these may be doctrinal and not allow one’s opinion or perspective.

Another difficulty is the effects of technical presumption. “When something has once been done well in a certain fashion, we tend to expect similar things to be done in the future in the same fashion, and are disappointed or do not recognise them if they are done differently” (Richards, 1929, p. 17). The last difficulty that Richards (1929) discusses is the general critical preconception. Poetry is faced with preconceived minds. Learners come with preconceived ideas about poetry, and if their standards are not met, they ridicule it other than appreciating its art and role in literature. This is to say, the preconceived ideas cripple poetry as a genre, hence, there is less appreciation by most people. Richards (1929) believes that the ten roughly sketched difficulties are the reason for the challenges that poetry seemingly presents.

Richards (1929) explores the concept of ‘meaning’. In trying to understand it, he states that the most common concern is figuring out meaning. He claims that the following questions are the

master-key to all the problems; what is meaning? What are we doing when we endeavour to make it out? What is it we are making out? He then comes up with four aspects that define meaning. The first is 'sense', in which he argues that "we speak to say something, and when we listen, we expect something to be said" (Richards, 1929, p. 181). When an ESL teacher chooses poetry for their learners, they need to choose poems that will speak to the context of the learners and the learners could listen to and appreciate. The second aspect is 'feeling', in which he contends that each poem that is written, the writer holds feelings about what they have written. He continues to say that the readers too, when reading or listening do pick up the feelings of the writer, perfectly or imperfectly, regardless of whether the writer is conscious or not about their feelings. The reader also develops feelings about the poem they are reading for different reasons. A poem has to evoke certain feelings that the reader may encounter when reading and analysing the poem.

The third aspect of meaning is the tone, in which Richards claims that every writer has an attitude and a particular approach to any given poem. The poet chooses his diction, modes of expression, and the arrangement of these words fits the purpose of writing the poem and contributes to the meaning of the poem. The last aspect of meaning that Richards brings forward is the 'intention'. For every poem written, there is a conscious or unconscious intention for writing it. According to Richards (1929), these four aspects are critical when trying to 'make out' the meaning of a text. The writer may write to educate, create awareness, inform, and share his or her feelings and perceptions. These four aspects are very important for ESL learners to know and understand because they are helpful when reading and analysing a poem.

However, it is important to note, as Richards mentions that sometimes all four aspects fail to decipher the meaning, especially if "the reader garbles the sense, distorts the feeling, mistakes the tone and disregards the intention" (Richards, 1929, p. 183). The analysis then becomes a difficult process because the reader either does not understand or has misinterpreted the poem.

2.3.2 Cox & Dyson (1965)

The work of Richards created an opportunity for other scholars to engage and critic the theory of practical criticism. Some of the scholars are Cox and Dyson (1965). These two scholars defined practical criticism as a theory that seeks to achieve precision and thorough understanding of poetry by scrutinising every poetic aspect that the writer provides. When analysing a poem through practical criticism, "every word in it counts, every interplay of metre with rhythm, every modulation and nuance of tone" (Cox & Dyson, 1965, p. 13). Advocates

of practical criticism believe in the consciousness of the writer in excluding and including some poetic features, the precision, articulation and diction used by the author in writing a poem? Cox and Dyson (1965, p. 12) argue that “a poem that is in any degree successful blossoms under our careful attention and comes into its fullness as we proceed”.

Cox & Dyson (1965, p. 21) provide the following as a reason for criticism, “a first-rate piece of criticism is very like a performance; it is a bringing alive of work, through close and faithful attention to it, at one time and in one place”. They continue to argue that poems exist on printed pages, and today, even electronically, but their coming to life and not only existence lies in its consciousness in a reader's mind, (Cox & Dyson, 1965). This is to say that even for writers, they cannot be seen as great writers if their work is ‘stored’ in books in different libraries but is never read and analysed by people. The criticism of their work makes their ideas sound to be heard and influence. Like Richards (1929), Cox & Dyson (1965) consider sense, feeling, tone and intention very important when making out the meaning of a poem. They maintain that through practical criticism “our reading includes a new sense of the poem’s structure and imagery, its tone and verbal delicacy, its precise effects” (Cox & Dyson, 1965, p. 13).

It is important to note that by practical criticism, the reader should scrutinise the poem but not lose the sense of joy to it, nor its artistic appreciation than the intellectual appreciation of it. Kearney (2008) notifies that when teaching poetry, it is important that the focus must only be on the poem and not the historical backgrounds that may come. Nevertheless, it is important that poetry analysis cannot be taken as an isolated activity. As Richards (1929); Cox and Dyson (1965) argue that the tone, feelings, sense and intention are important aspects of making out the meaning, all of this becomes true if the readers apply their own experiences to the analysis. The significance of a poem and its meaning expands the more you engage with it and uncover the conscious and unconscious sense, feelings, tone and intentions of the writer. Through that, the reader gets to appreciate not only the poem but also the beauty in poetry. Although paraphrasing is an aid of contextualising the poem, it often reduces the beauty and meaning of the poem. “The great poem has the power to enrich and extend us, to make us something more than we were before it. In its greatness, it is unlike any other poem we have ever read; but how is this uniqueness to reach us, unless we attend precisely and in very great detail to what it is?” (Cox & Dyson, 1965, p. 13). This statement speaks volumes about what ESL learners need to understand about poetry and the greatness in analysing poetry. Poetry does not only possess the ability to entertain us, but also to enrich our vocabulary, our language proficiency and acquisition of the second language.

Coy & Dyson (1965) extend their argument by introducing the basic approach to understanding and analysing a poem in which they raise three questions that need to be kept in mind when analysing a poem. The first is what is it about, which the authors explore as the subject of the poem. How is it done? This is the content of the poem, in which the two authors maintain that this question is in contrast to the subject. It looks at the diction, tone, imagery, themes and all poetic devices. Cox & Dyson (1965, p.16) state that “content signifies the unique co-existence of a more or less public subject with a particular and concrete aesthetic form”. The content is the actual set of words that the writer provides us with, which begins to make sense to us the more we dig into them, the confusion that we collide with, which should push the reader to dig even deeper for clarity.

The third question is, does it succeed? This question deals with the intentions of the writer, whether they are accepted or rejected. However, this question is affected by both the subject and the content. To make an example, some people would not want to read John Donne's ‘Death be not proud’ or Emily Dickson's ‘because I could not stop for death’ because they are afraid of death and reading about it does not make it any better. Also, the content affects the intentions of the writer, an example would be the romantic poems of Wordsworth, Shakespeare and other ancient writers, whose language use is far different from the contemporary language. Critics argue that those may be exclusive, and especially to the second language learners, who do not have such proficiency in the second language, would find those less interesting. Furthermore, the reader should expect that sometimes the subject and the content be distorted. Cox & Dyson (1965, p. 17) point out that “the subject may be traffic or depressing, but the form may exemplify beauty or felicities which are a joy and consolation for the mind”. There will always be a gap between the subject and content that even philosophy cannot account for.

The two authors introduced the ‘seminar approach’ which is commonly known as ‘teaching by discussion’ as a method of teaching and analysing a poem. The seminar approach is having the teacher and the learners in a table and discussing the text provided. Significant to this approach is the fact that each and every learner must contribute to the understanding and analysis of the poem. There is simply no room for shy, intolerant, learners. “What one gets in a seminar is an exchange of insights and responses, with the text as a fixed point in the centre, and the discussion pulling and tugging against this in every way” (Cox & Dyson, 1965, p. 23). In this approach, no one is better than the other, every contribution counts. Cox & Dyson (1965, p. 23) add that “the historical background has to be established, along with the assumptions and conventions of the author’s style; but this background is only a prelude to immediate and

personal relevance...”. One of the main criticisms of this approach is that it excludes background and personal relevance, which may be significant in enhancing the meaning of the poem.

The instructor’s function is to provide a free, sensible environment for everyone to freely and fully participate. “No one must be made to wish he hadn’t spoken, or be made to feel silly; the sarcastic and the scathing are impossible, yet the standard of excellence must be clearly defined” (Cox & Dyson, 1965, p. 26). The teacher must set clearly articulated objectives and rules to be followed so that the discussion would progress meaningfully. This approach is a student/learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. Therefore, learners play a significant role in analysing the text. Students should be active participants in the discussion and not be there to take notes and listen to the teacher and the ‘intelligent’ learners. Lazy learners make the approach impossible to succeed. So, learners need to know from the beginning that discussion depends on them and their active participation.

Nevertheless, productive as this approach may be, it is very difficult to use it in the typical South African classrooms because it requires a small number of learners. Most of our classrooms, especially the ESL classrooms contain a large number of learners, hence, this method will be chaotic. It also needs a special sitting plan which will allow learners to interact and a lot of time, which most lessons are one hour or even less than that. This approach works well in class that has less than 20 learners and the teacher may have more time in his/her period. The main reasoning behind this approach is to exhaust all the ideas about the poem and for a learner to leave the class with a full understanding of the poem and the analysis of poetry. This approach also needs a lot of technicalities from the teacher to be formalised, this may be problematic for some teachers because they may not have all of them done and the approach may fail. Furthermore, Cox and Dyson (1965) argue that the seminar approach allows the participants to show their personality provided that it requires that every participant must participate. This can be seen as a positive thing because by that the teacher gets to understand his/her learners more. However, I feel that discussing poems of a certain subject (like religion) may be chaotic and cause deviation from the subject content if not guided cautiously.

2.3.3 Peck & Coyle (1995)

Peck and Coyle (1995) continued to simplify and contextualize practical criticism even further by giving practical strategies of analysing a poem. They defined practical criticism as “that exercise in which you are given a poem, or a passage of prose, or sometimes an extract from a

play, that you have not seen before and are asked to write a critical analysis of it” (Peck and Coyle, 1995, p. 3). They also provide names that practical criticism has been understood better by, and these are: close analysis, close reading. These words define practical criticism to its core because it is about analysing the words in the text and not concede the historical background of the text, social consensus or even the writer's background. It is the analysis of the text as provided by the writer and not the ideas and preconceived reasoning about the text.

Peck and Coyle (1995) suggest that when trying to make out the meaning of the poem, the reader needs to find out the central tension or opposition to the poem. To achieve this opposition or tension, the reader needs to find the negative or positive lines in the opening lines of the poem, or something nice or even nasty in the first line of the poem. This allows or directs your mind to the proper meaning of the poem and provides you with the gist of what the poem is talking about. Important to their discussion is that various people will have different understandings of a poem because they read it differently. What is more essential is how the reader substantiates their understanding of the poem by using the words in the poem. That brings their perspectives to life, and so those of the writer.

Peck and Coyle (1995, p. 15) bring forward two ways that a reader may use to read a poem: “an ideal way, and a less naïve, slightly cynical way”. The ideal way is a method in which the reader comes to read a poem with a blank mind and carries no ideas about it. The authors compare the mind of a reader to a sponge, which absorbs the ideas in the poem and then uses them to analyse and understand the poem. This as it may, is a slow method of reading a poem. I also agree with them when they say this is impossible to do because every individual carries experience, and consciously or unconsciously, the experience of the reader creeps in the poem. You cannot just have a completely blank mind when reading the text. Even if the reader may not fully understand what the poem talks about, they do have a certain basis that they can build upon. The second method of reading the poem is the cynical way, in which the reader becomes an active reader, allows their ideas to flow through whilst reading the text. However, the reader should be able to restrict their ideas and not allow them to misinterpret the poem. The reader must be able to remove their feeling of the poem and should not allow preconceived ideas to cloud his mind and inform his understanding and analysis of the poem.

Peck and Coyle (1995) provided the framework of answering a poem. They note that when beginning to respond to the poem, the reader needs to take each line and stanza in their sequent order. This helps the reader build their response and not mix the meaning and plot of the poem,

therefore, giving the reader of the response an understanding of the poem itself. Also, this brings every aspect of the poem to life as the intention of the writer. The reader needs to use the poems formal qualities as evidence to their understanding and analysis of the poem, hence, providing the reader of the response with appealing evidence of thorough understanding of the poem. A poem may begin in a negative manner but ends in a positive manner. The negativity should not demotivate the reader. Also, if the poem talks about a subject the reader does not like, that does not mean it is a bad poem. The reader must be able to ignore their attitudes toward it and as practical criticism suggests, focus on the words provided and analyse them like it.

Cox and Dyson (1965) state that when reading and analysing a poem, you cannot simply begin by grading it with the poems you have read and maybe enjoyed. Rather, you read the poem, explore it and make its beauty come alive through its artistic appreciation, then, and only then you can grade it to the ones you have read before. This also happens if the reader likes what he/she sees in the poem, that they add unnecessary information about the poem because they have an affinity to the subject under the criticism. This then gives the reader of the response a notion of incompetency of the reader when writing the response. “Throughout your answer, you should be dealing with every aspect of how the poet brings his or her subject to life” (Peck and Coyle, 1995, p. 67).

2.4 Conclusion

This literature review has provided a critical overview of selected scholarship regarding teaching and learning poetry in an ESL context. Different scholars have defined poetry based on their understanding and experiences of it. However, within these different definitions, all of them define poetry as a sophisticated form of communication, often cloaked in ambiguity, paradox and figurative meaning. Its purpose is not only to educate, inform, create awareness, and share experiences, but also, to entertain. Nonetheless, due to the misinterpretations, often resulting from lack of reading skills, language barriers, attitudes and orthodox pedagogies, among other things, poetry finds itself in a dire position within the ESL classrooms. Furthermore, ill prepared teachers shy away from teaching poetry because they do not have confidence in teaching the genre. This is somehow due their defeatist experiences of poetry, language challenges and the lack of innovative strategies at their disposal. Therefore, it is because of this reason that I began this research.

Given the South African context, inequalities in resource distribution within the ESL schools, the number of learners in each class, it becomes difficult for teacher to even attempt giving learners group work because classes end up noisy and uncontrollable. There is a dearth of literature on strategies contextualised for the South African ESL classroom, which has a lot of diversity in addition to differing cognitive abilities. Therefore, this requires special attention so that learners in the rural schools too, perform at a higher level as their counter parts do in the English Home Language. This review extended its exploration of the theory of practical criticism by Richards (1929), whose work was extended and developed by Cox and Dyson (1965) who shared similar ideas to those of Richards.

Peck and Coyle (1995) centred their argument on using practical criticism in an exam room to analyse the given text. They explored the necessary skills required from the reader and how the reader should write the analysis. Their study relates more to the home language learners who are required to write essays for their analysis. For the ESL learners, they are required to answer questions based on the poem. This therefore needs attention as well, so that learners know what is expected from them when answering questions in an exam room and how to begin making out meaning of the poem given to them. This research finds its warrant from such predicaments and seeks to redress them by exploring a variety of strategies that both teacher and learners can employ when teaching and learning poetry. By advocating strategies for a close reading of the text, practical criticism permits an understanding of the text that has great utility in teaching and learning in an ESL context. This literature review has looked at establishing a definition of poetry, reasons why ESL learners (in rural contexts) harbour an apprehension to the appreciation of poetry and suggests that practical criticism may be a viable approach to the teaching of poetry in ESL in rural contexts.

Chapter 3

Theoretical framework

3.1 Defining theoretical framework and purpose

Grant & Osanloo (2014) state that a theoretical framework is a blueprint that serves to guide a research. Adom, Hussein & Agyem (2018, p. 438) define a theoretical framework as “a framework based on an existing theory in a field of inquiry that is related and/or reflects the hypothesis of a study”. I understand a theoretical framework is a theoretical lens that researchers use to question or provide answers in their research. There are numerous advantages in research in using a theoretical framework. Hence, the importance of it in any research being done. Grant & Osanloo (2015) point out that a theoretical framework aligns your cognitive abilities with your research plan and all the relevant concepts in your topic. Adom, Hussein & Agyem (2018) point out that the significance of a theoretical framework in a study is that “it guides a researcher’s choice of research design and data analysis plan”. It also provides a researcher with a controlled parameter of researching their phenomena and gives a researcher a better understanding of what questions to ask to develop a better understanding of their research and phenomena under study. The theoretical framework I have chosen for this study is practical criticism. The purpose of this theoretical framework is to provide an understanding of poetry and poetry analysis. Furthermore, it provides the research with direction and purpose with its guiding principles.

This theoretical framework is a structure describing what and showing how practical criticism is used, it is therefore, constructed chronologically. To achieve this, firstly, I have compiled a brief analysis of the definition of practical criticism by various scholars. Furthermore, I have given a brief history of practical criticism. To provide a clear understanding and analysis of practical criticism, I have chronologically structured my argument starting from Richards (1929), Cox & Dyson (1965), then Bennet (1977). To further the argument, I have included Bredin (1986) who agrees with most of what Richards (1929) asserts but raises certain concerns about his experiment and his conclusions. Thereafter, I used the work of Peck and Coyle (1995) who takes the conversation to another level by engaging with how a student can use practical criticism in an examination room when analysing a poem. I used these scholars because they developed the work of I. A Richards on practical criticism and strengthened practical criticism as a theory for the teaching and learning for literature and poetry in particular.

3.1.1 The concept of practical criticism

I understand practical criticism as an approach to literary analysis that focuses on the words in the text, which is sometimes understood as close reading or close analysis. Bredin (1986, p. 27)) comments that “practical criticism, as a teaching device, means close and attentive reading of literary texts, usually poetry, usually by small groups, under the guidance of a tutor”. Using this description, it is important to note the specific inclusion of a tutor. Especially, in the South African context, by advocating for practical criticism to be used in class, this promotes a learner centred approach to teaching and learning which leaves learners knowing and in control of their learning rather than memorising. Teachers becoming facilitators/’tutors’ as Bredin (1986) puts it, rather than being at the centre of teaching and learning as it usually is. Whilst other scholars debate about who firstly used the idea of practical criticism in literature analysis, Barry (1995) argues that I. A. Richards is the founder of practical criticism as a theory for teaching and learning, which is a technique that made close reading possible by detaching the context and history of the text. According to Eaglestone (2000) practical criticism is a process of close reading which is derived from detailed analysis of a text. Morris expands the description of practical criticism (2006, p. 161) by stating that practical criticism is a process that helps “develop the fundamental skills of close, rigorous, and objective analysis”. Trolander & Tenger (2015) distinguishes practical criticism from other forms of criticism based on “its emphasis on evaluating and interpreting the literary text from inside out and by focusing on how the reader might understand the text on its own”. Annett (2015, p. 101-102) defines practical criticism as “a discipline that prioritises attention to the words on the page when engaging in literary study, as opposed to relying on established critical consensus, historical context or pre-conceived beliefs”. It requires creative/crafty readers, who are willing to scratch the surface to find the core of the text, (Annett, 2015).

3.1.2 History of practical criticism

Peck and Coyle (1995) and Fard (2016) argue that the tradition of practical criticism began in the late 1770 with the works of “Dryden, Dr Johnson’s lives of the English poets...” as a tradition to literary analysis. However, practical criticism as a theory came to light in the early 1920s and later understood better through the writing of I.A Richards in 1929. He conducted an experiment using his students where he gave them 13 poems to analyse. Using this approach, the historical context and the writer’s background is irrelevant. I. A. Richards (1929) published a book based on the experiments with his students on practical criticism on experiments he had conducted over four years. In his introduction, he provided three objectives for the book, the

first was “to introduce a new kind of documentation to those who are interested in the contemporary state of culture”. The second one was “to provide a new technique for those who wish to discover for themselves what they think and feel about poetry and why they should like or dislike it”. The third was “to prepare the way for educational methods more efficient” “than the ones they used then to understand what they read” (Richards, 1929, p. 3). In this study, I concur mostly with the third objective as I seek to provide different contextual strategies that English second language (ESL) teachers can use in their classrooms to teach poetry to their ESL learners using practical criticism.

I.A Richards gave his students 13 poems ranging from different poets to analyse and they were given a week to analyse and submit in class. The key to this experiment was that the authors of the poems were not revealed, nor the title of the poem and their historical nature. Students had to make comments and he would collect those comments after a week. Another key factor in this experiment was maintaining the level of anonymity from the students. This allowed them to express themselves fully without fearing that Richards would know and expose to class who made the comments. The purpose of all this was for the students to analyse the poems based on the words provided by the author, with no pre-conceived ideas, attitudes, etc about the poem. Worth noting is the table that he brings forward deduced from the answers from the students? He uses: ‘Thought’ to point to the subject of the poem. He categorizes the ‘thought’ in to two; true and false. Some found that the poem was remarkable, original and profound. While others found the poem too obvious, common and trite. Regarding poetic expression, some found it very clear, confusing, dull, convincing, obscure and tame.

During his experimentation with one of the poems, poem IX “for the eighteenth birthday of George Meredith”, Richards (1929) provided the new group with the title of the poem. Line one reads “a health, a ringing health, unto the king of all our hearts to-day!”. Richards (1929, p. 119) notes that those who analysed the poem without the title “showed an incapacity to take in the fact that it was not the king, but the king of the hearers’ heart on that occasion, of which the first sentence spoke”. This provides us with an insight of the impact that certain aspects have on the poem and its understanding. The omission of the title of the poem concealed some clues for the students. However, had they concentrated on the words provided, they would have found it. Furthermore, in his introduction, Richards (1929) puts forward the difficulty of judging an authors’ work without having a slight hint of the author nor the context of it. He acknowledges that “even the reviewers of new verse have as a rule a considerable body of the author’s work to judge by” (Richards, 1929, p.5). West (2002, p. 207) argues that Richards

(1929) did not only suggest “a technique for reading literature, what he was in fact doing was investigating the nature of interpreting, and using poetry as an instrument to do so; he was investigating with the tools of psychology the process by which we as human beings make meaning from language”. Richards (1929) provided a controlled and practical way of making out meaning in a poem and any literary text by outlining some of the hindrances that students encounter when trying to make meaning.

