

Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the Pedagogical Content  
Knowledge and beliefs of teachers of English

By

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## Declaration

Submitted in fulfilment / partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters, in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, Mary Leeanne Laban declare that

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Supervisor Signature

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my six year old son, Alec Daniel Laban. You have given me the strength to complete this Masters. You have no idea how grateful I am for you. This will give both of us a better life, a brighter future and promises of new beginnings. Without even knowing it, you have been so patient. You are my driving force. I love you with every word of this dissertation, and every breath I take.

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## **Abstract**

The study has three purposes: 1) to understand the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of teachers teaching Shakespeare to second language learners in South Africa, 2) to establish the beliefs of these teachers, and 3) to identify the ways in which these beliefs influence the practice of teachers. The participants of this study were four secondary English teachers. Interviews and one lesson observation were conducted with each of the four teachers, in this qualitative research. Data collected from the interview transcripts was used to create I-poems by the researcher.

The PCK of the four teachers was analysed according to the cycle of Shulman (1987). The research revealed that the PCK of these teachers were at different developmental stages. It was evident that PCK increases through experience. Another imperative finding was that reflection and new comprehension, the last two stages of the cycle, were not always apparent with the teachers. It is significant that the steps of the cycle seemed to overlap.

The research concluded that the participating teachers were enthusiastic and great admirers of Shakespeare; however it was not always easy to translate their own enthusiasm into productive strategies of teaching. There was a definite challenge for teachers and learners. The socio- economic constraints of learners, the fact that most were not English home language speakers, coupled with the beliefs of teachers' influenced the development of the teachers' PCK.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

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## 1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the focus and purpose of the study. It also describes the research questions, and provides a brief overview of the key concepts and literature, as well as the methodology used.

## 1.2 Focus

The focus of this study is multifaceted. The first focus endeavours to describe the beliefs teachers of English have about the purpose of teaching Shakespeare. The second focus attempts to understand the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of teachers of English teaching Shakespeare in the senior phase to second language learners. Lastly, the influence of the beliefs of teachers on their PCK is analysed.

## 1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to better understand the beliefs and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of teachers teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. According to Shulman (1986, 1987) and Grossman (1990), PCK refers to those ideas, analogies, examples and explanations that teachers employ to create understanding in learners. The results will possibly have implications in providing an insight into the strategies teachers use to teach Shakespeare in South Africa, and how their beliefs influence their teaching strategies.

## 1.4 Rationale

### Personal Rationale

The motivation for this research can be attributed to my experience of teaching English, specifically Shakespeare, to learners in the senior phase. In my fourteen years of teaching, I taught ten of those years in a school where learners' home language was English. However, after relocating to a new school, I found myself teaching learners whose second language is English. I found myself in a predicament. I felt inadequate as a teacher, since many learners

could not grasp basic grammar rules of English but had to learn Shakespeare. I tried to fathom how teachers of English actually taught Shakespeare, a pronounced language of old, to second language learners. I needed to adapt my teaching strategies in an attempt to make Shakespeare understandable to learners. My beliefs of teaching Shakespeare changed. I felt frustrated. After much conversation with other teachers, I realized I was not in this quandary alone. I believe it is important to teach a range of genres to learners, but not overwhelm and overburden learners.

My mother died when I was two. My entire schooling career was a challenge, so I thought. My learners face some of the greatest challenges. Some of the following is without euphemism to show the extent of their plight. Many are child heads of households, both parents are deceased; there is little or no income. Children come to school hungry. Countless have not paid school fees. Parents of these children are domestic workers. Many of these children are parents themselves and will attend school when they can. I remember a learner who returned to school after three weeks because her school uniform was stolen off the line. I found my classroom empty. There was no furniture. Sometimes three children shared a desk and two to a chair. Textbooks are sparse or nonexistent. Drugs are a major issue. Learners choose when to attend class. Learners become frustrated when they lack understanding and go on to show resistance in their behaviour and attitudes. The existing ethos and culture of the school is learned quickly by those learners in lower grades. My school is not even in a rural area, but the constraints can be considered similar to rural schools.

Many learners at my new school struggle to speak English, and do not have basic skills required to further English at secondary level. Some learners joined the school in grade ten only to learn English as a first language at fifteen. I felt as if I was drowning, almost suffocating, because I was not equipped for such circumstances. The worst part was to ask them to be critical of texts that they could not decipher. I was just not winning the battle. Mass failure in tests on Shakespeare seemed to be the order of the day. I was doing an injustice to my learners. My teaching strategies and beliefs that I was accustomed to could not accommodate these learners.

Teaching and learning flowery language is especially difficult when one's first language is not English. The language of Shakespeare may create barriers to figurative understanding.