One of the findings that Richards (1929) observed was that the failure to analyse poetry was due to ‘misreading’/lack of reading that most students showed. Through practical criticism, his students showed growth in analysing poetry because this method required them to spend most of their time on reading the poem before attempting to analyse it. His conclusion was that a reader must detach themselves from the emotions of the poem to make out the meaning of it. Lobo (2013) contends that Richards (1929) believed that a poem contained all the necessary information for it to come to undergo scrutiny for understanding, therefore, the satisfaction of the reader’s appetencies would come second’. However, I slightly disagree with Lobo (2013) because what Richards (1929) was trying to avoid was the imposition of personal experiences on a poem which often leads to misinterpreting a poem. Hence, the reason why Cox & Dyson (1965, p. 13) argue that “the practical criticism of a poem is not the opposite to enjoyment...”. The reader’s satisfaction always comes with the intention of the writer, whether the poem seeks to entertain, educate, create awareness, etc.

3.2. Richards (1929)

Richards (1929, p. 340) states that “poetry, with its direct means of conveying feelings and its metaphorical modes, suffers especially from certain types of misinterpretations”. This statement is one among many that probed the invention of practical criticism by I.A Richards. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I.A. Richards did an experiment with his students at Cambridge University. He gave students several poems to read and analyse by writing comments that were to be collected in class in a weeks-time. The comments had to be anonymous as the poems were. Richards (1929) omitted the authorship and titles of the poems for his students because he wanted them to scrutinise words on the page and not be influenced by relative popularity of some poets over others. Also, what propelled the omissions is a human habit of considering “what seems to be said rather than the mental operations of the person who said it”. He states that “we are in fact so anxious to discover whether we agree or not with what is being said that we overlook the mind that says it, unless some very special circumstance calls us back” (Richards, 1929, p. 7). Liking or disliking a poem is often the first thing that comes

to mind after reading it for the first time, without having a good look at it and making out its meaning by appreciating that every word counts, as does the structure and all other poetic features.

The anonymity of the commentator ensured 'genuine opinions'. He explicitly states that the experiment cannot be duplicated in the everyday encounter with literature and accepts the difficulty of analysing a text without having a hint about it. Richards's says the primary focus of the book is to "discuss poetry and the ways in which it may be approached, appreciated and judged". Worth noting in Richards's book is the fact that he emphasised that before we can judge a poem, whether we like or not, we have to identify the 'mental condition' of the writer, know the poem and make out its meaning. Judging whether we like it or not also should not be based on our personal preconceived ideas, it should be based on the words on the poem and the subjects touched upon by the poem. However, a poem can be good because of its structure, intended message but the reader has the right not to like it based on preferences. This is acceptable because the reader would have analysed the poem and understood it well but maybe the subject of the poem is of dismay to the reader.

Richards (1929) puts forward eleven of what he calls the 'chief difficulties' associated with critiquing a poem. The first is the difficulty of making out the plain sense of poetry. In this difficulty, Richards (1929) argues that even good readers sometimes fall into this trap and they cannot follow the narration of the poem. This is often a result of misreading the poem, hence, misinterpreting it. The second difficulty which Richards feels is parallel to the first difficulty is sensuous apprehension. The third difficulty is imagery. Most students cannot pick up imagery in poetry. Those who can identify it, often find it hard to connect it to the patterns of the poem and its meaning. The fourth difficulty is what Richards calls mnemonic irrelevance, in which a reader through the poem is reminded of personal experiences and then shifts from what the poem is presenting and dwell on their experiences of the phenomenon discussed in the poem. The sixth difficulty are stock responses. In this case, the reader develops emotions and certain views about the poem without necessarily reading and comprehending what the poem entails. We often encounter this when reading reports from the learners that they give in class, just because they understand the subject in the poem, they then think they know what the poem says.

The seventh difficulty is sentimentality, the eighth being inhibition. The ninth difficulty are doctrinal adhesions. There are certain doctrines (they may be true or false) that hinders the

reader's ability to see beyond what they have been offered. Often these are cultural, religious beliefs, and sometimes educational doctrines. The reader refuses to accept anything outside the principles of these doctrines because for them it is either that way or not. An example of an educational doctrine is that if a learner was taught a certain phenomenon by one teacher whom they trusted, when you come as a novice teacher and provide a different perspective to their existing knowledge, they resist it without evaluating its correctness. The tenth difficulty is technical presuppositions, in which a reader thinks because something has been well presented before, it will be well presented again. When the reader finds otherwise, they tend to be disappointed and do not want to accept a different composition of it. The final difficulty that Richards (1929) forwards are general critical presumptions, which the reader makes general presumptions on the poem based on what they have read previously. Richards suggest that these difficulties are not disconnected from one another and they somehow overlap.

To further the argument Richards (1929) argued that there are four kinds of meaning, these are: sense; feeling; tone and intention. Regarding the sense, Richards (1929, p. 181) argues that "we speak to say something and when we listen, we expect something to be said". We read and analyse poetry because the poet has communicated something, and we analyse it to get a thorough meaning of what the author tries to communicate. He states that when we enquire the sense of a word, we simply utter it and note the thought it arouses without losing the context in which it is uttered. With lack of reading and misreading being the centre of findings for Richards, he argues that when making out the sense, a reader should pay attention to the nuances of the word when pronouncing it. He contends that these provide an insight into the poem. If you continue to face difficulties of making sense, you replace a word with its synonym that arouses the same thought. One must bear in mind the ambiguity of some words; therefore, appropriate reading is important. With feeling, Richards suggests that every text should invoke certain feelings, whether liking or disliking, sadness or happiness, etc. about that text. Such feelings may contribute to our negative or positive attitudes towards what we read. The author of the text also has certain feelings about what he/she writes, these feelings may be correctly or wrongly received by the reader. That too brings about a different interpretation of a poem. Richards (1929, p. 213) comments that "the feelings already occupying the mind limit the possibilities of the new word; they may tinge it, they may bring out one of its possible feelings with an added contrast". Therefore, because of the feelings that may infiltrate our minds, then our cognitive abilities may be apprehended from enhancing the meaning of the poem.

The author then carefully chooses words and arrange them in a certain order for then to produce a certain tone. The tone of the poem also plays a significant role in making sense of the poem. The last aspect that Richards brings forward is the intention of the author. Every poem written contains a conscious and unconscious intention which the reader might get correct and sometimes may grapple through and find something else. There are numerous reasons why the author produces certain work in a certain way. Through practical criticism, the reader appreciates these aspects by close reading and analysis of the poem. It is important to note the interrelation of these four aspects because a distortion of one may result in a complete misunderstanding of the poem. However, this does not mean that the reader is prevented from going beyond the parameters of the writer and conform his/her cognitive abilities to the boundaries of the author. The reader must look through words and make out the meaning of the poem because through criticism, poetry comes to life.

Richards makes different cases to show how different contexts may use the four aspects of deciphering meaning. He makes an example of a mathematician writing a report. He/she will arrange words in a more convincing manner, with feelings detached from the report because it needs to be factual. The intention will be clearly stipulated to gain precise recognition from the reader. Another example can be a person writing an academic article. The intention will be clearly stipulated, the diction and syntax must be precise and will use convincing language to get the attention of the reader. There might be a certain percentage of biasness, but the reader will continue to maintain objectivity by providing factual substantiation to his/her claims. Those are different context of using the four aspects of making out the meaning that Richards (1929) brings to light.

Richards (1929) argues that reading a poem for understanding requires several readings. Most people often read a poem once and it confuses them, and they leave it like that because they think that it is difficult. This is often the case with the ESL students in South African, just because the poem contains sophisticated words which they cannot understand, they abandon the pursuit of meaning. Hence, this study seeks to identify strategies that teachers can use to teach poetry to their ESL students for better understanding of poetry. Richards's argument continues to unfold some of the difficulties that students face when analysing a poem. One of the problematic things for students is the figurative language that poetry uses. Students firstly do not know different figurative devices in poetry, and when they are in use, they find it very hard to connect them with the meaning of the poem. Richards (1929, p. 221) defines a metaphor as "a shift, carrying over of a word from its normal use to a new use". One of his students

commented on a poem that what the poet is saying cannot be scientifically proven. Richards's response was "not many metaphors will survive for readers who make such a deadly demand for scientific precisions..." (Richards, 1929, p. 192). Some students cannot see the beauty of language through figurative meaning because they are indoctrinated to the literal and scientific world of language, they want facts and precision.

Another aspect that Richards includes in trying to make out meaning is the use of paraphrasing. He puts forward two kinds of paraphrasing, the first one is "to exhibit the sense of the poem". Here, the reader uses the dictionary to find synonyms of the words that will invoke the same feeling as those used by the author. The second kind "demands qualities of sensitiveness and imagination, the power to use remote experience and to create metaphors". However, Richards feels that only the author can do the second paraphrasing because of their 'birth right' as poets to create metaphors, (Richards, 1929, p. 225). Using paraphrasing as an aid to poetry analysis can be productive, however, paraphrasing can take away the beauty and artistic features of the poem if not done with careful attention to that. By finding the words in the dictionary to replace the original 'difficult' words by the author may distort the structure of the poem, therefore, distort the meaning of the poem.

Richards (1929) adds another important aspect of analysing poetry which is the poetic form. He argues that poetic form holds half of the meaning of the poem, therefore, requires as much education as sense and feeling of the poem. In order to understand the form of a poem, the reader needs to pay attention to every rhyme and the rhythm of the poem. Pay attention to the words or phrases he/she may deem less important. Richards argues that in order to understand the rhythm in a poem the reader should look beyond the arrangement of those rhyming words, whether it is bad or good. It requires a reader to understand the meaning of the words too. Richards argues that when trying to find the feeling of the poem, one of the problems that readers face is that they have to rely on introspection and some of the inept words in the poem which sometimes may have some ambiguity. He states that analysing a feeling is "...a matter of separating out its attributes, and no one knows yet what attributes a feeling may have, what their system of interconnections is, or which are important, which trivial" (Richards, p. 217-218). He comments that feelings are usually metaphoric in poetry, therefore, by finding the metaphors in a poem, you can then find what feeling they express.

Towards the end of his book, Richards (1929) traversed to a different aspect which leads to a lack of understanding of poetry. The first factor he raised is immaturity. He states that there is

a certain level of immaturity in his students which prevents them understanding and analysing poetry. He raises an important point that "...and educational and social system which encourages a large proportion of its endowed and favoured products to remain children permanently is exposing itself to danger" (Richards, 1929, p. 311). I feel this is somehow the case in the South African ESL classrooms with the traditional methods that the teachers continue to use. Learners do not grow cognitively to become independent thinkers because they are spoon fed in class the 'correct' ways of answering a poem. Another factor is the lack of reading. Richards points out that the most obvious conclusion that he drew from the experiment was that most students who could not find the poems interesting nor comment positively were those who showed deficiency in reading. This again is the case in the South African second language classrooms, most learners show a great deal of poverty in reading because they do not have tools to read at their disposal. Even those who do, they do not see the need to use them to improve their second language. With poetry analysis, they show a great anxiety and fear of it because it is something too foreign to them and because of the negative stereotypes attached to it, they do not see the need for learning it.

However, by using practical criticism and taking to account the difficulties that I.A Richards raised and the means of analysing poetry, it is possible for an ESL teacher and learners to gain better insights to poetry analysis. Richards (1929) continues to argue that confusion is often a factor in poetry analysis. He states that even good readers may confuse the four aspects of making out meaning and this confusion often leads to difficulty in analysis. What is required from the reader is that "they receive each separate contributory meaning without confusion" (Richards, 1929, p. 329). A reader should be able to separate the four aspects of making out meaning but also be alert to their interrelation because it is that which brings about the precise meaning of the poem.

3.3 Cox and Dyson (1965)

In the mid-1960s Cox and Dyson explored further the work of I.A Richard of practical criticism. Cox and Dyson (1965, p. 9) argue that "practical criticism is best taught by discussion". Their procedure to poetry analysis is that a poem is the centre of discussion, followed by the personal impressions then the discussion. The two authors raise concerns that practical criticism has been centred around. Some of which were that practical criticism is too hostile to the spirit of the poem, that it leaves the poem to its bare bones. Regardless of this critique, they still maintain that through practical criticism, a poem blossoms and find its beauty and meaning through scrutiny. "A really great poem begins, indeed, to take possession of us

not immediately, and at one bound, but insidiously and with stealth, over an unpredictable period of time” (Cox & Dyson, 1965, p. 12). The practical criticism of a poem does not mean negative criticism of a poem nor does it reduce or side-line the beauty and artistic nature of a poem. It is finding an in-depth meaning of the poem by perusing through each word and recognising the special selection of it over others.

Practical criticism is about examining a poem “until its particular reality comes vividly to life” (Cox and Dyson, 1965, p. 14). In order to achieve this, the two authors pose three questions as a basis of making out meaning. “what is it about?; how is it done?; and does it succeed?”. To find out the subject of the poem, one needs to look no further than the ‘poems public meaning’. Every poet writes out of their experiences of the world they live in and its socio-economic issues. A poet like Wordsworth or Shakespeare may write about the subject of love; religion and death like John Donne, politics and history like Oswald Mtshali, etc. When looking at the content of the poem, the reader now turns to recognise the arrangement of words, the imagery, structure, tone, etc. Cox & Dyson comments that one deficient factor in poetry analysis is that readers often address the subject of the poem and then judge it (whether they like it or not, whether it is a good poem or not) without looking at the content of it. Cox & Dyson (1965, p. 1.7) state that “between content and subject, there is a gulf which no simple moralising or philosophising can bridge”.

Often in the case of the South African ESL classroom, most learners would dismiss a poem because they cannot find the subject of the poem and its content is therefore difficult to crack. Furthermore, they judge the poem by whether it appeals to their taste or not, which, by using practical criticism you cannot do. What counts the most are the words in the text, you can later state whether you like the poem or not. “The poem in its own is an object; and an object which may itself, like a symphony or a great cathedral, be a shaping experience upon our live” (Cox and Dyson, p. 18). This is a way of looking at a poem and its analysis. Looking at it as an educational space and as an exercise that will help you progress but also grow cognitively.

Cox and Dyson (1965) propose that teaching poetry through practical criticism can be achieved by a seminar approach to teaching and learning. In this way, the instructor (teacher) and the participants (learners/students) can fully engage with the text in a non-threatening environment. This is done by outlining the rules of the seminar and creating a sensitive yet comfortable and friendly space. The sensitive part of it allows that every learner is conscious that every participant has an opinion and their voices must be heard. One of the functions of the instructor

is to establish this conducive environment for the learners to participate in full. The advantage to this strategy is that the teacher gets an insight to the way different learners encounter poetry and how they perceive it. Also, learners get to share their perspectives on a poem. The serious scrutiny of a poem ensures that every learner understand the poem and gains different ways of reading and analysing a poem. This strategy is a learner centred approach to teaching and learning. The participants take full control of the process and the analysis of the text. Cox & Dyson (1965) used different poems in their book to develop an insight to a seminar approach. A poem needs to be read aloud in the seminar, learners need to have in mind their personal impressions of a poem and then discussions can begin. This is a good strategy, nonetheless, concerns still arise as to how teachers then control the imposition of the personal impressions so that they do not reduce the understanding of a poem.

Like Richards (1929), Cox and Dyson (1986) places the text at the centre of discussion and argue that through close reading and scrutinising every word/phrase in a text that the reader can find a true meaning of a poem. Cox and Dyson recorded that their students also found some of the poem 'trite' and 'common', while others found them 'profound' and 'remarkable'. This is also similar to what Richards's students said in the responses he collected. In the poem 'she dwelt among th' undtrodden ways' by Wordsworth, some denounced that the 'style' of the poem is not that of Wordsworth. However, as they started to engage with the poem and with the direction provided by the instructor, students could understand the poems better. This is what this paper is about, finding strategies and contextualising them so that the ESL teachers can have an easier job in teaching poetry to their ESL learners. Also, to shy away from the traditional methods of teaching poetry that deprives learners of an opportunity to explore poetry on their own. Through practical criticism, learners can be taught how to engage with a text and not a single poem which is often the case. Most learners know different poems that were taught in class and only know how to analyse those poems in the way the teacher told them to. If you should give them another poem, they find it very hard because they do not have the necessary skills to do so.

3.4 Bennett (1977)

To prove the theory of practical criticism, K.C. Bennett conducted the same experiment that I.A. Richards did with his students. Bennett (1977) distributed the same poems that Richards (1929) used for his experiment to four different groups from 1973-1976. With the same procedure of giving students a week to write comments of the poems they have analysed. The emphasis was made that students must analyse the poems based on their being and the

comments were collected after a week. They were then distributed to class anonymously as the poems were for further scrutiny. Bennett (1977) brings forward the intense and rigorous discussions that took place in his classes and how hard it was for him to withdraw himself and his judgements. Even though he did point out some of the inconsistencies, omissions and illogical points. Worth noting in his experiment is that some of the students were able to tell the authorship of some of the poems and some guessed them correct. Bennett (1977) notes there was a shift in student's taste over the years and the popular poets got higher rankings than others. He notes that "Donne's Holly sonnet VII ranked third in relative popularity amongst my students, while it was third from the bottom on Richards' list, topping only the poems by Lawrence and Longfellow" (Bennett, 1977, p. 268). Also, Bennett (1977) adds that even though the students' taste of poetry may have changed, there are some of the aspects that are still the same. He states that students continuously impose their own experiences on the poem rather than analysing the words of the text. This then questions the full effectiveness of practical criticism without the reader response theory. Especially in the South African context, where learners' voices have been subordinated greatly by the curriculum of the past and by the traditional methods that teachers continue to use in classrooms.

Bennett (1977) raises what he calls the most 'unsettling aspect of the protocols' which was "the tendency to judge the whole poem by a single part, even after considerable class discussions regarding the point" (Bennett, 1977, p. 271). This is often the case in most class discussions, especially because students come to class with preconceived ideas about poetry and in some cases, different poets. They therefore, show great resistance to changing their conceptions even if the poem has been rigorously discussed. The poems that received praises and high ranking, students could not specifically describe why they ranked and praised them that much. That gave an insight into the analytics of the existing gap in student's understanding of poetry as much as they started to appreciate it. Another difference that Bennett (1977, p. 572) identified between his group and that of the 1920s of Richards (1929) was "the strong reliance on imagery as a central criterion". In the 1920s, Richards's group centralised the diction, rhythm, emotions and philosophy when analysing a poem. Nonetheless, the centralisation of imagery to poetry analysis did not provide students with explicit ideas of the poems discussed because they could not relate the mutual relationship of imagery, pattern of the poem and the meaning of the poem. This is often the case with most ESL students, even though they can sometimes recognise the imagery in the poem, they however, cannot find the

connection between them and the meaning of the poem. Practical criticism, through in-depth scrutiny seeks to connect the words of a poem with all the poetic aspects of the poem.

The parallels found by Bennett (1977) were the responses of his students regarding the first poem that Richards (1929) used, a poem by Bailey's *festus* (poem 1). In both instances, some students found the poem to be profound and remarkable, whilst some found it very common and tame. Also, the ranking of Christina Rossetti's "spring quiet" remained the same from both experiments. Bennett (1977, p. 574) states that the reasoning for this was that "a poem expressing longing for spring is easily labelled trivial or trite". These words frequently cropped up from both experiments from the student's responses.

3.5 Bredin (1986)

Bredin (1986) alluded to the theory of practical criticism and the experiment by Richards (1929). However, he did not agree with some if not most of the conclusions from Richards's experiments. In his paper, Bredin (1986) quotes an account that ridiculed the results of the experiment by noting the low rankings of poets like Christina Rossetti, Donne and others. They deemed the results as absurd as "every felicity was ridiculed, and every absurdity praised, by large minorities and even majorities" (Bredin, 1986, p. 26). He also notes that the "precise conditions of this test are not duplicated in our everyday commerce with literature", (Richards, 1929, p. 5). He argues that Richard's "conviction was that the conditions helped to reveal defects in reading, and not, as seems more likely, that they helped produce them" (Bredin, 1986, p. 27). Even though he concurs with the factors raised by Richards (1929) that may bring about errors of judgement and the centralisation of text understanding to scrutinising the words in the text. However, he is against the omission of context and eliciting the historical background of the text. "The first thing that any competent teacher will do with a poem is to provide a context, a period, a chronology, a social, political, religious, and intellectual background, a body of similar and contrasting works, works by the same and by related authors..." (Bredin, 1986, p. 27).

Bredin (1986, p. 27) poses a question that "what, one wants to know, has the bleak encounter with unattributed verse, nameless verse framed only with the white margins of the page, got to do with the rich dynamic world of literary culture?". He finds the omission of what he deems the 'important details' of the text very crucial to the understanding and analysis of any poem. He argues that if you provide these to a student, they will grow in analysing a text and overtime, they will be able to remove their personal beings from the text. Furthermore, Bredin accepts

that every author writes because of their experiences. He argues that this also happens to the reader, and states that it is impossible for the students to not include their experiences when reading and analysing a poem.

Bredin (1986) agrees with the four key components of making out the meaning of a poem that Richards (1929) raised which are: sense, feeling, tone and intention. Making out meaning is not only about getting correct the four aspects of it, rather, finding their relative weight and their interrelation in a text. He argues that “reading a poem, however, is not just a matter of looking at the words and then having, as an immediate consequence, certain attitudes” (Bredin, 1986, p. 29). He further suggests that a poem must then in turn produce in a reader a suitable response to its linguistic characters. Bredin (1968) argues that Richards was an empiricist and a materialist and saw one’s experience different from their experiences of literature, hence, the vocal exclusion of experience in his theory. Therefore, what Bredin (1968, p. 30) seeks to know in the Richards framework “is whether and how our experiences of literature (and arts in general) differ from the rest of our experiences”. Which in Bennet’s case, the experiences of one can mould and transform the experiences of other. This is to say that the writer’s experiences through his/her communication can modify a reader’s experience. A reader can also transform the reader’s experiences by combining them with his/her own experiences.

Bredin (1986, p. 37) therein points out the alternatives to Richards (1929) practical criticism. He claims that a poem must be seen as a public subject, its diction carefully selected by the author in time and space, deepened in author’s intellectual and spiritual background, “known intuitively by the readers at whom it is aimed, and accessible to subsequent generations partly through linguistic continuity...”. He claims that reading a poem necessitates that the reader listens to the author like listening to a person speak and engage with the text as if engaging in a dialogue.

3.6 Peck and Coyle (1995)

Peck and Coyle (1995) took the conversation of practical criticism even further and started engaging with how students may use it when writing their examinations. They define practical criticism as an exercise which a reader has never seen and is given to critically analyse. They suggest that in practical criticism, words like ‘close reading, close analysis’ are widely used but signify practical criticism. Using this theory, criticism “starts with the text rather than with a set of ideas about texts” (Peck and Coyle, 1995, p. 5). The reason of adopting this direction is because in schools, for those who do study poetry in schools, the ESL external paper comes

with an unseen poem. Often, the dread as Peck & Coyle puts it, come with the fact that the learner has never seen the poem and the anxiety that it is an examination makes it even more difficult for a learner to read with an understanding and provide a critical analysis of the poem. Even though in the South African schools, during the examination they never ask for learners to write a critical analysis of a poem in an essay format. Often it is questions based on the poem, but the reader needs to have a full understanding of the poem at hand.

Peck and Coyle say that generally for the reader, they must read the poem several times so that their understanding of the poem gradually emerges in their minds. However, because of time constraints in an examination, these authors suggest that when reading the poem, the reader must look for tension in the poem. Furthermore, the reader must follow what Richards (1929) calls the 'prose' of the poem, which is the plain step by step build-up of a poem. The tension of the poem usually unfolds itself in the first lines of the poem. Once you have found the tension of the poem, as Richards (1929) puts it, you have defined the subject of the poem, which is 'what is the poem about', (Cox and Dyson, 1965). One thing notable of this is that a subject of the poem may rely on the reader. Different reader may find different subjects in a single poem. However, the key to this is whether the subject the reader finds can be substantiated with the words in the poem. It is in that case that the reader must then look for the content of the poem. Misreading the poem and distorting the aspects of making out meaning is often the case for some students. In his experiment of practical criticism, Hartman (1973) found that, students often pay little attention to the words in the poem and usually make conclusions about the poem before appropriately reading the words in the text. There are also poems that only have one subject, like one South African poem "its depend" by Bheki Mthembu in which some students find it hard to differentiate between the speaker and the politician that the poem talks about, as to who is uneducated. That poem is a good example of using practical criticism when analysing it, because the idea of its meaning is placed in the words in it, if you misinterpret some words, you will lose the gist of the meaning of it.

Peck & Coyle (1995) agree with Richards (1929) and Cox and Dyson (1965) that the content of the poem is the coming to 'life' of the subject. Also, that the reader is essentially as important as the writer of the poem in bringing the poem to life by paying attention to every word that the poet specifically chose and perfectly arranged to communicate their experiences. The experiences of the reader too are vitally important in breathing life to the poem. However, the

reader must be cautious of how much they rely on their personal experiences so that they do not fall for what Richards (1929) calls the difficulties of understanding a poem. Some of which are technical presumptions, stock responses and general critical preconceptions. To avoid this, practical criticism emphasizes that whatever the reader might feel and think the poem is about should be supported by words in the poem. Peck and Coyle (1995, p. 15) state that “your mind becomes a kind sponge, in which ideas about and a response to the poem gradually accumulates”.

Sometimes the poet writes about the ordinary everyday life circumstances that the reader may have such experience of. e.g. the poem ‘This is just to say’ by William Carlos Williams. Often readers show no convictions and real grasp of such a poem. They often see it as ordinary and non-poetic, hence, they lose the sense of beauty and analysis of the poem. Readers simply “re-describe what the poet has described, and then, weakly, add that it is a true or moving observation of life” (Peck & Coyle, 1995, p. 15). Rather than having a stance, the reader feels that by saying something ‘positive’ they are impressing the examiner.

The blind spot of practical criticism is that it circumvents modern theories of poetry analysis. In addition to the ones mentioned above are modernism and post modernism, Marxism, reader response and feminism amongst others. I think it is safe to say that it is commonly understood that these theories are not broached for studying poetry in most ESL classrooms in the South African context. They are mostly unknown to the teachers and those have knowledge about them, do not know how to work with them in the ESL classroom. The process of reading a poem in clinical isolation from historical processes also can mean that literature is treated as a sphere of activity which is separate from economic or social conditions, or from the life of its author. Therefore, practical criticism must be used for beginners in the ESL FET classroom context so that by the time learners get exposed to other theories (Marxism, Feminism, etc) they have a basic understanding of how to engage with a poem in meaningful manner.

3.7 Conclusion

I derive the feasibility of practical criticism for the South African ESL learners from its robust focus on the words in the text. As a result of this, ESL learners will be able to understand poetry firstly by carefully reading the text, having the consciousness that each word attributes to the development of the meaning of the poem. Careful reading and paying attention to detail, as Richards (1929) advocates, is the most important aspect of practical criticism.

As stated before, practical criticism checkmates the imposition of personal experiences to the text by ensuring that everything that is said can be substantiated with the words in the text. Through this, practical criticism increases the confidence of the learner and their appreciation of poetry, not only as an educational tool, also as an entertainment tool. By rejecting the concept of definitive answers and an objective text, Richards unlocked creative intelligence, and his democratic shift of focus from author to reader made space for readers and gave students a voice. By rejecting a hierarchal model that presented the teacher as ultimate arbiter of meaning, he liberated not only students but teachers, putting both parties, at least in theory if not always in practice, on a more equal footing as they joined together in a collaborative and so perhaps less predictable voyage of discovery. For Richards, the value of poetry, in its challenging tendency to paradox, ambiguity and, in a word, difficulty, lay in its power to undermine comfortable assumptions and certainties and to force readers to think increasingly, precisely and actively for themselves (1926, p. 244).

Chapter 4

4. Sociocultural theory of learning

4.1 Introduction

This study also uses Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning to determine viable strategies to teach to ESL FET learners and to contextualize these strategies with practical criticism. This theory emphasizes the influence of culture, peers, and adults on the developing learners. Scott and Palincsar (2013, p. 1) point that sociocultural theory explains "how an individual mental functioning is related to their cultural, institutional, and historical context". "Vygotsky's SCT considers social interactions as the essence of cognitive development, which may differ among cultures" (Balbay & Dogan, 2018, p. 65). In this theory, Vygotsky believes that knowledge is acquired on two levels: through social interaction and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Rublik (2017, p. 342) states that "learning not only occurs inside people's minds, but begins with social interaction, which in turn, forms a complex, interactive, psychological and cultural process".

Rahimah and Ibrahim (2018, p. 23) posit that according to sociocultural theory, "learning not only occurs through the individual's cognitive processes but also through social, historical and cultural contexts (through which the knowledge was constructed". Juhlin (2018, p. 13) states that "to learn as a group with a meaningful objective and aim with the lesson at hand where the knowledge can be placed within society or culture will engage students to a greater extent". The theory of sociocultural learning centers around a learner centered approach to teaching and learning because it suggests that knowledge is not rigid but can and should be continuously constructed and reconstructed. Vygotsky emphasized that children and adults are both agents in the process of the child's development. "Development is, in this case, co-constructed" Cole & Cole, 2001, p. 37). Verenikina (2010, p. 2) states that "for teaching it means that both the teacher and the learner are seen as active agents in children's learning". Tharp and Gallimore (as cited in Verenikina, 2010, p. 2) "the teacher's intervention in children's learning is necessary but it is the quality of the teacher-learner interaction, which is seen as crucial in that learning". Therefore, the relationship between the teacher and the learners should always be seen as an important step in constructing and reconstructing knowledge. Both the teacher and the learners should understand their roles clearly for efficiency and effectiveness.

Walqui (2006, p. 160) provides the following summary of Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural learning:

1. Learning precedes development.
2. Language use the main vehicle (tool) of thought.
3. Mediation is central to learning.
4. Social interaction is the basis of learning and development. Learning is a process of apprenticeship and internalization in which skills and knowledge are transformed from the social into the cognitive plane.
5. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the primary activity space in which learning occurs.

Juhlin (2018, p. 13) posits an important statement relating to sociocultural learning, which is a grounding statement. She states that “since we are situated in this social context we affect things around us and are affected ourselves by things around us”. This statement engulfs and encapsulates the principles of the sociocultural theory of learning by looking at the fact that our experiences are shaped by acquired knowledge, which is shaped by our socialization. Vygotsky suggests that human development comes from their historical and cultural socialization with more capable others. This means that “cognition (mental, language and social development) is mediated through social interaction among individual’s collaboration and out of learner’s unique experiences” (Rahimah and Ibrahim, 2018, p. 23). However, as much as societal knowledge shapes us, our ideas, and our cognitive abilities, we as a society shape and reshape knowledge through interaction with one another and the tools and signs (semiotics) by attaching meaning to them. Daniel (as cited in Juhlin, 2018, p. 13) states that “humans both shape those meanings and are shaped by them”. Therefore, it is the responsibility of a teacher to ensure that learners know and understand this circle. Often in the ESL classrooms, because of the traditional methods of teaching used, learners become passive and do not think they have the will to argue otherwise or debate the knowledge taught in class. Teachers are the “know it all” and this gives learners an impression that their experiences and perspectives do not count in knowledge construction. This does not only defeat the objectives of teaching and learning, but also affects learners’ competence and development.

4.2 Three themes of sociocultural theory of learning

Scott and Palincsar (2013) state that Vygotsky’s theory of sociocultural learning revolves around three major themes discussed by Wertsch (1991). The first major theme discussed by Wertsch (as cited in Scott and Palincsar. 2013, p. 1) is Vygotsky’s ‘genetic law of development’. In this theme, Wertsch (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013) argues that Vygotsky believed that “individual development, including higher mental functioning, has its

origins in social sources”. Balbay and Dogan (2018, p. 66) concur that in SCT “the first principle is that learning is a social rather than only a cognitive or biological process”. This is to say that for a learner to understand a certain phenomenon or concept, it is not only through their cognitive abilities that they begin to comprehend it, but their societal understanding and definition of that phenomenon. Vygotsky (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013, p. 1) “Any function of the child's cultural development appears on the stage twice, or on two planes, first the social, then the psychological, first between people as an intermental category, then within the child as an intramental category”. This suggests that for teaching and learning, the content taught in class should first stimulate what learners relate to because of their socialisation. Their cognitive abilities are best shown if what they are to learn can be traced to their socialisation. This is to say that even introducing new phenomena or concepts, teachers need to first identify the things that learners may be able to relate to.

For a teacher to ensure that learners relate the content at hand to what they have been socialised in, they need to be engaged in numerous activities. The complexity of the activity relies on the learners’ cognitive abilities and the complexity of the phenomenon or concept being taught. According to Scott and Palincsar (2013, p. 1) argues that “from this perspective, as learners participate in a broad range of joint activities and internalize the effects of working together, they acquire new strategies and knowledge of the world and culture”. Learners begin to understand different ‘knowledges’ from other learners because of different socialisation, through different activities, and begin to have a concrete understanding of the phenomenon at hand. A concrete knowledge requires valid substantiation with facts and through cognitive thinking, learners reach a consensus on the validity of the knowledge. Tudge and Scrimsher (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013, p. 1) argue that “Vygotsky was not only interested in what more knowledgeable others brought to the interaction, but also in what the child himself or herself brought to the interaction, as well as how the broader cultural and historical setting shaped the interaction”. The significance of reading into what learners bring to the interaction assists the teacher in drawing his/her learners’ cognitive abilities, their socialisation and culture. This, therefore, assists the teacher in planning his/her lessons with an understanding of his/her class. What they can do and what they cannot do for that period.

The second theme that Wertsch (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013, p. 2) discusses is that “human action, on both the social and individual planes, is mediated by tools and signs-semiotics”. Balbay and Dogan (2018, p. 66) add that “human learning process is a mediated process”. It is mediated by tools and signs (semiotics) that are provided by the environment in

which the teaching and learners occurs, by the culture and history. Lantolf (as cited in Shabani, 2016) argues that “the construction of knowledge is a socially mediated process affected by physical and psychological tools and artifacts”. Semiotics is the study of signs. Vygotsky (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013, p. 2) states that “these semiotic means include: language; various systems of counting; mnemonic techniques; algebraic symbol systems; work of art; writing; schemes; diagrams, maps, and mechanical drawings; all sorts of conventional signs and so on”. During the process of teaching and learning, learners use these tools and signs (semiotics) to understand the content and hand by relating it to what they already know about it through their cultural and historical socialisation. It should be stated however, that semiotics are contextual, therefore, differ in different contexts because of different interpretations and meaning attached to them. In the modern technological world, semiotics includes: “computers, calculators, paint brushes and the like, all of which are useful representational activities” (Scott and Palincsar, 2013, p. 2). All of these and other tools and signs enhance learners’ understanding of the content knowledge.

Moreover, learners use the different tools and signs and incorporate them with the content to enhance their abilities of problem solving. Scott and Palincsar (2013, p. 2) states that Leontiev (1981) “used the term ‘appropriation’ to characterize this process of internalization”. Learners appropriate the different tools and signs to construct and reconstruct meaning/knowledge. Vygotsky purposefully identifies the teacher as a ‘facilitator/scaffolder’ because the responsibility of a teacher in knowledge construction is to help learners firstly, identify with the text/knowledge at hand by using their experiences and socialisation. Secondly, to reconstruct the existing knowledge by adding value to it. Value is only added when learners assimilate existing knowledge with their own socialisations, internalise it, use semiotics to adapt it to their context. This does not mean that there is no correct answer, and that learners can write whatever they like and argue that they wrote based on their context. It simply means that what the learner may identify with is not correct, therefore, his/her knowledge needs to be reconstructed. The function of the teacher here is to focus learners to the words and drive them to thinking about what the words in the text offers to them.

The third theme Wertsch (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013, p. 2) discusses “is that the first two themes are best examined through genetic, or developmental, analysis”. Writing about the sociocultural theory, Vygotsky was fascinated by the “unity and interdependence of learning and development”. He wanted to understand how learning occurs and how cognitive development occurs. Vygotsky (as cited in Scott and Palincsar, 2013) argues that “learning

awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and with his peers”. He extends his argument by stating that “learning is not development; however, properly organized learning results in mental development and sets in motion a variety of developmental processes that would be impossible apart from learning. Thus, learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human, psychological functions” (Vygotsky, as cited in Scott and Palinscar, 2013, p. 2). This fascination between learning and development resulted in Vygotsky’s second level of sociocultural learning theory which is the idea of the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

4.3 The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Chaiklin (2003, p. 39) argues that Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development was a result of questions like “what kind of instruction is optimal for a particular child?”. Such questions centred around instruction and development. Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) defines the zone of proximal development as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”. The ZPD is the space between what a learner already knows and the unknown but has the potential to reach the unknown through the assistance of a teacher. This means that teachers need to know what their learners already know and what they do not know. However, teacher must be careful regarding the complexities of the unknown. If the unknown is too abstract, learners may not be interested in knowing it because it is too difficult. What is taught should not be too easy for learners too because then they will not learn anything of substance, hence, not reaching their zone of proximal development. Vygotsky (1962, p. 104) further stated that “what the child can do in cooperation today, he can do alone tomorrow”. This statement provides us with an insight on the impact and effectiveness of collaborations in teaching and learning.

However, in the South African ESL FET context, because of the high numbers in class and a lack of resources, it becomes difficult for a teacher to identify the zone of proximal development of each learner. The strategy then, is to identify the average ZPD of the whole class and work with it. Through different activities the teacher can then be able to identify learners who are lacking and then give them special attention, pinpoint their ZPD and scaffold them to reach the same level as the whole class. Rahimah and Ibrahim (2018, p. 24) state that through the social interactions “learners gain awareness of the objective environment through speech and social interaction and consequently shape their personality development in terms

of perception, reflection and valuable activity”. Rogoff (as cited in Scott and Palinscar, 2013, p.3) states that “children’s cognitive development is an apprenticeship-it occurs through guided participation in social activity with companions who support and stretch learners’ understanding of and skills in using the tools of culture”. Teacher carry a lot of responsibility with the ZPD because they are responsible for guiding learners in constructing and reconstructing knowledge, directing their sociocultural experiences to context and content.

To supplement and extend the ZPD, Vygotsky incorporated the term scaffolding. Bruner (1983, p. 60) defines scaffolding as “a process of ‘setting up’ the situation to make the child’s entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilled enough to manage it”. Borrowing this term for teaching and learning carries a significant literal and figurative meaning because the role of a teacher in this process is to assist learners whilst they build, repair, or clean knowledge. The teacher becomes this temporary structure, whose role is to help learners reach their full potential in knowledge acquisition and construction. Walqui (2006, p. 163) argues that “it is only within the ZPD that scaffolding happens”. This is to say that for a successful scaffolding, the teacher needs to understand the range at which the learners are capable of working in (that is, from the known to the unknown).

Gibbons (as cited in Walqui, 2006) argues that most teachers have criticised the term ‘scaffolding’ because “it refers to a rigid structure, not the fluid dynamics of collaborative work that we associate with ZPD”. Walqui (2006, p. 164) therefore argues that scaffolding functions as both “aspects of the construction site: the supportive structure and collaborative construction of work that is carried out”. Scaffolding allows for a smooth negotiation of knowledge construction as there are no steps omitted. Walqui (2006) argue that teachers need to explain how they learn so that they feel comfortable even with their difficulties so that it becomes easier to address them. Learners “need to understand that their feelings of vagueness and frustration are valid” (Walqui, 2006, p. 169). To help learners overcome their difficulties, the teacher needs to engage them in activities that will expose them to different knowledge and challenge their cognitive abilities. Through collaboration (may be with the teacher and/or peers) learners are scaffolded to new ideas.

Walqui (2006, p. 170-177) posits six types of instructional scaffolding:

1. Modelling- “students need to be given clear examples of what is requested of them for imitation”. The teacher may photocopy the texts which learners will use as a guide to do what they are required to do. It is important for a teacher to emphasise that learners

try to explore language beyond the obvious and try to use the modelling text to build their vocabulary and language use.

2. Bridging- “students will only be able to learn new concepts and language if these are firmly built on previous knowledge and understanding”. The teacher must understand that learners are ‘tabula rasa’ and use their existing knowledge to introduce the new knowledge. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher may engage learners in activities that will trigger their existing knowledge and develop anticipation for what is to be learnt.
3. Contextualising- often in poetry, the language used is difficult, therefore, sounds foreign to the learners. Therefore, the teacher needs to contextualise the poem for the learners to comprehend. The teacher may use multimodal tools (pictures, music, short videos, etc.) as means of contextualising the text for the learners.
4. Schema building- “schema, or clusters of meaning that are interconnected, are we organise knowledge and understanding”. The teacher’s role is to help learners understand the interconnections of different elements (metaphors, simile, tone, style, etc.) that makes out the meaning of the poem. Understanding them and how they are interconnected will enable learners to work collaboratively to find out the meaning of the text.
5. Re-presenting the text- the teacher allows learners to use their skills, acquired from different genres to re-present the text in their own way. Learners may turn a poem to a narrative. Learners use their own language to re-do the text and present it in class. In this way, learners take ownership of the text and insert their skills to develop a much better understanding of the text.
6. Developing metacognition- the teacher uses the text to stimulate learner’s thinking skills. Learners have to see beyond what the author gives them but use it to support their ‘out of the box’ thinking. In this way, learner’s arguments remain grounded by the author’s words. It incorporates evaluating the facts and monitoring language use and why it has been used like that.

4.4 Advantages of using sociocultural theory of learning

The theory of sociocultural learning identifies the teacher as a facilitator/scaffolder. Greenhow and Robelia (as cited in Rahimah and Ibrahim, 2018, p. 24) state that cognitive support from a

more capable person can expand a learner's personal learning or problems solving abilities and help to promote newer and more advanced behaviours for meaning-making and reflection on new knowledge". Juhlin (2018, p. 15) defines the ZPD as "the range between what a student can do on their own and what they can do with the help from the teacher or from other classmates". There are advantages of teaching with the consciousness of the sociocultural learning. Some of the advantages to this are that learners speak more during the lesson. Because the lesson begins from what the learners already know, they are forced to share their perspectives about the text. Learners are encouraged to be independent and believe in themselves because learning is their responsibility, and they should show accountability of their learning. Moll (as cited in Juhlin, 2018, p. 15) argues that "some abilities that the students possess might only show at a time when they are working together with other classmates". Learners learn to work in pairs and groups (collaborate) to enhance their understanding of the content knowledge. They use their social, cultural, historical experiences to construct and reconstruct meaning/s and knowledge with concrete and well-thought-out substantiations.