One is left bewildered and muddled by the language. If it is not read with the correct tone, or dramatized as Shakespeare imagined, then a mere read of the play becomes mundane and boring. As teachers, most of our time is dedicated to teaching literature, Shakespeare, yet it only counts for a mere twenty-five marks in the examination, which is equivalent to six percent of the total mark. Hence, I was interested in identifying the beliefs of teachers teaching Shakespeare and investigating their Pedagogical Content Knowledge.

### **Academic Rationale**

The second motivation for this study is the stark reality that there is a lack of research in South Africa on the teaching of Shakespeare to second language learners. The one study was conducted by Lemmer in 1998. Shakespeare has been part of the English home language curriculum for decades in South Africa, but research on its viability, teacher knowledge, strategies used and beliefs of teachers seems to be ignored or neglected in South African research.

Bransford, Brown and Cocking (2000) see teachers as the key to enhancing learning at schools. There are a host of strategies that teachers employ, but what is applicable and actually used in the Shakespeare classroom, in South Africa, needs to be explored.

This study seeks to add knowledge on PCK and the beliefs of teachers teaching Shakespeare, and to create awareness, as there is a lack of studies addressing the above two issues, specifically in South Africa.

## **1.5 Background to the Study**

The geographical location of the study is Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The four participants are from four secondary coeducational schools. The learner population in each school is more than 600 learners comprising of Black and Indian learners. The pass rate at these four schools was between 74–95% in 2014. The vast majority of these learners are from impoverished homes. Learners may receive social grants provided they are underage. The learners of three of these schools are affected by the rippling effects of HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy and substance abuse. Class sizes sometimes include more than 50 learners. Resources and financial constraints are challenges common to three of these schools. The fourth school is

based in the city and learners are not faced with the social factors prevalent to the other three schools. However, the fourth school does have learners who are much older, who have failed at other schools and attempt to complete their matric once again at this particular school.

According to Steyn et al (2011) and Ramphele (2012) historically disadvantaged schools have a shortage of classrooms, water facilities, sports facilities and toilets. Spren and Vally (2010) note that learners in South Africa from historically disadvantaged schools, are heads of households, and face hunger, poverty, violence and HIV/AIDS. Taylor (2012) also demonstrates that learners who attend historically disadvantaged schools are lagging by at least two years worth of education compared to their peers in historically advantaged schools. Taylor (2012) points out those learners born into underprivileged families face an educational disadvantage. He added that socio-economic status may determine educational outcomes, which determines the socio-economic status of the next generation.

According to the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (Department of Education, 2003), the purpose of studying literature for the English home language curriculum is to develop understanding and meaning of texts that learners would not ordinarily read. It is also to expose learners to the imaginative aspect of language and writing. Learners are able to provide comment on their personal interpretation. Another purpose of studying literature is for the learner to engage with the text on his own without being influenced by the teacher. Therefore, a learner derives meaning through conscious participation and involvement. The CAPS document also encourages a focus on dramatic and technical aspects of a play. This would include staging, movement, vocal expressions and facial expressions. It also encapsulates the idea that a drama should not be read and analysed as a novel.

The purpose of studying literature for the English first additional language (FAL CAPS) curriculum is not for learners to do literary interpretation, but to expose learners to genres of writing and how these genres are created. Learners would look on the surface at imagery, themes and symbols of a play. Therefore, there is a marked difference in the requirements of studying a text for English home language to studying a play for English first additional language. This clearly will have implications for learners who study English as a Home Language, but whose home language is not English.

## 1.6 Research Questions

1. What are the beliefs of teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?
2. What is the Pedagogical Content Knowledge of these teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?
3. In what ways do teachers' beliefs influence their practice in the teaching of Shakespeare?

## 1.7 Brief Review of Literature

This succinct review of literature provides an outline of Chapter two.

Shulman (1986) unfolded the understanding of teacher knowledge almost three decades ago. He infers the notion that PCK is knowledge that a teacher develops through experience and formal learning. Both Geddis (1993) and Shulman (1987) state that PCK is the knowledge which differentiates a teacher from a non-teaching expert. The teacher therefore draws on her PCK to change or convert subject matter or content matter and his or her own understanding into teaching that is constructive for his or her learners' understanding.

According to Shulman (1987), PCK includes teachers' knowledge of analogies, exemplars, explanations, demonstrations, strategies, and assessment techniques. This study explores the kinds of explanation teachers use to explain new vocabulary and historical contexts, and what resources (for example, films, different versions of the play), teaching strategies (for example, role play, group work) and assessment strategies are used.

Shulman (1986) notes that teachers ought to represent key ideas to their learners using their PCK. He also proposes several forms of representation of a concept. Teachers therefore find alternative ways to represent content or concepts to their learners in an understandable way. These representations lead to new understanding and comprehension. However, these forms or representation have not been identified specifically in teachers of English in South Africa.