4.5 Disadvantages of the sociocultural theory of learning

There are also disadvantages to this. Slacking learners may participate fully in the group discussions and rely on the interactive learners to do the work. However, by assigning roles to each member of the group, the teacher ensures that every learner participates. Also, by walking around the groups and checking if they have queries or anything they would like clarity on, the teacher ensures that all the learners participate in group and pair discussions. Juhlin (2018) states that there are learners who like to work with the teacher and may feel inhibited in group work. She also extends that "when one evaluates results and positive outcomes from lessons, the advantages could outnumber and outweigh the disadvantages with a few exceptions".

4.6 Effects of teaching poetry using the sociocultural theory of learning

Rahimah and Ibrahim (2018, p. 24) "argue that "the aim of social constructivist education is to develop learners who are able to engage in independent thought and knowledge creation". When teaching poetry, sociocultural learning can play a significant role as a backbone and a theory that directs teachers into planning and executing lessons in a more effective and efficient way where "meanings are negotiated within the intersection of individuals, culture and human activity" (Balbay and Dogan, 2018, p. 66). Beach (as cited in Juhlin, 2018, p.14) suggests that "students can work in pairs to think-out loud together about specific aspect of a poem that they

don't understand, posing questions to one another". Grouping learners ensures collaboration. Learners use their social, cultural and historical skills to make out the meaning/s of the text/poem. The teacher can use such groupings to get a clear ZPD of the class and note certain learners to focus on. By understanding learners' way of understanding, the teacher adapts his/her ways of instruction and teaching in ways that will suit his/her learners' development. The teacher will carefully select poems that his/her learners can and will relate to. A careful selection of poems ensures that learners are taught poems that are not too abstract for the learners and also, not too easy because they will not learn anything from that.

As stated prior, one of the problems most ESL classes have are learners with different competencies, some of them very poor cognitively and linguistically. Bekiryazici (2014, p. 913) suggests that "all classes can be defined as 'mixed' since no student is the same as the other and this makes it difficult for teachers to meet each student's needs". Observing the South Africa ESL classes, where each class is filled with large number of learners, it is very difficult for teachers to attend to every learner's need. The difficulty is that when the teacher opts to teach 'in accordance with the level of upper-middle section' but capable learners may feel that they are not cognitively challenged, whilst the less capable learners may feel that they are excluded from learning (Bekiryazici, 2014). Therefore, the question remains as to how can a teacher find balance between the different cognitive abilities of his/her and the content being taught.

Bekiryazici (2014, p. 914) suggests that "instead of focusing on tasks that they are capable of, the children solve problems they cannot do individually; and through collaboration with their peers or adults like teachers and parents, they develop their mental and cognitive skills". This argues for learner centred teaching, where learners work collaboratively to comprehend the unknown, and with the help of the teacher, guiding them to the right direction. Scaffolding plays a vital role in mixed classes because they get to concentrate more on the less capable learners and the more capable learners assist other learners too for a steady cognitive development. Establishing learners' ZPD assists the teacher in planning the lessons and the resources required to successfully execute the planned lesson.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored Vygotsky's theory of Sociocultural learning as a means of understanding how learners acquire knowledge. The theory of sociocultural learning argues that knowledge is socially constructed and reconstructed. It suggests that human experiences

are made up by what they are socialized in to, but also, through cognitive thinking, people reconstruct these socializations by relating it to their own contexts. Vygotsky was fascinated by learners' development and the impact of instructions. He therefore introduced the idea of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the range between what learners can do on their own and what they can do with the assistance from the teacher. Studying the zone of proximal development of your learners ensures that teachers carefully select and plan their lessons in a way that will suit his/her learners. Teachers learn to appreciate and see learners as equal participants in the process of teaching and learning. Teachers understand that new knowledge should be integrated with the learners' existing knowledge for them to assimilate it and make sense of it and the world they live in. By understanding this, teachers strive for learner centered approaches to teaching and learning.

This theory is relevant to this study because poetry teaching requires that teachers not only find out learner's existing knowledge, but also, to combine it with their historical and cultural experiences so that they can relate with it first, then begin to understand the new knowledge. The work of sociocultural theory is to explain how an individual's mental functioning is related to cultural, institutional, and historical contexts. Using the principles of the sociocultural theory of learning and the ZPD, ESL teacher will be able to understand their learner's capabilities and work from them to add to their knowledge. The South African ESL context requires sensitivity and consciousness from the teacher. Sensitivity of the learner's different background, consciousness of the historical injustices of the country and their implications on the contemporary curricula. The theory of sociocultural learning provides teachers with that understanding. Therefore, resulting in meaningful lesson planning, accompanied by meaningful teaching resources and activities.

Chapter five

5.1 Introduction

This chapter critically considers the aims and objectives found in the current national curriculum called CAPS document regarding teaching and learning poetry. Also, the researcher has compiled a self-constructed profile of an ESL learner in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) and the challenges they face in poetry classes. Furthermore, I have used two literature studies to show the difficulties experienced by ESL teacher and learners in different contexts. The first is by Ahmad (2014) a study conducted in Saudi Arabia. The second is a study conducted by Maake (2017) in South Africa. I have also included the 10 poems (poem and author) prescribed for grade 12 learners in South Africa as indicated in both the curriculum statement and the department's English study guide (Mind the Gap). Additionally, I have added a discussion on an interesting observation about the choice of the prescribed matric poems.

5.1.1 CAPS document (2011)

South Africa schools are currently regulated by a curriculum statement called Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (commonly known as the CAPS document). The CAPS document is a guiding document which drives a content-based narrative instead of the previous result oriented/outcome based curriculum statements. One of the general aims of the South African curriculum is to “facilitate the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace; and provide employers with a sufficient profile of a learner's competence” (CAPS, 2011, p. 4). The failure of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) brought a reformed curriculum statement which promotes a learner centered approach to teaching and learning. The CAPS (2011, p. 4) promotes “active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths”. The previous curriculum statements aligned with a teacher centered approach to teaching and learning, where the teacher is the sole source of information. However, CAPS (2011, p. 11) states that “an important role of the language teacher is to provide high-quality feedback, which is at the heart of good assessment”. In this way a teacher is a facilitator of teaching and learning, whilst learners take full responsibility for their own learning.

The CAPS document as a curriculum statement seeks to produce learners that are able to “communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes” (CAPS, 2011, p. 5). It is important for all the learners to develop an accurate and appropriate use of English because it is the medium of instruction. Nonetheless, this is not to

enforce/promote an unequal status amongst languages in the South African societies. Chapter 1, section 6 of the constitution of South African, (1997) recognizes and promotes all languages, especially the indigenous languages to share an equal status as English and Afrikaans. The CAPS document (2011, p. 8) provides that the First Additional Language level (FAL) “assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school”. One of the specific aims of learning an additional language is to enable learners to “express and justify, orally and in writing, their own ideas, views and emotions confidently in order to become independent and analytical thinkers”; also, to “use their Additional Language and their imagination to find out more about themselves and the world around them. This will enable them to express their experiences and findings about the world orally and in writing; (CAPS, 2011, p. 9). These specific aims align mostly with teaching and learning poetry and other literature genres. Through language teaching and learning, learners must be able to produce their own work by incorporating what they learn in class with their everyday experiences to try and have a better understanding of the world they live in.

“Poetry should be taught, not poems” (CAPS, 2011, p. 17). This statement clearly advocates for an in-depth teaching of poetry rather than teaching specific poems which most teachers do. Teaching poetry is about ensuring that learners have skills to read, understand and analyze different poems. In most cases you find that learners only know the poems that were taught in class. If you give them a poem they have never seen before, it becomes difficult for them to analyze because their poetry skills are obscure. Therefore, teachers need to ensure that they teach the skills mostly to their learners than teaching certain poems. Teaching the skills of reading and analyzing poetry allows learners to grow in their abilities to critic and also produce their own writing. The CAPS document (2011) urges that learners read as many poems as possible and must develop a skill to read and write poetry. The CAPS document stipulates that Grade 12 is given 10 prescribed poems to study, nonetheless, this does not prevent the teacher to add more poems if time permits, to ensure that the learners are introduced to different poems, poetry analysis and appreciation.

“Creative writing should be closely attached to the study of any literary text” (CAPS, 2011, p. 19). Enforcing creative writing in a poetry class ensures that learners engage with different poetic genres and develop a system to maneuver around them. The texts should not be too difficult for the learners because they might find it hard to understand, therefore, they will not learn anything. Moreover, the text should not be too easy for the learners as there will be little or no learning. Therefore, the teacher should choose poems that learners will relate with and

show eagerness to learn. Using creative writing as an educational tool you also provide learners with a safe place to try and make mistakes which the teacher corrects. The role of a teacher is to balance what can be too easy or too difficult for the learners. As argued earlier, one of the difficulties that learners face with poetry is that they cannot understand the figurative language it comes with. The CAPS document (2011) clearly puts forward that learners need to be exposed to literary appreciation. “Teachers often need to restrain their own interpretations and ideas of literary texts and allow as much learner participation as is reasonable” (CAPS, 2011, p. 16). The restrained teachers’ opinions allow for learners to search for meaning without having the right or wrong answer. CAPS (2011, p. 16) states that “interpretation is not about right or wrong. It is about searching for what is meaningful to the reader”.

5.1.2 A profile of ESL learners in KZN and the challenges they face regarding poetry.

This profile is a self-constructed profile derived from what I have observed as an ESL student and as an ESL teacher in Kwa-Zulu Natal. An ESL learner in KZN mostly is an IsiZulu mother tongue speaker and home language learner. However, there are learners whose mother tongue may be other than IsiZulu but learn IsiZulu as a home language in school. Most ESL learners have no fluency in English and find it hard to study English. With the current phasing out of subjects like Agricultural Sciences and Accounting in some high schools, teachers of those subjects are deployed to teach language even though they are not qualified to do so. This adds to the crisis of English teaching in most ESL schools, some English teachers find figurative language intimidating because they are more familiar with literal language. Therefore, with the liberty of choosing which literature genres to teach in the three years of the FET phase, teachers shy away from teaching poetry. Almost all the ESL teachers are not first language speakers of English, some are not confident enough to converse in English.

In the first three years of schooling (grade 1-3) learners are taught in their mother tongue as documented by the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (1997). This is done to help facilitate the transition of a child from what they are used to at home to what they are to learn in school. “From Grade 3 (Std 1) onwards, all learners shall be offered their language of learning and teaching and at least one additional approved language as subjects” (LiEP, 1997, p. 2). Learners then have to quickly learn the second language (which in most cases is English because it is the medium of instruction) which then becomes difficult to do, (Maake, 2017). The misinterpretation of code-switching which in most cases turns to ‘translation’ by teachers puts learners in a comfortable zone of not wanting to learn English because they will get translations in class. Maake (2017, p. 22-23) “...at the foundation phase level, particularly in rural areas,

learners still encounter problems of using English as an additional language”. This continues even in the FET level of the learners, because of a sloppy start to the introduction of poetry in the lower phases. The learner’s competence in English is greatly challenged.

5.1.3 Ahmad (2014) Teaching of poetry to Saudi ESL learners: stylistic approach

Ahmad (2014) argues that poetry provides numerous opportunities to the ESL learner if taught correctly. This is because “poetry is embellished with rhythm, beautiful diction, and elevated grammatical features” (Ahmad, 2014, p. 123). Poetry provides learners with an economy of words in the additional language. There are a number of advantages as a result of teaching poetry to EFAL learners. With the recent technology and access to the internet, teaching learners to appreciate poetry will enable them search about poetry on their own and learn from it. Ahmad (2014, p. 123-124) argues that “learners can acquire correct pronunciation, intonation, and rhyming patterns by listening to poems either on YouTube or read by the competent and well-trained teachers of English”. This way learners grow and become competent speakers of English.

Whilst advocating for a stylistic approach to teaching and learning poetry, Ahmad (2014) found that the teacher-centred approaches are a cause of the depreciating value of poetry appreciation by both learners and teachers. He argued that a stylistic approach should be used to enhance a productive and interesting process of teaching and learning poetry. Both the teachers and learners enjoyed poetry classes because they were educational and did not lack the entertaining aspect of poetry. This is often the case in the ESL classrooms, learners find poetry to be boring and dull because they are only taught to analyse a particular poem not poetry as stated in the CAPS document (2011).

5.1.4 Maake (2017)

In a study done by Maake (2017), whilst investigating the methods used to teach poetry, shows that out of 11 schools in the Shiluvane circuit, 4 schools teach poetry in grade 10. Maake (2017, p. 5) argues that poetry should be taught in relation to the “cognitive, affective, and reflective needs of the learner”. In her study, Maake incorporates Vygotsky’s constructivism, in which she adds that knowledge is a social construction which needs both the teacher and the learners. In this way, Maake (2017) aligns the process of teaching and learning with a learner-centered approach which the current curriculum statement (CAPS) advocates. Noting the diversities (not only the cognitive diversities but also the lingual diversities) in the South African classrooms,

Maake firmly stands for the use of the theory of constructivism in the EFAL classrooms. In this way, learners play a significant role to the process of teaching and learning.

As the English CAPS document (2011, p. 5) states, “inclusivity should become a central part of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school. This can only happen if all teachers have a sound understanding of how to recognise and address barriers to learning, and how to plan for diversity”. The CAPS document puts the teacher at the centre of the teaching and learning, however, not as a sole source of it, rather, as a facilitator who observes and comes with solutions for different learning barriers that his/her learners have. Using this, Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) turns out to be effective. For the teacher to plan a lesson, they must know their learner’s cognitive abilities and their deficiencies. This way the teacher sets out lessons that will include every learner, whilst balancing others who do not find the lesson too easy, and who therefore are not learning anything.

Maake (2017) argues that the requirements of the grade 9 Policy Document of having to read three prescribed books (drama, prose and poetry) results in evidence of teacher centered approaches and learners read without an understanding of what they are reading about. Being result-oriented because of the pressure exerted by the department on school achievement percentages, learners end up being prevented an opportunity to make mistakes and learn because they take what the teacher says, which is understood to be the ‘correct’ answer. Maake (2017, p. 27) states that “the teachers abuse their discretion in selection of literature texts by purposely excluding poetry”. This discretion comes from the twenty-five percent literature examination set internally. Maake argues that teachers do not even change the literature text from time to time because they are comfortable and do not want to try something new. “Therefore, this makes literature classes very boring, especially for the repeating learners” (Maake, 2017, p. 27).

Poetry teaching continues to be seen as a difficult and intimidating thing to do. This translates to be the same even for the learners because they are used to hearing people complain about poetry and its ambiguities and paradoxes. A perfect example is the study by Maake (2017) which found that out of 11 schools in a circuit, on 4 teach poetry in grade 10. Both teachers and learners become glued to the literal meaning of literature and forget traversing to the figurative interpretation of the text. Maake (2017) also provides that those who teach poetry in their classrooms, leave out the entertaining aspects of poetry and focus on the memorisation of

the meaning of the poem for examination purposes. Due to this, learners cannot find the reason to appreciate poetry as the work of an artist that contains all beauties and meaning.

5.2 The 10 prescribed poems for grade 12

1. Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? (sonnet 18): by William Shakespeare
2. Still I rise: by Maya Angelou
3. Death: Anonymous
4. Spring: Gerard Manly Hopkins
5. Captive: by Francis Carey Slater
6. Alexandra: Mongane Wally Serote
7. Mid-term break: Seamus Heaney
8. Poem: Baroleng Seboni
9. To learn how to speak: Jeremy Cronin
10. Everything has changed: Mzi Mahola

The above poems are prescribed for matric in all English FAL schools. A notable fact in the choice of poems is the shift from Western poetry and the equal recognition of the South African poets together with the Western poets. The National Curriculum Statement had, out of the 10 prescribed poems, had 6 Western poets, and in the other 4 poems, only 1 was an African poet, a South African for study. In the CAPS choices provided, we have a much more decolonised system recognising 4 Western poems, 4 South African poets (2 are by black South Africans) and 1 poem from an African poet. The other poem comes from 'anonymous' and explores the concept of death as something that you cannot run away from. This recognition of South Africa poets contextualises the curriculum and promotes equality amongst the Western poets and the South African writers.

Teaching African and South African poetry is increasingly becoming a pivotal point in decolonising literature and the South African curricula. D'Abdon (2016, p. 44) argues that with decolonisation being as a central "discourse on contemporary South African culture...it suggests that, in order to decolonise and Africanise poetry curricula, teachers and scholars should adopt 'participatory observation' research methodologies, and teach multimodally the works of poets so far excluded from the curricula". The CAPS document (2011) takes a step towards decolonising and Africanising poetry curricula by recognising South African poets who have been previously excluded. This appreciates the work done by South African writers and puts them in an equal footing as their white western counterparts. Nonetheless, patriarchy continues to dominate the poetry space. Female poets continue to be marginalised and less

appreciated in poetry, especially, black African female poets. Out of the 10 prescribed poems for grade 12, there is only one female poet (Maya Angelou). There is not even a single African/South African poet included in the prescribed poems for grade 12. South Africa has produced a number of published female poets who deserve the same recognition as their male counterparts. Gcina Mhlophe, Lebohang Mashile, Ingrid Jonker, Antjie Krog, Makhosazana Xaba, Gabea Baderoon, to name a few. The absence of female poets in the lists of prescribed poems creates a negative attitude around poetry and gives an impression that poetry is for males. Therefore, it remains a challenge and a patriarchal problem that the work of such well-established writers is not equally recognized to that of their male counterparts.

5.3 Decolonising poetry

The idea of decolonising poetry emanates from stereotypic norms that simultaneously dominates the minds of an ESL teacher and learner when the word ‘poetry’ is enunciated, especially those who are not advocates of poetry. Decolonisation can be thought of as a set of practices and processes that seek to reckon with the consequences of colonial encounter, dismantle the coloniser/colonised binary and rectify the material, social, political, and cultural dispossession of people and the histories to which they belong. Decolonisation is about justice and recognising the way the world we live in has been shaped entirely by colonialism. Decolonisation means consciousness raising and giving oppressed people the knowledge to understand and resist the conditions they are subjected to.

English literature is often cast as an apolitical field. We think of literature and poems as able to express a universal humanity, untouched by the markers of our identities. But history of English literature as a discipline is also tied up with colonialism. In the colonies, it served as a method of reaffirming the intellectual and artistic superiority of western powers. A perfect example of this was the introduction of the Bible and Christianity on the arrival of the Missionaries in South Africa. Speaking English provided superiority over the ‘illiterate’ masses and guaranteed the ‘intellectuals’ respect and certain elitist positions within the society. Therefore, it would be erroneous for us to turn a blind eye on how literature and poetry has been used as a form of colonisation by the western powers. Moreover, it would be inaccurate for us not to recognise the role played by literature and poetry in decolonisation, especially in the South African context. Poetry played a significant role in resisting colonisation in South Africa. It provided entertainment and social cohesion during the gloomy, melancholic and painful era of the apartheid era. It provided liberation to masses, even though the freedom was only for a few hours before the brutal apartheid police took them back to reality. It reminded

victims who were on the verge of giving up the fight against colonialism and marginalisation, reasons not to stop. It provided hope for a better tomorrow, of living in a democratic South Africa.

This infer that through poetry, teachers can extract history in its genuine form, written by people who experienced it, telling their stories in the way they best understood them. This is a fundamental point in the South African context, where the young people demand white people to recognise their unjust historical practices and ‘pay’ for them. On the other hand, the white people perceive this as black people ‘attacking’ them and their privileges. In her research paper, Godsell (2019, p. 1) states that, over the years in experience in teaching history in the teacher training institutions, questions that are always difficult to answer are “history hurts. How can we teach it without causing (or feeling) pain?”. She then provides that poetry can and should be used to teach history. “Poetry can bridge the gap between skills and content, and engage learners in critical thought, writing, and historical thinking skills” (Godsell, 2019, p. 3).

In the literature review chapter of this paper and elsewhere in this study, the I provides numerous definitions of poetry by different established authors. As a young ESL learner, I always felt that poetry was something foreign to me, a language only understood by the elites and for the white people. Finch (2003, p. 29) argues that “the traditional view of poetry as one of the most sophisticated forms of literary and linguistic expressions, makes it by definition, inaccessible to all but the most advanced language learners”. Brindley (1980) comments that the insignificant contribution of poetry to ESL learners’ language acquisition derives from its ‘allusive’ language that often alienates learners, especially those who are not native speakers of English.

To distinguish poetry from other literature genres, different scholars have used sophisticated words to define it. Furthermore, scholars and poets have managed to vividly display poetry as an interesting yet uneasy, tempting yet uninviting, paradoxical, abstract yet complete form of communication. However, ESL learners develop fears, therefore, resistance to learning and appreciating poetry as a form of communication results. Using words like paradox, sophistication, tranquillity, literal and figurative, juxtaposition, among others, to define poetry, often scares learners away from poetry; therefore, resulting in not achieving the reasons of studying poetry.

One of the factors resulting to this is the use of traditional pedagogies when teaching poetry (Khatib, 2011). The sophisticated poetry selection by the Department of Education (DoE) also

raises the anxieties and resistance to study poetry. To date, when you talk about poetry to ESL learners and those who have completed their matriculation, they instantly think of Shakespeare, John Donne, John Milton, and other famous poets. It is very rare to hear people talk about Mafika Gwala, Mazisi Kunene, Mzi Mahola, Bheki Mthembu, and Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali amongst other well-known South African black writers. It is even most rare to hear people talk of Gcina Mhlophe as a poet, Bothlale Boikanyo, Lebogang Mashile and many other female poets. Kurian & Bazliel (2018, p. 2) comment that “ancient poetry came with a lot of rules and regulations”. These rules and regulations restricted poetry and identified it as a language for the elite only. The failure that teachers have been met with is to make their learners aware of the language shifts and their implications for poetic language and the birth of different poetic genres, e.g. modernist poetry and post-modernist poetry.

This reveals the gap that exists between what is taught in schools and the aims of education as stipulated in the CAPS document (2011, p. 5), one of which is “to produce learners that are able to demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation”. The DoE has tried in the current grade 12 poems as stated in the previous chapter, to shift from the Western poets and introduce more of the South African poems in the grade 12 subscribed list of poems. The current ratio is 4:4:1:1 (4 South African, 4 Western, 1 African & 1 Anonymous). In a debate with educationalist and the current Gauteng MEC for Education and Youth Development, Panyaza Lesufi, argues that it serves no purpose that the same poems that scholars of the past and now many of them parents themselves used to study are still in schools learnt by their children.

He argues for transformation in the education sector and the introduction of South African material to be taught in schools so that learners can easily relate with and resonate with too. Therefore, decolonising poetry is about allowing learners to appreciate every facet of poetry in their spaces. For teachers to decolonise poetry teaching and learning means trying to show learners that poetry exists in their personal spaces. For example, all South African clans have praise songs and oral poetry for the ancestors, therefore, conscientizing learners of such poetry will ease their anxieties towards poetry in general and English poetry in particular. Teaching learners about the different genres in poetry and the versatility of poetry bridges the gap between education and their own experiences. Most of the praise poetry resonates with the South African people because of the vibrancy in which it raises certain issues (e.g. fighting apartheid, women empowerment, civil rights, etc.).

A perfect example is Themba Masinga, a religious praise poet whose work has been captured by Sithole (2015). Sithole argues that Themba Masinga's poetry comes from his appropriation of the Bible and his praise songs for the leaders of the Nazareth Baptist Church of EBuhleni. In his own way, Masinga decolonises the Bible by appropriating its references and making poetry through them for the congregants to get a much clearer and better understanding of their religion. His consciousness of his audience is of extreme importance, which is like that of any other western poet or a poet of any other genre. Therefore, when I talk of decolonising poetry for learners, I mean to contextualise poetry for the ESL learners by acknowledging the poetry in their own personal spaces. In that way, learners will gradually, with the assistance of the teacher, be able to start appreciating poetry as a whole genre, not as something foreign to them and only for the specific elite group.

Godsell (2019, p. 6) argues that "history must locate itself emotionally, with students and learners, as well as mentally, and cognitively". She provides that the best way to achieve this is using poetry, because poetry engulfs all of these aspects. In this way, students and learners will relate to the history emotionally, but also apply their cognitive abilities to delve deeper to understand history. South Africa stomachs rich historical contemporary poetry, which provides stories and experience of the rich, unjust, and democratic South Africa. This does not and should not only be relevant to the history teachers, students and learners, but for language (English) too. Teaching South African poems provides relevance and vibrancy because learners can relate to what the author is writing about. Furthermore, it provides hope because the people feel represented and that their stories must be heard too.

Often, poetry that is read in the South African classrooms is "an archive of white voices writing about Africans, and what is missing is the voice of Africans speaking in their own idioms" (Godsell, 2019, p. 7). This statement speaks volumes of what is happening in the South African classrooms, which gives an impression that Black African South Africans do not have a voice. Learners grow with this ideology in their minds and begin to believe that it should be like that, their voices are not important, especially, if there is a white counterpart. Their experiences and thinking of poetry as a sophisticated, elitist genre, excludes them from trying to make sense of it. The indigenous oral and spoken poetry is still perceived as irrelevant as an educational tool and is marginalized and only seen as an entertaining genre in poetry. Perhaps if it used as a basis to the introduction of poetry, because of its vibrancy and the resonance it shares with the people, and because of its deep roots to the culture of black people, it can enhance the understanding and interests to learners to study and appreciate poetry. In this way, you are not

only decolonising poetry as a western phenomenon, you also uplift the indigenous genre, which then provides affirmation of the voice of those who relate to it the most.

Chapter 6

Analysis of strategies of teaching poetry

6.1 Introduction

Young (2016, p. 27) states that “poetry is an integral part of any high school curriculum, and that English teachers have an essential role in encouraging its values and use in the classroom”. This chapter seeks to analyze strategies that teachers may use to teach poetry in their ESL classrooms, particularly in the South African context. Given the history of education in South Africa, the democratic dispensation that promotes inclusivity and the curriculum that promotes learner centered education, it is therefore a parallel need that teachers are provided with different strategies that will enhance the educational objectives expeditiously. This chapter aims to provide different strategies to poetry teaching and learning by contextualizing different strategies and provides analysis on how they can be employed in an ESL class for improved understanding of poetry and analysis. Firstly, I will provide a diagram that figures the relationship between the teacher, learners, and the understanding of poetry. Thereafter, this chapter explores different strategies that are applicable to the South African context.

6.1.1 Responsibilities of a teacher in poetry teaching

Fabien (1990) states that poetry teaching requires a mutual relationship between the teacher and the learners. Both the teacher and the learners should know their responsibilities and ensure that they play their part in teaching and learning. Fabien (1990) argues that the role of a teacher is to ensure that through his or her teaching, learners begin to understand and enjoy poetry. Fabien then borrows from Mordecai (1981 p.1) the following: skills that the teacher must have to teach poetry effectively and efficiently.

- The teacher must have a good working relationship with the class.
- The teacher must understand and respond to the poem.
- The poem must be such that the students are able to respond to it.
- The focus of the class must be on the poem – not on questions about it or the information related to it (or its author), but on the poem itself.
- The teacher must, at all costs, stop the class or arrange it so that the class ends while the students are still enjoying the poem and before they become bored with it.

Fabien (1990) continues to argue that when teaching poetry, planning is the most significant part of its teaching and learning. During planning, the teacher needs to provide answers to questions like: what type of poems are my learners more likely to respond to? Why would they

be interested in such poems? How do I introduce these poems? How do I teach these poems? How do I assess the learners' understanding of the poem? Johnson, (as cited in Fabien, 1990) states that teachers must "choose poems that help learners to understand and describe their 'worlds'". To assist learners in understanding their world through what they are learning in schools requires that teachers have rich strategies to teach the content and relate it with the world of their learners.

Fabien (1990) introduces a preliminary assessment as an assessment to test if the learners understood what was being taught in class. She argues that "preliminary study enables the teacher to get a good grasp of the poem, to check out facts that may require explanation and to identify aspects which may require special attention" (Fabien, 1990, p. 11). This helps the teacher to uncover the learners' barriers, therefore, to implement certain activities to enhance their understanding and develop their skills.

6.2 Strategies of teaching poetry

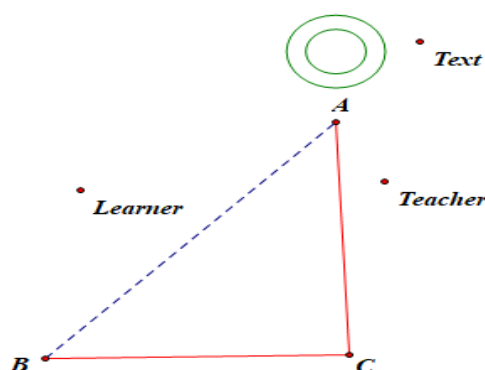
Pushpa & Savaedi (2014) and Gonen (2018) argue that often in schools you find that poetry is only taught for examination which completely negates the enjoyable, creative and reflective part of it. Slaby & Benedict (2019, p. 92) suggests two reasons for such and the decline of poetry in schools:

"1) many well-meaning educators in middle and high schools are not confident (or do not feel themselves to be competent) as readers of poetry; and,

2) they communicate this in their teaching of reading poetry to their students in approaches that are scattered, unfocused, and inaccurate". Regarding poetry teaching, Norris (2010, p. 22) feels that "many teachers may assume that students learning English are not ready for it because of its metaphorical language and often culturally-specific content". Pushpa & Savaedi (2014) contend that poetry teaching requires necessary strategies that will allow learners to appreciate poetry. Therefore, this chapter seeks to provide teachers with different, well defined strategies that can be used to teach poetry especially to ESL learners. Freyn (2017, p. 80) suggests that "teaching poetry in the language classroom can lead to a meaningful language learning experience". "Beside the use of appropriate methods and techniques, selecting appropriate poetry based on the students' needs and levels is also important" (Rohaniyah, 2012, p. 112).

Poetry is universal and "requires concentration and attention which usually students do not adhere to" (Mittal, 2014, p. 21). Therefore, to begin with, I would like to outline, using the model developed by Dutta (2001), a mutual and constructive relationship that needs to exist

between the teacher and the learners for any of the following strategies to poetry teaching to be successful.



6.2.1 A diagram depicting the relationship between the teacher, learners, and content understanding.

Dutta (2001) explains that the double layered circle represents the text, and in this case, a poem. The double layers stand for the literal meaning (outside layer) and the figurative meaning (inside layer). The significance of the inside layer symbolizes that in order for learners to make out the figurative meaning of the poem, they must scrutinize (dig-in) the poem to find it. The dotted line from BA “suggests that without the teacher's guidance, students are likely to get lost on the way before they get to the text-spot” (Dutta, 2001, p. 523). Point AC represents the role played by the teacher by guiding and scaffolding the learners towards understanding the text. BC is the base point where the learners are at. This presentation captures the relationship and roles that exist between the teacher, learners, and the text. Dutta (2001) extends his argument by inculcating the three steps and activities which are also embedded in the CAPS (2011, p. 27-28) that teachers need to make use of when teaching poetry or any other literature genre, which are: Pre-reading; during-reading; and post-reading.

6.3.1 Cognitive reading strategy

One of the key findings (as mentioned in this study) by Richards (1929) was the lack of reading by students. According to Brumfit (1980) reading is a multifaceted activity composed of “perceptual, linguistic, and cognitive abilities”. Therefore, it should not be seen as a matter of reading aloud the words on the page, as often is the case for ESL classrooms. Reading entails numerous activities for efficient and effective comprehension. Hay (2004) introduced an important strategy of reading poetry for comprehension. Cognitive reading strategies are “employed to assist students in deciphering, interpreting and comprehending poetry” (Hay,

2004, p. 3). Ozek & Civelek (2006, p.2) argue that “reading strategies are divided into two major categories: metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies”. Metacognitive strategies monitors’ the cognitive strategies. These involve preparing and carefully planning what is to be taught, setting the objectives and reflecting whether the objectives were met or not. McEwan (2007, p. 2) argues that “cognitive strategies are the mental processes used by skilled readers to extract and construct meaning from text and to create knowledge structures in long-term memory”. Cognitive reading is not about memorising the text nor rewriting what the text says. Rather, it is about assimilating what the text provides, storing it in your memory with a clear understanding. It is a modern way of teaching and learning which uses unorthodox ways of teaching and learning. It is a learner-centred approach, it enhances their reading skills and comprehensions skills, therefore, develops competency. This strategy is in line with the principles of practical criticism because it focuses on the words in the text and pushes learners to cognitively engage with them to get a well-rounded meaning of the poem.

According to Ozek & Civelek (2006, p.3) cognitive strategy is in line with practical criticism because it is an approach where “reading is meant to be a process of decoding, identifying letters, words, phrases, and then sentences to get the meaning”. Using this definition of cognitive reading, in cognitive reading, learners are required to pay attention to detail about the text they are reading. Learners need to ask themselves questions like: What? Who? Where? and How? These are questions asked in close reading. Using these questions, learners are able to identify the setting, theme or message and other aspects in the poem for analysis. Fisher and Fry (as cited in Stormont, 2018) argue that there are three keys to close reading: “1) posing deep text-dependent questions that revolve around what the text says, how it works, and what it means; 2) holding collaborative conversations that encourage students to challenge each other; and 3) engaging in post-reading tasks that require synthesizing information from the text and various learning activities”. These keys to close reading are valuable when teaching poetry because learners must use these to make out the meaning of the poem through close reading.

Ebrahimi (2012) understands cognitive reading strategies as ‘focused techniques’ that learners use to tackle a problem related to a text by reading the text more than once among other things. One of the advantages of using this strategy is that it promotes cognitive reading, which is reading for understanding. Hay (2004) introduces a top-down strategy, which is about the overall meaning of the poem. The bottom-up relates to ‘decoding’ the meaning of the poem by scrutinising the words and phrases in the poem. The schemata building positions itself to making out meaning of the poem from the structure of the poem. Also, this strategy entails

explaining to the learners the connotative and the denotative meanings of the text so that when they engage with poetry, they can employ these. Many scholars like Richards (1929) have argued that the meaning of the poem is almost lost at the beginning of the process of reading because most learners fail to read for an understanding. Poetry requires special reading skills because of its structure, diction, and style. The complexity in poetry because of its diction, ambiguity, paradox, figurative language, consequently forces “poetry readers to become skilful in language use” (Ebrahimi & Zeinal, 2018, p. 186). It is because of this statement that teachers need to teach poetry to their ESL learners, so that they develop consciousness for language use, understanding, and growth in their second language acquisition.

In the ESL classes, you often find learners browsing through the text they have been given by the teacher, and not necessarily reading it. When the teacher walks by, the learner will ‘mumble’ to make an impression to the teacher that he/she is reading. McEwan (2007, p. 2) states that “struggling students often mistakenly believe they are reading when they are actually engaged in what research calls mindless reading”. This is often the result of lack of reading skills, lack of understanding because of the diction used in the text, and sometimes, lack of interest in the text. This is frequently the case when teaching poetry to ESL classes. Some learners tend not to be interested in the poem because it is too long, they do not want to read, some because of the vocabulary used in the poem. Therefore, it is important for teacher to equip learners with different reading skills and strategies so that they develop eagerness in their reading. McEwan (2007, p. 2) posits seven strategies of highly effective readers:

1. Activating- “Priming the cognitive pump in order to recall relevant prior knowledge and experiences from long-term memory in order to extract and construct meaning from text”. The teacher may use elements like pictures to try and activate prior knowledge from the learners. The teacher needs to be cautious of the things he/she uses to activate learners’ prior knowledge as it should be things that will invoke knowledge of the similar context as the one the teacher intends to activate.
2. Inferring- “bringing together what is spoken (written) in the text, what is unspoken (unwritten) in the text, and what is already known by the reader in order to extract and construct meaning from the text”. It is not enough to identify metaphors, imagery, themes, etc. but to state what they infer, why did the poet use certain diction and not the other.
3. Monitoring-clarifying- the reader needs to ask themselves what they know and how they know what they know. This helps them grasp the content of the text and clarify

any misunderstanding. Learners may collaboratively work in pairs to ask each other about what they know about the text and how. In this way, even the one who had difficulties in understanding the text, will develop a sense of understanding and be able to substantiate their claims.

4. Questioning- the teacher may pose questions to test their understanding of the text. These may be leading questions to help direct learners to a sound response to the text. Learners also need to ask themselves different questions about the text to see if they understand it. They can use the opportunity to ask their peers certain questions about the text. This develops their thinking and comprehension skills.
5. Searching-selecting- this strategy involves learners using different material to try and make out the meaning of the text. For example, learners may use the dictionary to find meanings to difficult words. Use the internet to get more information about the text so that they develop a deep understand of the text and sometimes, the ideas revolving around the text.
6. Summarising- “restating the meaning of text in one's own words — different words from those used in the original text”. To summarise the text helps learners express their own understanding of the text, in their own concise way.
7. Visualising-organising- learners create a visual image of the text using the descriptions provided in the text. This does not only show their understanding of words in the text, it also reveals how learners relate to the text. A perfect example where this strategy is applicable are picture poems. In this genre, words are used to make a particular shape that which the poem is about. According to Finch (2003, p. 30) “picture poems offer a visual perspective on the arrangement of words, and therefore an effective means of encouraging learners to interact with target vocabulary”. Even though research has proven that learners learn well if they can visualise things, this genre is unfortunately less used to teach poetry in schools. In the South African curriculum, there is not a single picture poem taught in ESL classrooms. Teaching picture poems as a basis and introduction to poetry may be advantageous to the learners because it is easy to understand. Learners can make sense of the visual image and then the words will be used to provide a deeper analysis of the poem. The teacher may introduce learners to the simple forms of picture poems to draw their interest and see if they appreciate the artistic powers of the writer in writing such poems.

These strategies of cognitive reading are valuable for practical criticism in the teaching and learning poetry because they provide learners with different tools to make out the meaning of

the poem. They do not only ensure a clear understanding of the poem, but also enhance learners' cognitive reading skills, their competence and improve their second language acquisition. It allows learners to depend solely on the words provided in the text and their cognitive skills to read and analyse a poem. Also, because poetry is an extremely complex genre, it requires the complexities offered by the cognitive reading strategies to help make out the meanings of different genres in poetry. McEwan (2007, p. 2) also provides three steps that teachers need to follow when teaching cognitive strategies:

1. The teacher must “provide direct instruction regarding the cognitive strategy”. The teacher needs to “define and explain the strategy” to the learners so that the learners know what to do and how to do it. Then explain the purpose that serves in different stages of the lesson. This ensures that learners move steadily with the teacher and not rush things that the teacher has planned to be done at a specific phase of teaching and learning. The teacher also needs to explain to the learners the “critical attributes of the strategy” to the learners and “provide concrete examples of the strategy”. This enables learners to get a better understanding of the strategy and see how it is used in different contexts and why.
2. Model the strategy by thinking aloud- the teacher needs to work with the learners to come up with different examples to understand the strategy better. This helps the teacher to see if the learners are grasping the ideas about the strategies and how they function. Involving the learners ensures that learners engage in the process of teaching and learning and not become passive recipients of information.
3. Facilitate guided practice with students- the teacher should be the facilitator of knowledge and allow learners to take a responsibility of their learning. To assess if learners understand the strategies, the teacher must provide learners with group or individual activities and facilitate the discussions. This is valuable in class because learners often show good understanding during class discussions but fail when they work individually.

Cognitive reading strategy characterises reading a poem as a skilful activity that requires a lot of understanding and special attention for comprehension. The teacher may give learners an easy poem but that requires specific reading skills from the reader to understand. The teacher may then instruct learners to read silently and try to write their analysis of the poem before the teacher reads the poem and allows discussion. Learners need to take caution of the structure of

the poem and its significance towards the meaning of it. Learners will have to show an understanding of the strategies they have learnt through the analysis. An example of such poems is a poem titled “pretty ugly” by Abdullah Shoaib.

I’m very ugly

So don’t try to convince me that

I am a very beautiful person

Because at the end of the day

I hate myself in every single way

And I’m not going to lie to myself by saying

There is beauty inside of me that matters

So rest assured I will remind myself

That I am a worthless, terrible person

And nothing you say will make me believe

I still deserve love

Because no matter what

I am not good enough to be loved

And I am in no position to believe that

Beauty does exist within me

Because whenever I look in the mirror I always think

Am I as ugly as people say?

(Now read bottom up)

This poem is a special form of poetry that requires such attention to reading and the way in which it is structured contains all the meaning/s in it. Therefore, in this strategy, learners are introduced to reading poetry in various ways to achieve the understanding of the text and enjoyment. Another advantage of using this strategy in an ESL classroom is that it promotes reading skills in learners, therefore, enhancing learners' second language acquisition. However, its disadvantage is that it centralises reading over intense scrutiny of a poem for analysis. This can be overcome by the teacher by giving learners probing questions so that when they read, they know what to look for. The teacher needs to be precise on his/her instruction for the analysis so that learners know what is expected of them. This strategy can work well in the South African ESL classroom context because it enhances learners' cognitive skills by pushing them to see beyond what is offered by the words in the text. It is also significant in enhancing learners' reading skill in their acquisition of a second language.

Poetry being a multifaceted genre, consists of special poetic genre of the picture poems which also requires special attention to its visual structure when analysing. Ellestrom (2016, p. 437) states that visual poetry has for a long time been seen as "a type of poetry that deviates from normal poetry in and through its visual characteristics". Picture/visual poetry positions itself between visual art and literature because of its artistic nature and its poetic nature. This is special because a lot of its meaning is encrypted in its structure. Readers need to pay attention to the structure of the poem to make out the meaning of the poem. The vividness and richness of picture/visual poetry enhances the understanding and analysis of the poem. Irmawati (2014, p.37) argues that "in most readers, however, the mental pictures become more elaborate if the material we read is such that it baffles rapid understanding, as is often the case in poetry". Therefore, this special genre requires attention because of its peculiarity from other poetry genres and the reading skills employed for comprehension requires that learners recognise the relationship between the structure and the words in the text.