Grossman (1990) provides research in *A Tale of Two Hamlets*, where she demonstrates the PCK of two teachers teaching *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. The research demonstrated that

different strategies employed by teachers can result in different outcomes, that is, learners' understanding. Empirical studies on PCK of teachers of English are lacking in South Africa.

Shoemaker (2013), like many other researchers, recommends the following teaching strategies to engage learners in Shakespeare: 1) modern translations of Shakespeare, 2) graphic novels, 3) watching the film of a Shakespeare play, 4) comprehension tests, and 5) learners keeping journals. South African teachers may find it challenging to employ the above mentioned teaching strategies because of financial and time limitations. A second consideration is that the purpose of teaching Shakespeare according to the national curriculum may differ to the purpose of teaching Shakespeare in other countries. Therefore, strategies suggested by Shoemaker (2013) may not envisage the needs and outcomes recommended by the South African Department of Education.

Studies on PCK of science and mathematics teachers have been explored. Examples of these include studies by Mohlouoa (2011) and Wu Peng (2013). Mohlouoa (2011), like Grossman (1990), illustrated the different strategies his participants used. However, one of the participants used an additional strategy, demonstrations, which enhanced learners' understanding. Mohlouoa (2011) also suggested that PCK develops with experience if the teacher is willing to reflect and improve.

In a dated, but one of the few relevant studies concerning the PCK of teachers, Lemmer (1998) carried out the Shakespeare School's Project in South Africa. In his research: *Upgrading the Study of Shakespeare in Southern African Secondary Schools: An Interim Report on the Schools' Text Project*, his study uncovered that numerous teachers concentrated on background information, made use of a reduction methodology and did not focus on learners' meaning and interpretation, but rather learners took copious notes on the play. According to Lemmer (1998), teachers showed a lack of confidence and methodological knowledge. This raises the question about how teachers of English can present Shakespeare without losing Shakespeare's wit, sarcasm, sexual innuendos and universal themes.

There is a definite language barrier that learners and teachers face in South Africa. This cannot be ignored. English is not necessarily the first or even second language of learners. In 2011, 87 785 learners sat to write the English home language matric examination (Umalusi,



2011). The Umalusi report reported that 80–85% of these learners were not first language English speakers. It is also disconcerting that only 53% passed the English home language examination papers. Taylor (2010) adds that learners who speak English as a second language clearly perform worse on average than their first language counterparts. There is virtually no research regarding what teachers of English in South Africa do to combat this critical issue when teaching Shakespeare to second language learners.

Personal knowledge advocated by Kelly (2006), Day and Gu (2010), and Bertram (2011), address the deep seated beliefs of teachers about the purpose of disciplinary knowledge. A teacher's subject knowledge and own beliefs, or personal subject construct are intertwined. Beliefs have a strong affective and evaluative element, according to Pajares (1992). Ball (2000) states that PCK can be affected positively or negatively, depending on a teacher's experiences and attitudes towards the subject. Therefore, a teacher's own experience of learning literature could impact on the way he or she teaches. I was interested to investigate and identify the beliefs of teachers of English teaching Shakespeare, and to see how this influences their PCK.

## **1.8 Methodological Approach**

This study falls within the interpretative paradigm. This paradigm enables gathering subjective data from the perspective of the participants. The idiographic is specific in my study. My intention was to seek deeper understanding from my participants. This is a hermeneutic study allowing for interpretation and understanding. My methodological approach is qualitative. This is based on the perceptions and meanings of a participant. Methods of data generation include: semi-structured interviews and observation. The data collection instruments include interview schedules and observation schedules. The data sources are field notes from lesson observation, audio recordings and verbatim transcripts of the interviews, and I-Poems which were compiled by statements extracted from the interviews.

Purposive and convenience sampling is used. My unit of analysis includes four English teachers from four secondary schools. The observations were conducted within the confines of the classroom. The interviews were conducted in places convenient and non-threatening for the participant. Creswell (2009) and Patton (2002) consider the natural setting to be a

major characteristic in qualitative research, where there is one-on-one interaction in the context of where participants interact with the problem. The researcher does not manipulate the phenomenon.

Participants differ in their experiences and number of years of teaching English. This is intended to provide a rich understanding of the development of PCK, how beliefs differ in terms of the number of years of experience and how beliefs influence PCK.

The purpose of qualitative research is to achieve insight into a specific phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as a situated activity comprising of interpretive practices. Patton (2002) suggests that qualitative researchers are involved deeply in the research process. Lofland and Lofland (1996) support this by claiming that to gain understanding of words, their meanings and social knowledge, one has to participate in the mind of another human being. This was my intention: to be engaged and absorbed in the research process in order to gain a clearer understanding into the beliefs of teachers of English and the phenomenon of PCK of teachers teaching Shakespeare, and how the former influenced the latter. This meant listening to the audio recordings numerous times. I had to analyse and re-analyse, as well as contact my participants should I have needed clarity on issues discussed in the interview.