6.3.2 Pre-reading, during/whilst-reading and post-reading

The CAPS document (2011, p. 13-14) introduces the three lesson phases that teachers need to follow when teaching reading: pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading. This section will clearly and intensely explain the three phases and the activities that teacher may employ in each phase to ensure a successful lesson. The CAPS document (2011, p. 13) states that "by Grade 10 learners should be confident, independent readers in their First Additional Language,

selecting texts for their own interests and tastes”. Unfortunately, this is not reflected in the South African ESL classes. Frequently you find that learners in grade 12 find it very difficult to simply read out loud, not to mention reading for understanding. With poetry and its diction and vocabulary, you find that learners cannot read the words in the poem; therefore, it is impossible for them to even begin to comprehend it. These poetic features (diction, figurative language, etc) should be used to enhance learners’ understanding of the second language. Holbrook (1967, p.63) defines poetry as “language used for its deepest and most exact purposes.” He goes on to propose that there is no other medium through which language can be used as richly and accurately to explore experience as poetry (p. 69). The CAPS document (2011) notes that not all learners may have a good reading skill, therefore, teachers are trusted to testing their learners reading abilities at the beginning of the year for proper planning. The discretion remains with the teachers, whether they do it or not remains a subject to be researched. There are numerous factors resulting to this, but this section will only consider the three phases of reading.

6.3.2.1 Pre-reading

According to the CAPS document (2011, p. 13) pre-reading “prepares learners for reading a text in their additional language”. The pre-reading phase is a lesson where the teacher prepares learners before reading the text (poem) by establishing their prior knowledge of the phenomenon in question. The teacher does this to find out what his/her learners know and how much they know about the content of the lesson. There are numerous ways the teacher may establish this. Furthermore, it helps the teacher identify his/her learners’ capabilities. According to Toprak & Almacioglu (2009, p. 23) “pre-reading activities introduce students to a particular text, elicit or provide appropriate background knowledge, and activates necessary schemata”. Pre-reading is supposed to stimulate eagerness from the learners and sets an environment conducive for learning that particular concept. It seeks to provide attention and sets the mood for learning without the teacher giving away too much about the lesson. Learners should be kept interested in the text and wanting to know what the text talks about. If the teacher gives away the content of the text before reading, learners may no longer be interested in reading and discussing the text. Learners may develop attitudes and certain stereotypes towards the text, therefore, not learning.

Haque (2010, p. 10) states that “when reading a text for the first time it may seem difficult to us, but if our prior knowledge is activated by any means (through pre-reading activities) then the text becomes clear”. The pre-reading phase employs different activities which seek to

enhance learners understanding of the text. One of the activities that are employed during this phase is activating prior knowledge about the phenomenon. The teacher may ask learners about the themes of the poem they are about to read. This allows the teacher to address some of the difficulties faced by the learners. Furthermore, learners may discuss with the teacher the negative stereotypes they have regarding poetry. These may be dealt with before the actual reading phase of the lesson. Therefore, as Haque (2010, p. 13) “there is a great importance of pre-reading phase since it prepares the learners to read”. With poetry, it is even more important, especially in the South African ESL classrooms, with a decline in poetry teaching. Teachers need to be sensitive and be clear as possible when introducing poetry to their learners, so that they do not scare them with the bombastic words.

To encounter such learning hindrances, teacher must employ various activities during the pre-reading phase. These include discussing background information about the author and the text. There are poems that require the reader to have an understanding of the background of the author and the time in which the poem was written. An example of this is a poem written by Chris van Wyk titled “in detention”. This is a poem written during the apartheid era, the poet uses poetry to expose the explanations offered by the police for deaths in detention in South Africa. Therefore, to teach this poem, the teacher needs to provide learners with the context and time in which the poem was written. Even though this may seem outside the principles of practical criticism, the two can co-exist because the teacher will provide learners with the background of the poem but also emphasise that learners only use the words in the text to analyse the poem and that their analysis should be in line with the background context of the poem. Pre-reading also involves “brainstorming and reviewing familiar stories” (Toprak & Almacioglu, 2009, p. 23). The teacher may provide learners with the title of the poem and allow class discussion on what learners think the poem is about but analysing only the title. Learners are therefore engaged in critical cognitive development and thinking out loud. Placing on record the idea of trying out, and taking and shaping every answer towards the direction you want gives learners self-esteem and remain interested on the text. It is important to note that “a teacher must provide pre-reading activities that would match with the text to be read” (Haque, 2010, p. 14). This is a crucial point because this strategy paves the way for the whole lesson. It would be a dire situation for learners to have a misinterpreted idea about the text. That would mean that the teacher failed to plan his/her lesson accordingly.

According to Haque (2010) the pre-reading phase may be conducted in a teacher centred approach, both teacher and learners centred approach and in a learner centred approach. The

teacher ought to adapt to the conditions he/she finds in class. If a teacher, for example, had planned to teach metaphysical poetry, like “Death be not Proud” by John Donne, and finds that learners do not know the metaphysical poetry. The teacher needs to take a teacher-centred approach and explain to the learners what this genre is and what it entails. How is it different from other genres in poetry? After explaining to the learners, the teacher may then reverse to a learner centred approach after the pre-reading phase. The main ethos of this is to ensure that learners have knowledge of what is to be taught. According to Haque (2010, p. 17) one of the reasons for pre-reading is “to prepare the reader for the language of the text”. Learners must know the language they are expecting to see. This comes from the discussions the teacher and the learners have during the pre-reading phase. Haque (2010, p. 17) states that “too much unknown language can present the learner with a heavy cognitive load and hinder comprehension”. Another strategy the teacher may employ to counter this is to define difficult words found in the text and maybe even instruct learners to use those words in a sentence to see if they understand them. This way, it will be easier for the learners to understand them when used in the poem.

Pre-reading activities

Picture prompts

1. The teacher collects and distribute pictures closely related to the themes/s and/or the subject of the poem to be discussed. The number of pictures given to the learners depends on the complexity of the poem. The teacher may provide more picture to those learners who have poor comprehension skills. This strategy motivates learners to provide meaningful responses because they can visualise the text under discussion. At the end of the reading phase, learners can use those pictures to identify/describe with each stanza of the poem.
2. Learners work in groups to study and interpret the pictures. Each learner must be given an opportunity to express his/her impressions and thoughts about the pictures. This develops learners’ cognitive skills. During the discussions, learners may come with more interesting ideas about the text, and grounds their ideas with substantive reasons.
3. The teacher then instructs two to three groups to discuss in class their impressions, concerns, curiosities about the picture. This establishes learners’ cognitive abilities through the depth of their responses. Also, other learners may add to the views of the groups that presented and pose questions for them to clarify any misunderstandings should there be any.

4. The teacher then synthesizes the learners' ideas and provides learners with the proximities of their responses to the text. This gives learners with an almost clear picture of the text before reading it, but with more eager of finding the exact subject of the poem.

Activating prior knowledge

Learners are more receptive to new learning when they can connect it to what they already know. Poetry provides a quick and fun way to do this.

1. The teacher asks learners questions about poetry, and a specific genre in poetry that he/she planned to teach. How is it different from other poetry genres? What aspects does the reader need to pay special attention to in making out the meaning of the poem? This provides learners with a clear picture of what they are going to study about and the expectations of the lesson.
2. The teacher may provide learners with the topic of the poem so that learners begin to anticipate what the poem might be about from the title.
3. Learners share their experiences of poetry/that specific genre/topic with the class. In that way the teacher is able to establish learners' experiences and how much they know about the phenomenon under discussion. The teacher is therefore able to adjust the way he/she planned to teach the text through reflection.
4. Another way of unlocking learners' experiences of poetry is to tell a short story that will relate with learners' experiences. It might be a religious, cultural, or any story that will trigger learners' cognitive skills, therefore, redirecting them to what the teacher planned to teach.

The pre-reading phase is notably the most important phase of the three interrelated phases. It provides a synopsis whether the lesson will be successful or not. Therefore, a reflective teacher is then able to adapt to the situation of the lesson and find solutions to carry on and effectively and efficiently teach the content. Even though during this phase, the learners may have not seen the text, but they should have a gist of the context if not the content in the text. Talking about the themes found in the poem, what the title infers, and having certain words from the text gives learners a picture of the text. "Previewing a text with students should arouse their interest and help them approach the text in a more meaningful and purposeful manner as the discussion compels them to think about the situation or points rose in a text" (Toprak & Almacioglu, 2009, p. 23). Therefore, when teaching poetry, teacher needs to employ this strategy and learn

different activities that may be suitable for their contexts and their learners' capabilities. It is the responsibility of a teacher to know his/her learners' cognitive abilities and reading abilities. Even though most ESL classrooms are overcrowded, and it is impossible for a teacher to know each learner's abilities, but the teacher must find a way of keeping learners interested in the lesson. This is why teachers need to use numerous strategies for pre-reading so that they meet the needs of the diversities in their classrooms.

6.3.2.2 Whilst/during reading

According to the CAPS document (2011, p. 13) whilst reading "involves close reading of the text". During reading is the actual reading of the poem, where the poem will be read a couple of times by the teacher, a learner reading for the whole class and then learners reading silently on their own for analysis. Toprak & Almacioglu (2009, p. 23) state that "whilst reading exercises help students develop reading strategies, improve their control of the foreign language, and decode problematic text passages", in this phase of the reading process, the teacher is concerned with reading for comprehension. Therefore, it is significant for the teacher to read the text (poem) first. In this way, the teacher is modelling reading skills and noting the important parts of the poem by emphasising through his/her tone and maybe even repeating that part. Wahjudi (2010, p. 86) notes that "one important purpose is for the teacher to model good reading strategies such as identifying main ideas, predicting information what comes next, relating one idea with another, guessing meaning of unfamiliar words in context or deciding to skip unfamiliar words". When entering this stage, the teacher should ensure that learners transition with him. In most cases, you find that struggling readers stall at this phase while engaged readers continue processing after reading by re-skimming to cull important ideas and reflecting on the meaning.

In this stage, learners get to engage with the text through reading and analysing. The teacher may read the text once, whilst learners note what they do not understand in the text. The teacher then provides a direction to the learners by clarifying any misunderstanding. However, "the teacher should remember not to dominate the activities" (Wahjudi, 2010, p. 86). Therefore, to avoid a teacher centred approach, the teacher may then give one of the learners to come in front of the class to read for the whole class. In this way, the teacher begins to gradually withdraw himself/herself for the learners to take control of their learning. However, this does not mean the teacher should sit down and relax. The teacher may write leading questions on the chalkboard so that when the learner finishes reading, the class may look at the leading question and have them in mind when reading for the third time. Reading for the third time learners

must read silently and ensure to write something on the side because after that there is a class discussion. Wahjudi (2010, p. 86) states that “students also need some time to experience and get used to individual silent reading”. Silent reading helps learners notice some of the things that may have not have been noticed earlier. This is enhanced by each learner applying his/her reading skills to the text.

Toprak & Almacioglu (2009, p. 23) state that the responsibility of the teacher in this phase is to “pinpoint valuable strategies, explain which strategies individuals most need to be practiced, and offer concrete exercises in the form of ‘guided reading’ activity sheets”. Poetry analysis often becomes a boring part of the lesson because of rote learning. Teachers do not know how to withdraw themselves from ‘dishing out’ information to the learners. This phase of teaching and learning requires the teacher to be a facilitator of knowledge and allow learners to make sense of the text. Some of the activities employed in this phase are pause and reading (this may be done after each stanza) and summarising. Learners must try to summarise the poem to see if they have understood it. When reading a poem, during this stage, the teacher must ensure that every learner understands the poem. Learners need to ask themselves why the poet decided to use certain phrases over others, the diction, style, etc. These are the questions that each learner tries to answer to be able to understand the poem.

Activities for during reading

Decoding

1. The teacher needs to read the poem to the learners so that they understand how certain words are pronounced. Also, it provides the learners with the ‘how to read’ that poem to the learners.
2. After their first encounter with the text, learners must circle/underline words that they think carry more meaning in the text.
3. Learners must apply their cognitive skills to think about the meaning of poem beyond what the author gave them.
4. The teacher can allow learners to use the pictures he/she had provided the learners to link them with the words in the poem and develop an understanding of the text.
5. The teacher and the learners can move stanza by stanza (depending on the complexity of the poem) and try to generate an overall understanding of each stanza. At the end, learners will be able to connect the meanings of each stanza and create a coherent understanding of the poem.

6.3.2.3 Post-reading

The CAPS document (2011, p. 14) states that “at this stage learners view and assess the text as a whole. They synthesise (or pull together) ideas in the text, summarise ideas, compare and contrast different aspects of the text, evaluate the text, draw conclusions, and express their own opinions”. During this phase of the lesson, learners are required to produce an analysis of the text (poem). In this stage, learners have a full idea of what the text is talking about and using the words in the text, they should be able to substantiate their claims. Learners may begin by discussing the meaning of the poem (the literal and figurative). Discussing the meaning of the poem makes it easy for learners to move on to the themes, imagery, etc. Ibid (as cited in Toprak & Almacioglu, 2009, p. 23) states that “post-reading, (after, follow-up, beyond reading) exercises first check students' comprehension and then lead students to a deeper analysis of the text, when warranted”. Learners are required to provide a deeper meaning of the text to show their understanding of it. It is important for learners to know that it is not enough to identify the poetic features only and think that is an analysis. Rather, the important thing is what these poetry features infer and how well they communicate the author's idea/message.

In most cases you find that learners only scratch the surface of the text and lack the tools of digging for a deep insight to the writer's ideas of communicating the text. Finch (2003, p. 29) states that “the traditional view of poetry as one of the most sophisticated forms of literary and linguistic expression, makes it by definition inaccessible to all but the most advanced language learners”. This means that learners must apply delicacy when attending to every aspect of the poem when analysing because the meaning of the poem may slip through the fingers if you fail to grasp the importance of every word in the poem. In the South African ESL schools, learners are not expected to write essays analysing the text but are expected to answer questions based on the text. The teacher prepares assessment activities to test learners' understanding of the text. The activities may begin with group discussions and then escalate to a whole class discussion. The idea is to gradually remove assistance from the learners so that they can work on their own. The value of this is derived from the fact that examinations are taken individually, therefore, learners need to develop competence and skills of reading and analysing a text. Learners need to be exposed to examinable questions so that they develop an understanding of answering them even in the examination.

The context of ESL schools that I have chosen, is where English still continues to be seen as the language of the elites. Most learners suffer a lot of low self-esteem in reading; therefore, the cognitive reading strategies help develop learners' self-esteem and confidence in reading. These strategies empower learners with skills of reading for meaning, which is grounded by principles of deep thought and appreciation of the artistic nature of the poet. The reading cognitive strategies become the compass for the learners in tackling any kind of poem they are provided with. The collaboration of the cognitive reading strategies with the three reading phases (pre-reading, during and post reading) provides coherence and swift lesson development. ESL learners need to be taken step by step when teaching poetry because of negative stereotypes surrounding it and the illiteracy regarding poetry. These three lesson phases, if carefully used, with sensitivity attention to the language barriers that the teacher may encounter in class, help develop learners' understanding of poetry, its ambiguity, paradox, diction and vocabulary. Therefore, learners not only develop confidence in poetry reading and understanding, but also increase their second language acquisitions.

Maake (2017) states that teachers do not teach poetry in schools because they lack the confidence in teaching it. They too are a result of rote learning, therefore, they have a horrible experience of poetry. They would rather teach genres of literature: prose, short stories and drama than teaching poetry. Cognitive reading strategies also empower teacher with the teaching strategies that they can employ when teaching poetry analysis. Using the activities in the three reading phases, teacher can be able to carefully select poems that are suitable for their learners and match them with the suitable activities that will trigger interest and promote competence in the learners. Teachers may also develop and further their knowledge of reading skills and their content, which are found enlisted in the duties of an educator in the norms and standards. The teacher is a "scholar, researcher and a life-long learner". Department of Education, norms and standards, 2000, p. 1). This ensures that the process of teaching and learning becomes productive and effective to the learners.

6.3.3 Paraphrasing

Bhuvaneswar (2014, p. 1) states that "meaning is never complete, never fully realized but always just beyond us, postponed or deferred". It is important however, to try and search for the meaning of a poem, to gain an insight to the authors' true senses, intentions and convictions of writing. Another way of searching for meaning is through paraphrasing. According to Bhagat and Hovy (2013, p. 465) "paraphrases are sentences or phrases that convey the same meaning using different wording". I understand paraphrasing as rewriting a text using different

words to enhance the meaning of the text. The final product (text) may be longer than the original text. Hismanoglu (2005, p. 58) states that “in paraphrasing, students are required to use their own words to rephrase the things that they see in print or hear aloud”. Paraphrasing needs careful attention when employed to poetry teaching. This is because as significant as it may be in achieving clarity, it may also defeat the whole purpose of understanding and analysing poetry if misinterpreted. Paraphrasing can be done by replacing difficult words with more simple and understandable words using the dictionary. Most importantly, when paraphrasing, the meaning of the poem should remain the same. “Since paraphrase coincides with the students’ trying to make sense of the poem, it is a strikingly useful tool with poetry” (Hismanoglu, 2005, p. 58). Paraphrasing provides learners with an opportunity to express what they understand about the text in question, and to create their own understanding of the text using their own words. This develops their reading skills, writing skills, and their vocabulary, therefore, enhancing their second language acquisition.

Randolph (2014) discusses different steps for paraphrasing a poem. He states that before the teacher gives learners a poem to paraphrase, learners should have a complete understanding of paraphrasing. Randolph (2014, p. 1) suggests that, often when defining paraphrasing, teachers often fall to the definitions that “causes students to fixate on ‘word change’ and not on ‘understanding’ the text in question”. Therefore, when teaching paraphrasing, teachers need to ensure that learners have a clear understanding of what paraphrasing is and how it is done. Paraphrasing is not about simply changing the words in the text in question, but, requires a full understanding of the text so that when learners paraphrase it, they do not lose the meaning of the text. Randolph (2014) suggests that one way of achieving this is to spend more time teaching paraphrasing using different topics other than a poem. In this way, learners get exposed to different texts and gain skills of paraphrasing. The key is to begin with less sentences and move to more abstract sentences.

Techniques for paraphrasing

Bailey (2011), Bhagat & Hovy (2013) and Injai (2015) suggest that one of the techniques for paraphrasing is:

- Substituting the word with its synonym/antonym - the teacher and the learners need to carefully identify difficult words in the text. Then, substitute those words with the words with similar meaning (synonyms). The key is to ensure that the context of the content remains the same. If the learners substitute a word with a synonym that may

not fit the context of the content, it may take away the meaning of the text to something else.

- Changing the word order - the teacher and the learners may change the verbs, adjectives, nouns, etc. in text and the order of the words in the text. Playing with words/moving the word gives learners autonomy over a text and gives learners a sense of ownership over the text. In that way, learners are able to relate to the text and the meaning of it. However, attention should be paid to how this is done to avoid a shift in the message of the text.
- Change the structure of the text - the teacher and learners may change the structure of the poem to understand its meaning. However, in poetry, the structure of the poem plays a significant role in making out the meaning of the poem. This is one of the criticisms of paraphrasing. Therefore, I suggest that when the learners are done discussing the meaning of the text, they need to go back to the original structure of the poem and see if there is any information they can extract from it to further their argument/analysis of the poem. In this way, respect to the authors' art of structuring a poem in a certain specific way is not derailed.

In poetry, Randolph (2014) suggests that teachers begin by discussing different elements that make out a poem: define poetry, name different genres, perspectives of writing poetry, intentions of writing poetry, the feelings, and other relevant elements. In this way, the teacher provides a background for learners and builds an environment that is conducive for learning poetry. Thereafter, the teacher provides learners with the poem in question for them to look at on their own. Learners need to identify the main ideas in the poem, what each stanza addresses, the setting, the characters (if any), the tone, intention, feelings and the themes found in the poem. After the individual work, learners work in pairs to discuss what they have written about the poem. Learners must find the common ground to what they have written individually and combine it to maintain coherence in their discussions.

After the pair discussions, the teacher instructs learners to share their ideas in a class discussion. "This gives us (learners and teachers) the opportunity to share ideas, think about various interpretations, and hone the art of critical thinking" (Randolph, 2014, p. 3). Learners not only get to understand the poem but get exposed to new vocabulary which is used by other learners to paraphrase the poem and improve their listening and speaking skills.

Whilst some may feel that paraphrasing should be done by the teacher because they have a better understanding of the context in which the text is written and experience, I feel that learners should be involved in paraphrasing so that they learn and get better at it. Learners should be allowed to lose the essence and meaning of the poem at first when trying to paraphrase, but that is the process of teaching and learning. Paraphrasing is criticised for reducing the artistic nature of a poem. Authors have a specific and peculiar way of putting words and phrases, and their selection of words and metaphors, which is only afforded to them. Paraphrasing has been judged to take away that artistic beauty of poetry because teachers and learners rarely possess the skills of putting the words of a poet in a same way.

Another criticism to paraphrasing is that it takes away the structure of the poem, whereas the structure of the poem contributes to the meaning of the poem. Fabien (1990, p. 3) argues that “the form of a poem is important to its meaning and so to paraphrase robs the poem of an integral aspect of its being”. Certain public examinations require that students paraphrase pieces of poetry. Paraphrasing can have only negative effects. The form of a poem is important to its meaning and so the paraphrase robs the poem of an integral aspect of its being. With its rhythm, rhyme, imagery and metre taken away the poem becomes empty; a destroyed work of art, “nobody’s words” and can no longer be of real value to anyone. But even worse, is the fact that the pupils are given the impression that poetry is only a complex way of saying something simple; that the poet is deliberately mystifying them with strange concepts that could be very easily expressed in prose. The result could be strong aversion to poetry on the part of pupils

Therefore, it is recommended that paraphrasing is done by the teacher, who takes note of all the disadvantages of it and determine how they will work around them to present a justifiable analysis of the poem. One way of overcoming this disadvantage is for a teacher to paraphrase the poem to understand the meaning better, but for analysis, the teacher must use the original poem so that they are able to analyse each and every aspect of it knowing what it means.

Teachers can only allow learners to paraphrase poems if they have sufficiently acquired their second language because paraphrasing needs the reader to have an economy of words. South African ESL learners often reach grade 12 with little vocabulary, some even find it hard to have a conversation in English without stuttering or code-switching. It is because of such reasons that I argue that paraphrasing be done by the teacher to enhance learner’s understanding of poetry. The teachers themselves need to pay a special recognition to this because it is very easy to lose the essence and structure, therefore, the meaning of the poem.

6.3.4 Close reading

Franzen (2017, p. 5) states that “poetry analysis is about breaking down and studying the language of a poem to interpret meaning”. There are different strategies that teachers can employ to realise the true meanings of the poem, one of which is through close reading. (Burke (2012, p. 2) defines close reading as a “thoughtful, critical analysis of a text that focuses on significant details or patterns in order to develop a deep, precise understanding of the text’s form, craft, meanings, etc. Franzen (2017, p. 6) suggests that close reading “enables students to lose themselves in the text where they can bring life to the words on the page”. Close reading is a reading strategy for text analysis that places in focus the words on the page and deems the historical context of the text and the author insignificant. Furthermore, close reading disallows the imposition of the reader’s experiences of the text or their experience with the meaning of the poem. “Studying the text closely is not only to work with one’s own persona. It is also a way of introducing meaning and relevance to the students and promoting engagement and rigor” (Franzen, 2017, p. 5). Close reading requires cognitive diligence from the learners so that they are able to extract a deep meaning/s of the poem.

Close reading requires learners to be able to apply different reading and analysing skills to make out the meaning of the poem with the limited resources/information they are provided with. Learners must be able to code, decode, and identify different figures of speech in the poem to make out the meaning of the poem. Nonetheless, it is not important to identify the figures of speech, analysis comes from decoding their significance and their value to the intended meaning of the poem. Franzen (2017, p. 5) argues that “if students encode and decode poetry, the inquiry develops their explicit knowledge about language content, language skill, and it supplies metacognitive opportunities”. Valentine (2016, p. 30) argues that “close reading is a reading approach that requires critical thinking of and personal engagement with text”. It aids learners with cognitive development of thinking skills, reading skills and comprehension skills necessary for learning. Therefore, instilling self-confidence and competence in the learners.

Monk (as cited in Valentine, 2012, p. 32) suggests that “during close reading, students need to examine five tasks thoroughly - reading, vocabulary, sentence, syntax, and writing”. Using these tasks as a backbone of analysis, learners get a better understanding of the text and develop critical awareness skills of language. According to Franzen (2017, p. 5) teaching poetry using close reading answers a question that most critics of poetry often ask: “how does poetry analysis help students develop their reading comprehension skills in English as a foreign

language?” Close reading answers this by capacitating ESL learners with reading skills that enables them to study the text beyond what the author provides them with. Because learners only depend on the information on the text, they are forced to scrutinize the text by applying different lenses and skills to make out the meaning of a poem. Valentine (2012, p. 45) argues that another benefit of close reading is that “educators who incorporate close reading have the ability to intertwine reading, vocabulary, sentence syntax, comprehension, and writing”. This also benefits the learners because they get exposed to these tasks and begin to understand them and their significance in meaning construction.

Burke (2012, p. 2) suggests that close reading includes the following:

Using short passages and excerpts to:

- ☐ Diving right into the text with limited pre-reading activities
- ☐ Focusing on the text itself
- ☐ Rereading deliberately
- ☐ Reading with a pencil
- ☐ Noticing things that are confusing
- ☐ Discussing the text with others
- o Think-Pair Share or Turn and Talk frequently
- o Small groups and whole class
- ☐ Responding to text-dependent questions

These elements of close reading provide guidelines for learners to follow when reading texts for analysis and redirects their attention to the important aspects of close reading. “Having students engage in cognitive and social learning allows them to expand their minds to promote literary criticism” (Valentine, 2012, p. 34). Learners repeatedly read the text so that they get the core meaning of the text and explicitly scrutinize every word in it.

Burke (2012) and Valentine (2012) forwards three steps in close reading:

1. **First read: key ideas and details** - the teacher sets the purpose of reading and instructs learners to read the text independently or can be read aloud, depending on its complexity. The teacher should not provide learners with any background information

about the text as this is against the principles of close reading. Learners should read for details, underlining the important words in the text. “In a close-reading passage, several words are either bold-faced or underlined. If underlined, the students are provided with a working definition of the word as it relates to the passage” (Valentine, 2012, p. 37). The teacher can provide learners with the definitions of the challenging words in the poem so that when learners begin to read, they already have an understanding of the words in the text. Valentine (2012) suggests that the teacher should give learners leading questions so that they draw conclusions on the author’s purpose and make connections of the text for a concrete meaning. Reading should focus on the main idea/s in the poem and the key elements that the author purposefully included to enhance the meaning of the poem. Valentine (2012) emphasises that the teacher should allow learners to constantly revisit the text to validate their discussions. In this way, learners do not have the pressure of memorising the text.

2. **Second read: craft and structure** - at this stage, the teacher separates the poem in portions for analysis. The teacher may instruct learners to re-read the specific chosen lines of the poem for scrutiny. Learners explore with deep scrutiny that part of the poem and extract all the meaning/s they can from it. After rereading, learners discuss the poem with their partners/small groups. The discussions should be grounded in author’s ‘craft and organisational patterns’, which includes the diction, vocabulary, the structure of the poem, and figures of speech amongst other things. Valentine (2012, p. 38) argues that “students must be aware of the demanding sentence structure, and the educator must help students extract meaning from that portion of the text”. The teacher should be a ‘scaffolder’ and assist learners by directing and redirecting them. After the discussions, there should be a class discussion, allow all groups to present what they have discussed.
3. **Third read: integration of knowledge and ideas** - learners should integrate and synthesise the ideas that has been discussed in class to come up with a single, well thought-out meaning of the poem, supported by concrete evidence of the words in the poem. Valentine (2012, p. 43) suggests that at this stage, learners “perform a writing task about the passage, which includes paraphrasing, explaining connections in the text, and/or evaluating the position of the author”. At this stage learners already have a concrete meaning of the poem, the teacher may test/assess their individual answering skills. This also helps the teacher to detect individual development and their abilities of writing a persuasive and concrete answers to the questions.

These steps provide the ESL teacher with a guideline of how they can conduct their poetry lessons using this strategy and to get the best out of their learners. This strategy is valuable to the ESL context I have chosen because it does not require technological inputs or resources other than the text. Learners, with the assistance from their teachers are able to read, comprehend and analyse a poem by only looking at the words in the text and applying their cognitive thinking skills and reading skills. This strategy extends its functionality beyond the threshold of an ESL poetry class, but apply the same cognitive skills gained in this strategy in other subjects and their understanding of their own world. Valentine (2012, p. 46) emphasises that “close reading provides a means for students to learn to read and comprehend increasingly complex texts”. Learners begin to look beyond what the author provides in the text and begin to ask inquisitive questions about the text and take ownership of the text. This increases their self-confidence and increases their competence in their learning.

6.3.5 Discussing the vocabulary used in different poems

Khatib, Rezaei and Derakhshan (2011, p. 203-204) state that “poems are usually written in a form different from the norms of speaking or even writing and hence they make understanding them a herculean task”. Poetry has suffered an unjust prejudice because of its language and style. Therefore, it is important for both the teacher and learners to engage in discussing the vocabulary used in poetry to develop understanding of the language, consequently increasing learners’ vocabulary and second language acquisition. Aydinoglu (2013, p. 274-275) argues that “it is always believed that the language of poetry is very hard to understand and rather different from the ordinary language. Robertson (2017) argues that another strategy that enhances poetry teaching is by discussing with the learners the vocabulary that is used in different poems. This provides the learners with an opportunity to engage with and grow their vocabulary so that when encountered with the poetic diction, it becomes easier for them to read and understand. Schroeder (2010, p. 3) argues that “because of poetry’s conciseness, students can learn how to search for and choose the best word for a situation”. Therefore, learners develop their vocabulary and in their language use.

Furthermore, in this way, learners enhance their language skills and their second language acquisition. “Students may want to pick a word or phrase that is meaningful from a poem and write it on a ‘poetic word wall’ — sort of a graffiti wall of sentiments” (Robertson, 2017). When discussing a poem with the learners using this strategy, learners remove certain words in the poem and replace them with other words. The discussion then circles on how different the poem would be if they replaced certain words in the poem with others. This provides the

significance of choosing certain diction over others by the poem. It also symbolises the artistic skill of the writer in writing a poem. Learners also learn to manoeuvre around poetry and should get the impression that they too can write poetry.

Teaching poetry requires that learners familiarise themselves with the diction and the vocabulary used in poetry. This enables them to grow not only on poetry understanding, but also in their second language. The teacher must explain the vocabulary used in poetry to the learners and how it is used to enhance the meaning of the poem. Learners should also be encouraged to use that vocabulary in their everyday spoken language so that they gain a better understanding of it. Also, learners must be encouraged to use such vocabulary in their own poetry writing so that it provides them confidence, self-esteem and competence their written work. Learners will then begin to appreciate poetry not only as a distinct genre but as another way of acquiring a second language.

Vocabulary teaching is an important pre-reading activity, especially for the ESL learners because it calms their anxieties and provides insight to the text. Valentine (2012, p. 38) argues that “before students can learn to think, comprehend, and infer information critically about the text, they must understand the words and terminologies used in a passage”. The teacher should use proactively use the words so that learners get an understanding of them and how they are used in different contexts. Learners also develop their vocabulary and grow an economy of words. Valentine (2012, p. 37) states that “if the vocabulary is limited, readers have a difficult time understanding an author’s purpose”. This is often the case in most ESL classes, learners often fail to understand and/or misinterpret the meaning of the text/poem because of their short vocabulary. Limited vocabulary affects the way learners even respond to the questions about the text/poem. Learners often miss their intended answer by over explaining or falling short of precision. Therefore, teachers should spend time, in the pre-reading phase, explaining and discussing the vocabulary used in poetry to the learners.

6.3.6 Understanding figurative language

English being the medium of instruction puts pressure on the ESL teachers to ensure that learners have the necessary grammatical competence to communicate in the global world. As English is not their mother tongue, second language speakers tend to interpret things literally. This presents a difficulty in interpreting poetry as a commonly used poetic technique is the use of figurative language. Figurative language is a form of communication that uses literal images to form images of something new. Ventrone (2017, p. 8) argues that “the prospect of speaking

English to native speakers can be very daunting to English language learners” who do not have proficiency in the target language. This results from the fact that “in language teaching, emphasis is usually placed on grammatical competence rather than metaphorical competence to improve a learner’s proficiency in the target language” (Kathpalia and Carmel, 2011, p. 273). For most ESL learners, figuring the meaning of the figurative language is an arduous activity because in most ESL classes, teachers’ emphasis is always on writing, reading and speaking appropriately and fluently. They then neglect idioms and metaphors, which then prevents learners from enjoying the beauty of the language. Palmer, Shackelford, Miller and Leclere (2006) suggest that learners can and should be scaffolded towards understanding figurative language. This is even more necessary because of the world becoming a global society. Learners need to develop not only grammatical competence, but also, the metaphorical competence of communication to understand English as it is a global language and necessary for wider communication

For most native English speakers, interpreting metaphoric language becomes an easy process because of their proficiency. “However, the situation is different for foreign and second language learners, who probably have to process these metaphors from scratch, especially if they do not have equivalent expressions in their mother tongues” (Kathpalia and Carmel, 2011, p. 274). Poetic language is different from the everyday spoken and written language because of its paradox and ambiguity. Hasanah (2018, p. v) states that “the function of figurative language is to add beauty and artwork of the poems and also to make the poems more interesting and unique”. Poetic expressions add value to poetry and enhance the poet’s intentions and meaning/s of the text. However, it requires that ESL learners be exposed to it so that they develop an understanding of it and begin to appreciate it as a form of communication that requires deep thought for comprehension. Poets use metaphors, similes, onomatopoeia, allegory, personification, metonymy, apostrophe, irony, understatements and overstatements, paradox and ambiguities to make their intentions heard. Scaffolding learners to this requires that teachers have an understanding of the figurative language and use it in their everyday teaching and learning. Learners need to be introduced to the simple metaphoric expressions first and through scaffolding, move to the most abstract ones. This completes their competence in understanding the target language and its acquisition.

Hasanah (2018, p. 4) states that “figurative language with its compatible terms forces the reader to attend to the connotations rather than to the denotations”. Therefore, metaphorical language requires critical thinking, consequently, enhancing competence from the learners. Ventrone

(2017, p. 7) suggests that “in order for English language learners to integrate into society, they need to develop full communicative competence in many areas of expression, including figurative speech”. Deedari and Mansouri (2004, p. 12) state that a figure of speech “is not a mere decorative device, a pretty or fancy way of saying something which might be better said literally”. This is how most ESL learners see figurative language, only as a language used to ‘complicate’ their lives by making poetry difficult. It is therefore a responsibility of a teacher to ensure that learners are exposed to such language so that they begin to understand it and appreciate it as a communicative language. The teacher must help them relate it to their own language if possible so that they begin to draw their own languages to enhance the understanding of the figurative language.

6.3.7 Multimodality

The twenty first century has seen different technological upgrades especially in the informal settings (social media spaces) while the formal settings like schools cling to the orthodox ways of making meaning, (Kress, 2010). The realisation of technology has seen poetry finding space in media platforms, combining poetry with music, videos, photography, and other forms of visual art (Kress, 2003 & Jewitt, 2008). Kress (2003, p. 1) argues that it is no longer possible to about literacy in isolation from a vast array of social, technological and economic factors”. However, in the ESL classrooms, especially in South Africa, poetry continues to be a ‘one man show’ where teachers are the only voice of meaning. Godhe and Magnusson (2017, p. 845) argue that “young people read and create text which are often a combination of written texts, pictures, moving images and sound mediated through digital devices such as computers and mobile phones”. Hijazi and Al-natour (2012. p, 295) state that “poetry’s attraction is in its conciseness, its brevity, and power to convey so much in a limited space”. Poetry arouses feelings, dives deep into the readers’ soul.

Moreover, there are other means to enhance this and the understanding of poetry which is a multimodal tool of poetry analysis. Multimodality implies the use of different ways to achieve a certain goal. Moreno and Mayer (2007, p. 310) define multimodal learning environments as environments where learners are presented with “a verbal representation of the content and a corresponding visual representation of the content”. D’Abdon (2016, p. 46” states that “poetry has often been a privileged site for technological experimentation”. Multimodality consists of different modes like: audios, videos, pictures amongst other things. According to Marchetti and Cullen (2016, p. 39) one of the advantages of a multimodal approach to poetry teaching is that

it “does not necessarily rely on technology”. Teachers can use whatever mode available to them to teach poetry.

Freyn (2017, p. 81) suggests that “a multimodal approach to teaching poetry can be done in a number of innovative ways”. Xerri (2012, p. 508) states that “the notion of multimodality redefines pedagogy because learning itself is reconceptualised, partly because of the impact of new technologies”. A perfect example of a multimodal teaching approach is using a video to trigger the learners’ minds and attention. Most of the ESL learners do watch ‘soapies’ like “Skeem Saam” where there is a constant use of poetry by and through the character of Wallet. The teacher can use such episodes to evoke interest and motivation to his/her learners, because it is something they can relate to and which they may resonate with. The key here is to ensure that learners remain composed and eager to discuss poetry and not lose the essence of the lesson. Templer (2012, p. 1) states that this “is a superb tool for energizing the reading and appreciation of poems in the language classrooms”.

Multimodality carries a lot of advantages for poetry teaching and learning, one of which is that it enables learners to follow the prose aspect of a poem/poetry. This advances learners’ understanding of poetry and facilitates the process of analysing it by bridging a gap between making out the meaning of the poem and enjoying the poem. Moreover, poetry in story telling becomes a personal thing to the learners because they can relate with most of the themes told in the story. Marchetti and Cullen (2016, p. 41) argue that “ensuring fluid interaction and optimizing communication by appropriate selection and combination of modes by the teacher provides a framework for creative learning”. Therefore, the vibrancy in which the stories are told, and the incorporation of poetry (e.g. oral poetry) enhance the meaning of the poem. However, multimodality has disadvantages too. One of the disadvantages of it is that learners may somehow focus on the enjoyment and the added non-poetic features and forget the importance of the structure and other poetic devices that create the meaning of a poem. Therefore, teachers need to emphasise that learners pay much attention to these rather than the additional features of the poem.

Examples:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_IN_sdj2m0

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6mYuGRkN5c>

These do not only carry the beautiful art of language through poetry, but also the acting that is inalienable and compatible to the poem. Acting out poetry is another form of multimodality

which enhances the understanding and meaning of the poem. Robertson (2009) states that “poems can make wonderful class presentations, whether students read different poems from a collection aloud, act out a longer dramatic poem, or take turns reading a rhyming text”. In their grade 12, most learners are wrapped up in technology. Also, with all the conversations pointing towards the fourth industrial revolution, this helps equip learners by emphasising that they direct their use of technology towards their education. With the technological illiteracies that South African rural learners have, introducing digital technology in classes will not only help learners increase their educational skills but also their competence.

Another way of using multimodality as a teaching strategy is by choosing songs as a way of teaching poetry. There are numerous songs that are recognised as one of the greatest poems ever written. An example will be a poem/song by John Lennon titled “Imagine”. Teaching a poem like this requires creativity from the teacher. A teacher may allow the learners to sing the song so that they get active and in a way, reducing the anxiety levels of the learners that occur every time they hear the word ‘poetry’. Also, this way, the teacher decolonises the notion that poetry is boring because of the ‘bombastic’ words/phrases that it carries. Introducing this strategy to poetry teaching will also contextualise poetry for the learners.

- Using music as a multimodal tool to teach poetry

Music is a universal language that everyone understands but has different preferences. Music is grounded by cultures and experiences amongst other things. Therefore, using music to teach poetry establishes a sense of entertainment in education. Hijazi and Al-natour (2012, p. 295-296) suggests that “the purpose of using music in the adult EFL classrooms is to create a learning environment by increasing vocabulary, building listening comprehension, enhancing speaking, reading, and writing skills and expanding cultural knowledge”. Introducing music in an ESL poetry class decreases anxieties felt by learners when engaging with poetry and gives them comfort. In his study of the discourse of pop songs, Murphey (1992) found that there are numerous features that can be employed to teach poetry to ESL learners using music. He states that songs carry poetic features like rhymes, rhythm, strong vocabulary, and their lyrics are structured like poems. Furthermore, music listeners can have different understanding/interpretations of a certain song because of how they listen to it, analyse it and their contexts. Therefore, music carries more parallel features to poetry, consequently, it should be used to create a better understanding and appreciation of poetry. This is significant in the ESL classrooms because of the prejudice poetry faces because of the horrible experiences both teacher and learners have regarding it.

Hijazi and Al-natour (2012, P, 301) believe that “music can actively process new stimuli and infer the rules of language”. In most ESL classrooms, teachers are often faced with having to motivate learners in the beginning of each class to get learners’ attention which is time consuming. Using music to teach poetry, teachers do not have to spend any time motivating learners because music will provide the entertainment and the anticipation of the day’s lesson. Another advantage and benefit of using music to teach poetry is that “it can change the artificial classroom environment into a real experience and make new information meaningful, bringing interest and order to a classroom” (Hijazi and Al-natour, 2012, p. 301). Music provides the class with vibrancy that resonates with the meaning of the poem. Learners must be able to connect the music/song played with the poem they are reading. In order to ensure a comprehensive use of music in a poetry class the teacher needs to do the following:

1. The teacher needs to explain to the learners the objects of the lesson and that the lesson will contain music. However, learners should not be taken away by the music and forget about poetry analysis. This helps learners focus on the priorities and creates an anticipation of the lesson.
2. The teacher needs to divide learners into groups. The number of learners in each group depends on the number of learners in class and the space available.
3. Play a song that he/she selected for the poem. The teacher may ask the learners if they know the song and discuss it. The discussion should be directed towards the connection between the song and the poem.
4. The teacher will then discuss with the learners some of the difficult words in the poem with the learners. In discussing the words and their meaning, learners should begin to have a picture of what the poem may be about. They should use the song and the words to suggest the mood, tone, and the anticipated theme/s.
5. After the discussion, the teacher will read the poem to the class. Learners should use this to connect to their partially created image of the poem.
6. The teacher should allow learners to silently read the poem on their own whilst he/she writes things that will be discussed after their reading. Learners will be able to employ the same skills used by the teacher to read the poem, but also add their own skills to get a deeper meaning of the poem.
7. The teacher will open a space for a class discussion. By this time, learners should have a complete, coherent and comprehensible meaning of the poem. They should be able to

discuss how the music played in the background enhances their understanding and meaning of the poem.

These steps are valuable in teaching poetry with music because they provide a guideline/framework for teachers to employ this strategy in their ESL classes. Hijazi and Al-natour (2012. P, 301) believe that “instructors and teachers who teach poetry may gain a lot from familiarising themselves with the research literature related to the use of music on thought, behaviour and the process of learning as a whole”. It is the responsibility of a teacher to enhance their teaching and their professional development so that they remain competent and subject specialists. Using music to teach poetry also provides teachers with flexibility in their teaching pedagogies and improves their technical abilities. Learners do not have to memorise the poem and the discussions in class, but have to fully participate in the discussions and poetry analysis.

- Teaching musical poetry

Poetry manifests itself in different shapes and genres. To introduce music in poetry, the teacher may use musical poetry so that learners get exposed to it and begin to not only listen to music but develop skills for analysis. An example of this is teaching one of greatest musical poem written by John Lennon, “Imagine”:

1. The teacher needs to explain to the learners what musical poetry is and how poetry manifests itself in poetry.
2. The teacher may also discuss the background of the author and his musical career. Learners must be given an opportunity to share their experiences of the author/artist and his music.
3. The teacher needs to play the song for the learners. They must note the important words so that they can be able to discuss the meaning of the poem/song.
4. The teacher needs to open a class discussion and allow learners to express their perspectives on the song and its meaning.
5. To enhance the analysis, the teacher needs to provide learners with a written copy of the text for learners to read.
6. The teacher must play the song and allow the learners to read the text silently. Because the rhythm of the song is slow, it allows learners to get an even clearer meaning of the poem.

7. Learners should be able to analyse the structure of the poem, alliteration, metaphors, onomatopoeia, personification, with the song played they should be able to analyse the rhythm and easily recognise the rhymes, etc.

Using musical poetry, the teacher enables learners to relate with poetry and see it as an everyday thing other than a class and examination thing. Learners begin to see poetry as a refuge than something foreign to their context. Learners begin to appreciate poetry in an anxiety free and entertaining environment. Hijazi and Al-natour (2012. P, 301) concluded that they “found that using music may help students to comprehend poetry and enjoy analysing” other than stressing about memorising what the teacher said to them in class. Learners should always be actively involved in knowledge construction, especially in poetry, because only the writer of the poem carries its true meaning. Poetry readers only try to make out its meaning based on their experiences and how they understand it.

6.3.8 Jigsaw method

The jigsaw method of teaching has been widely used in the content subjects like physical science, life sciences, agricultural sciences, history and others but rarely, if ever, used in language teaching. However, this strategy to teaching and learning can be used to teach literature. Sugainti (2016) describes the jigsaw method as an innovative technique to poetry teaching and learning. “jigsaw technique is the efficient way to teach poetry comprehensive skill because it can save the teacher's energy and can make the students get more comprehension about poetry meaning by interacting with other students” (Sugainti, 2016, p. 65). Learners are separated into groups of 4/5 with each group responsible for constructing knowledge from a given text and explaining to their members. This method is a learner centred approach to teaching and learning. This strategy to poetry learning is efficient for group working because it ensures that every member of the group participates fully to the ‘making out’ of the meaning of the poem. Each group must have a group leader who will facilitate the reporting. Learners need to know by memorising their group members so that when they adjourn from the expert groups, they know their original group members to report to. One advantage is that it does not necessarily need to be the more progressive learners who become experts of the certain piece. The teacher may identify the less progressive learners to work with the more progressive learners and master the piece and deliver it to the group.

Maake (2017, p. 43) provides the following elements as the steps for the jigsaw technique:

- ❖ A task or passage of text material (poem) is divided into several component parts or topics;
- ❖ Each group member is given a topic on which to become an expert;
- ❖ Learners who have the same topics meet in expert groups to discuss the topics, master them and plan how to teach them;
- ❖ Learners return to their original groups and teach what they have learned to their group members;
- ❖ A test or quiz is taken individually;
- ❖ Team recognition is given.

The jigsaw strategy is closely related to the strategy of building it from scraps. The difference to it is that learners given the same piece of a poem work together to become experts in it and then go back in their original groups and explain each aspect of the poem to their members. Every learner must ensure that they understand the poem and its meaning, both as a fragmented piece and as a single text. This ensures that when learners go back to work individually, they are able to answer questions about the poem. In this technique, the teacher serves as a facilitator of the discussions and helps the learners where they need help by directing and posing leading questions to the different groups so that they know where to go. The teacher also by walking around, listening to the group discussions after the 'expert' group discussion ensures that different group members report exactly what was discussed in the 'expert' group discussions. In this way, proper social skills are developed while a comprehensive understanding of the text at hand is also achieved.

South African ESL classrooms are often crowded because of high numbers in each class. Therefore, this strategy requires that the teacher bares the numbers in his/her class. In a very big class, the teacher may divide learners into separate groups and give them the poem to discuss. Thereafter, each group will select an individual for each piece that the teacher gave so that they meet with others to discuss. Whilst the selected learners work to analyse the different pieces they are given, their original group should try to analyse the whole poem. Once the specific groups have clearly understood their given piece, they should go back to their original groups. Each 'expert' learner should be given an opportunity to explain the piece they were instructed to discuss. This should be done before the original groups reveal what they have written. Once every 'expert' learner has presented, the group should then reveal what they had

written and then work from that. In this way, the group knows where they had gone wrong and ensure full participation from all the learners.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the relationship that exists between the teacher, learners, and poetry analysis. The role played by the teacher in facilitating constructive reading and poetry analysis. Thereafter, this chapter explored in detail the strategies that teachers may use to teach poetry to their ESL learners, especially in the South African context. The strategies have been provided to enhance poetry teaching, learning, and understanding so that learners begin to appreciate poetry as an educational genre to second language acquisition. Furthermore, for learners to see poetry for its enjoyable and artistic nature without developing anxieties and low self-esteem, learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, this is possible with the above strategies because they are employed to enhance vibrancy in teaching and learning.

Chapter 7

Summary, recommendations and conclusion

7.1. Introduction

This study has attempted a critical understanding of the strategies that ESL teachers can use to teach poetry in ESL classroom contexts.

This study must be seen as a means of contextualising poetry by employing different, democratic and learner-centred strategies to ensure vibrancy, relativity, and clear comprehension and analysis of poetry. Previous research: Richards (1929), Salameh (2012), Chemwei, Kiboss & Cheruiyot (2013), Danesh & Shirkhani (2015), Young (2016), Maake (2017) among others, have argued that some of the barriers to understanding poetry are borne out of the lack of reading skills, language, attitude, but mostly, due to orthodox strategies. Therefore, this thesis had the aim of exploring different strategies that teachers may use to teach poetry, especially in the ESL classrooms in the South African context. The underpinning theory for this research is practical criticism as defined by Richards (1929) and subsequently improved by Cox & Dyson (1965); Bennet (1977); Bredin (1986) and Peck & Coyle (1995) amongst others. The reasoning behind the chosen theory is that in most rural schools, there is an extreme lack of resources. Henceforth, a theory that uses the text as its core source of information is required for analysis and makes pragmatic sense. This takes away the pressure from both the teacher and the learners because it does not require them to have material that might be very hard for them to find because of the lack of resources.

This study found that, as a result of the insufficient strategies to poetry teaching at the disposal of the ESL teachers, teachers end up refuting Plato's statement which defines and sees poetry "as an art form to be appreciated, not a body of information to be imparted" which is to say, poetry should be considered and appreciated first for its artistic nature. Also, the teaching of poetry as mechanically imparting information hinders the capacity for ESL learners to learn the target language more effectively.

7.2. Summary on the key findings

Previous research, Richards (1929); Peskin (1998); Meihuizen (2001); Castiglione (2017); Ebrahimi & Zainal (2018) and many others have investigated and explored the failures to comprehend poetry and concluded that reading skills is one factor. Cox & Dyson (1995) forwarded strategies of writing poetry analysis in the exam room. They explored the necessary

requirements from the learners when writing an analysis. Other scholars have explored different strategies used by teachers to teach poetry and those that can be used to teach poetry. However, the South African context requires special attention because of its historical injustices regarding education and an appreciation of the rural contexts in which this study is grounded. Our democratic dispensation seeks to undo the injustices and promote unity through quality education, but this is very challenging given the resource poverty that obtains in rural areas. This requires that researchers expand the ideologies and pedagogies for teacher to employ and make learning accessible to students in rural areas.

A study by Maake (2017) found that in the rural ESL schools, less than half of the schools taught poetry to the ESL learners in grade 12. This may be interpreted in many different ways, one of which may be that teachers are using their discretion provided by the CAPS document to choose which genre to teach in the FET phase. However, research proves that often teachers, especially the ESL teacher, are resistant to teaching poetry. This is because of the myth that poetry is a difficult genre and their past experiences of engaging in poetry. This resistance to poetry stems from teachers' attitudes towards the idiomatic and figurative language which poetry uses for its expressive and rhetorical features and which may seem alien to second language learners. Additionally, the bane with teaching poetry in rural contexts is that the teachers are mostly narrowly focused on teaching for examination purposes. Little attention is given to the nuances of meaning, personalising understanding for learners and discussing rhetorical features and meaning for their aesthetic sense and sheer enjoyment. Many ESL teachers in rural contexts struggle with teaching poetry in circumstances of resource poverty and with learners who are poorly equipped to read a language they mostly use for academic purposes only. These factors culminate in a resistance to the teaching and appreciation of poetry in rural schools and its perception as a difficult genre to be avoided.

One of the key findings of this study is the importance of cognitive reading strategy. Reading is considered a very complex task because reading is not only about phonemic awareness, vocabulary and fluency. The reading of poetry demands rhetorical appreciation that extends beyond the decoding of literal meaning and expands into the figurative domain. Cognitive reading is used to differentiate, interpret, and comprehend the text at hand. This strategy involves reading beyond a literal decoding of the text. It involves inferring, decoding information, posing questions, reflection, summarising the main ideas in the text looking at imagery and the imaginative use of diction. Cognitive reading strategy is more applicable to poetry teaching because it provides learners with tools to read poetry that assists a critical

understanding of poetry. It ensures intense analysis of a poem, seeking valid and sound meaning grounded by concrete evidence.

Another finding from this study as a crucial strategy to teaching poetry are the three reading phases: pre-reading, during, and post reading. These phases provide the teacher with activities that can be employed to enhance the understanding of the meaning of the text. In the pre-reading phase, learners are engaged in activities that provide them with a gist of the text and increases their motivation and curiosity. The teacher can establish learner's background knowledge of poetry and the themes he/she prepared to teach during the lesson. This directs and redirects learners focus to think about the phenomenon that is introduced in class. The teacher can give learners the difficult words found in the text and explain them to the learners or ask them to use a dictionary. Also, the teacher can give learners an opportunity to discuss those words in groups or pairs to stimulate attention to the contexts in which the words are used in the poem

The second phase which is whilst/during phase is the actual reading of the text. In this phase, the teacher reads the text and allows learners to read silently. During this phase, the teacher may offer learners leading questions with which to redirect their thinking to that of the text. Also, the teacher poses questions that will provoke deeper thinking whilst reading the text. The teacher may separate the text in different pieces, depending on the complexity of the text, and discuss the important details of that stanza with the class without going into details/analysis of the text. In the last phase, post reading, learners get to discuss different aspects of the text, including the meaning of the text, themes, tone, the structure of the poem, style, among other things. In the post-reading phase, the teacher may give learners a set of questions to probe their thinking skills in relation to the text. Allow learners to discuss the text and provide a complete analysis of it. These phases are important to poetry teaching because they allow grow as the lesson and discussions escalate. They also allow learners to participate in the class discussions.

Further to these strategies, this study established that paraphrasing is another ideal tool for teaching poetry in an ESL context. However, paraphrasing requires delicacy and diligence on both the teacher and the learners. Paraphrasing a poem allows learners to have control over the text, therefore, giving them a sense of responsibility. It also allows learners to give their understanding of the text. Nonetheless, paraphrasing has been criticised for derailing the artistic nature of a poem. It takes away the structure of the poem, which, in most instances plays a significant role in determining the meaning of a poem.

Another significant strategy, consciously and often unconsciously used in ESL classrooms is close-reading. In this strategy, a text is exposed to serious scrutiny, which seeks to find out the real meaning/s of it without considering the context of the text, historical background of the text and the writer. Excluding these aspects from the analysis ensure that the meaning of the text only comes from the words provided by the author. This strategy ensures that learners rely on their thinking skills to make out the meaning of the text. This develops their thinking abilities and encourages competence. However, close reading has been criticised because some poems are better and meaningfully understood by firstly understanding the author's historical background and the context in which the text was written. In an ESL rural context with resource poverty, this study acknowledges the value of this, but for pragmatic purposes, advocates practical criticism.

Other key strategies found by this study are discussing the vocabulary used in different poems and understanding the figurative meaning. Discussing the diction used in poetry exposes learners to different words. Therefore, this makes it easier for learners to understand different poems. Valentine (2012) argues that "if the vocabulary is limited, readers have a difficult time understanding an author's purpose". It is because of low/insufficient vocabulary that ESL learners argue that poetry language is only used to make their lives 'difficult'. Increasing learner's vocabulary will result in them having a repertoire of words, therefore, making it easier for them to express themselves appropriately. Another problem with poetry teaching is that ESL learners find it hard to comprehend figurative language. Teachers spend most of their lessons teaching about grammatical competence and fluency decoding figurative language. Therefore, this study suggests that teacher begin to teach the figurative to enhance their understanding of poetry.

Another key finding of this study is multimodality as a strategy to poetry teaching. Often when people hear the term multimodality, they quickly begin to think about the internet, computers and other digital resources. Which in turn they would argue that lack of resources is a major crippling effect in most rural schools. However, the term multimodality extends beyond the use of technological tools as resources to teaching and learning. Multimodal teaching is a modern teaching strategy that incorporates different resources other than the orthodox resources like books and chalkboards. It uses acting and reciting poetry amongst other things to enhance the meaning of poetry but also allows learners to enjoy and appreciate poetry. Teachers can use musical poetry as a basis to develop eagerness from the learners and explain

to them how music is poetry, how they can use their analytical skills to analyse the meaning within the raps and rhymes.

The final strategy found to be effective in this study is the Jigsaw method. This strategy dominates in content subjects and is rarely used in language teaching. However, this study suggests that ESL teacher begin to employ this strategy in their literature teaching because it allows learners to take full responsibility for their learning. Learners help each other in groups to understand the meaning of the text. Most importantly, it encourages competence from the learners as they learn to be ‘experts’ of a certain aspect of analysis. Subsequently, learners grow in confidence and competence in poetry analysis.

7.3 Significance of the study

The decline of poetry teaching in ESL classrooms has grabbed the attention of numerous scholars and has prompted scholarship to depict the importance of poetry in a learner’s second language acquisition and its role in literature, (Khatib, 2011 & d’Abdon, 2015). This research has used two theoretical frameworks to explore and analyze strategies ESL teachers can employ to teach poetry in the ESL classrooms, particularly in rural contexts. Practical criticism has been used as a lens that teachers should use to teach poetry in their classes. Whilst Vygotsky’s theory of sociocultural learning has been used to show the relationship that exists between content and how learners learn and assimilate new knowledge.

Emphasis has been put on the fact that teachers should acknowledge that learners are not ‘empty vessels’ and do have prior knowledge of the content taught in class. It may not be correct and appropriate but that is why learners are in class, to reconstruct their existing knowledge by assimilating what is taught in class and relate it to their world. The focus on the words on the page (suggested by practical criticism) seeks to ensure that learners get the best meaning of the poem by scrutinizing every word on the page. The strategies provided in this study will help learners understand their learners better by firstly establishing their zones of proximal development (as stated in the theory of sociocultural learning). This will help the teacher to plan his/her lessons in a way that will fit the learner’s capabilities and abilities. Also, to those who have been using some of the strategies, but unconscious of them and how they can be best executed, will gain insight into the advantages and the disadvantages to them and how to best execute them to optimize learning.

This study concurs with the CAPS document (2011) in advocating for learner centered approaches to teaching and learning. Hence, it has ensured that all the key findings/strategies

revolve around a learner centered approach to teaching and learning. This encourages learners to take full responsibility for their learning. It encourages competence and high self-esteem in learners. This study sees poetry as a genre that should be used to enhance learner's second language acquisition because of its richness in language used: diction, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation marks, amongst other aspects. Poetry ensures that the reader understands how and why the author used those language features to clearly enunciate his/her point. Therefore, learners can learn much more about language using poetry. Furthermore, this study wishes to show that poetry is art and should be appreciated and enjoyed for its artistic nature. The researcher argues that learners need to be brought closer to poetry, and vice versa. This ensures that learners do not see poetry as a foreign phenomenon, but something they can relate to

Furthermore, to meet the objectives set out in this study and the outlined barriers to efficient and effective poetry teaching and learning, this study has critically examined strategies such as cognitive reading. This strategy pays attentive detail to poetry reading and identifies that comprehension in poetry is lost during the reading phase, (Richards, 1929). Therefore, this study suggests that ESL teachers focus using a practical criticism lens when reading a poem to ensure that a poem is read appropriately, correctly and meaningfully. The correct and appropriate application of these strategies promise to yield better results in poetry teaching and learning and provides a clear structure to approach critical appreciation of a poem.

7.4 Limitations

According to Theofanidis & Fountouki (2018, p. 156) "limitations of any particular study concern potential weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher's control and are closely related with the chosen research design...". One of the limitations of this study is that it cannot be generalised because its scope is for the South African ESL context in the Kwa-Zulu Natal province and focused particularly in rural contexts characterised by resource poverty.

7.5 Recommendations

- Given the fact that poetry teaching and learning such a dire problem, it demands further research. Salameh (2012, p. 41) argues that "poetry is one of the core courses of any faculty that teaches literature, and, therefore, it is important for instructors of literature to attempt to find the major problems students confront in studying this particular literary form".

- People who are interested in adding to the body of knowledge may research how teachers teach classes ranging from 40-60 average learners per class. A focus on the pedagogical problems of teaching such numbers in a class is required.
- Investigate the pre-conceived ideas and stereotypes attached to poetry and how to overcome such in ESL contexts.
- Investigate fourth year English major students' readiness to teach poetry in an FET /ESL classroom.
- Evaluate the efficacy and practicality of the modern unorthodox strategies in the teaching of poetry to an ESL class in South Africa.

7.6 Conclusion

Observing and learning about the decline of poetry teaching in ESL classrooms resulting from the stereotypical manifestations of the complexities, ambiguities and paradoxes contained in poetry gave warrant for this study. Using practical criticism as a lens for analyzing poetry, this study suggests that teachers may be able to use the meagre resources they have to teach poetry analysis effectively. This study also incorporated the sociocultural theory of learning to help teachers understand the way learners acquire knowledge the sociocultural learning theory clearly argues that learners are not 'empty vessels' and should not be treated as such. It argues that teaching and learning are a mutual process of cognitive dialogue. But it begins with invoking learner's existing knowledge of the subject matter, then constructing and reconstructing knowledge by exposing learners to more knowledge which they should assimilate and process with their existing knowledge.

This study, using the two theories (PC and SCL) aimed at exploring strategies for teaching poetry in English Second Language (ESL) classes in the South African context in the FET phase. The decline in poetry teaching is a result of many factors, including the fact that teachers continue to teach poetry as comprehension, and the teacher, particularly in rural contexts is the sole source of information.

The challenge to appreciating poetry also stems from the Eurocentric bias indicated in most ESL curriculums of poetry. However, there is a noticeable shift with more South African and African poets now appearing in poetry curriculums in schools. Even though the department of education took a step towards decolonizing poetry by prescribing more South African poems than western poets, it is unfortunate that it still remains patriarchal. Women are less represented

in the poets prescribed for teaching. This needs scrutiny if we are to achieve an egalitarian society.

This study found key strategies that should be used for teaching poetry in the ESL classrooms. Some of the key findings were the cognitive reading strategy, which deals with the complexities of reading. It emphasizes intense reading of the text which incorporates decoding, summarizing, questioning, and searching for important details about the text among other things. Another key strategy is multimodal teaching, which incorporates not only the digital resources but any modern, unorthodox resources of teaching. It uses acting and reciting poetry, teaching poetry with music, which brings poetry closer to the learners because they then begin to enjoy poetry for its artistic nature. It takes away the anxieties of analyzing the text by relating it to the learner's world. The key strategies in this study are valuable to poetry teaching because they focus on the learners, and using practical criticism, teachers are able to use the little resources they have to enhance their teaching and learning.

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Appendixes

Mr Mlungisi Vusumuzi Hlabisa (214536349)
School Of Education
Edgewood

Dear Mr Mlungisi Vusumuzi Hlabisa,

Protocol reference number: 00005092

Project title: Exploring strategies of teaching poetry to English Second Language learners in grade 12.

Exemption from Ethics Review

In response to your application received on 17 December 2019, your school has indicated that the protocol has been granted EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW.

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited.

For any changes that could result in potential risky an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited,


In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number,

PLEASE NOTE:

Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years,

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

Yours sincerely,



Prof Ansurie Pillay
Academic Leader Research
School Of Education



Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

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Certificate of English Language Editing

Thesis title: **EXPLORING STRATEGIES OF TEACHING POETRY TO ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) LEARNERS IN GRADE 12**

Author: **MLUNGISI VUSUMUZI HLABISA**

Date Issued: 20 October 2020

Editor: Y. Sheik (ESL Specialist and Consultant)