### **Research Methods**

Semi-structured interviews were used to gain information in an attempt to achieve trustworthiness. Each participant was interviewed once. Semi-structured interviewing is a traditional research practice that has much academic insight and knowledge. Interviews can yield useful and fruitful information. Conversation is a part of life. The choice of interviews as a research method was to extract information from an interviewee and probe for further reflection. Building rapport with participants was important, as it added credibility during member-checking. Coding of direct experience through interviews was a manageable task. The source or interviewee can always be a point of reference.

Poetry is an arts-based research practice where it serves as a metaphor to rebuild experiences and allows for denotation. This research practice is an imaginative and communicative methodological tool which includes intuition. Poems that derive from research are extremely condensed. According to Furman, Langer and Taylor (2010), poems present data in a

compacted and consumable way. Therefore, this new research practice was selected. A few words can express emotions and description. Poetry centres on poignant and reminiscent aspects of existence. Leavy (2009) suggests that poetry captures essentials of social reality.

In my study, the poems were not written by the teachers, but were created using data from the interviews. These poems are called I-poems and were created using statements that participants made in the interview. Every sentence of the interviewee that began with “I” was extracted and used to create the I-Poem. This was based on Gilligan et al. (2003), who used I-Poems to study the voices of women. Therefore, the researcher could view the many facets of each participant and their self-image becomes apparent. The data from these poems provided deeper meaning into what participants believe in teaching Shakespeare. These poems are the actual words of participants. It allowed for the presentation and revelation of negative or positive beliefs.

Observations provided information on participants’ PCK and the resources and strategies that were used to teach Shakespeare. It also provided insight into whether participants’ beliefs and actual practice correlated. Observations offered a holistic understanding of teachers’ PCK. Each participant was observed once. The purpose of observation was used to determine the elements of PCK such as explanations, resources and strategies participants used in teaching Shakespeare. Another function of employing observation in this study was to verify the contextual factors and nonverbal language of the participants and to ascertain if teachers’ beliefs correlate with responses in the interview.

## **1.9 Structure of the thesis**

Chapter one highlights the background to the research and provides the research questions, research objectives and implications of study. This chapter also offers a brief summary on the literature review and methodology used.

Chapter two explains in detail the current literature available on PCK and the influence of beliefs of teachers on their teaching. The chapter focuses on PCK according to Shulman (1986, 1987), informing this study. The contribution of other researchers on PCK is highlighted to provide a holistic view on it.

Chapter three presents a description of the methodology used, which includes the research design, sampling, research tools, data collection, analysis and trustworthiness. It also includes input from other researchers on these aspects.

Chapters four and five concentrate on the findings from the analysis and interpretation of data from the interviews and observations. It also includes I-Poems created by the researcher using the interview transcripts.

Chapter six reflects on the research, provides recommendations and a conclusion to the study.

## **1.10 Conclusion**

This chapter provides the blueprint of the study. It offers an insight into the chapters that follow, providing a brief description of what the study entails. Chapter two addresses the literature around the research questions, providing existing and available information, empirical studies and research.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

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## 2.1 Introduction

The initial chapter describes the research that was undertaken. This current chapter presents an in-depth literature review, critically viewing available research on the teaching of Shakespeare in South Africa to English second language learners. I endeavour to identify the beliefs of teachers teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. The second aim of this study is to describe the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of teachers of English teaching Shakespeare. I reiterate that PCK refers to those ideas, analogies, examples and explanations that teachers employ to create understanding in learners. Lastly I attempt to ascertain if the beliefs of teachers influence the PCK of these teachers.

## 2.2 South African Studies on Shakespeare

Studies on Shakespeare including those of teaching and learning Shakespeare are vast. However, studies defining and understanding the PCK of teachers of English teaching Shakespeare is limited in South Africa.

Lemmer (1998) carried out the Shakespeare School's Project in South Africa nearly twenty years ago. In his research: *Upgrading the Study of Shakespeare in Southern African Secondary Schools: An Interim Report on the Schools' Text Project*, it was revealed that many teachers focused on the historical information of Shakespeare for English, Home Language. However, teachers did not concentrate on learners' meaning and understanding, but rather on them taking copious notes on the play. According to Lemmer (1998), many teachers did not commence with a passion or an appreciation of Shakespeare; teachers revealed a lack of confidence and methodological knowledge. This raises the question about how do teachers of English present Shakespeare without losing Shakespeare's wit, sarcasm, sexual innuendos and universal themes to second language learners. Lemmer (1998) in his study looked at teaching strategies but did not label these as PCK.

A second study by Lemmer (2001) shows that many learners are not engaging or inspired by Shakespeare and that once learners leave the parameters of school, they choose not to delve

into further study of Shakespeare. In his article entitled “Shakespeare among South African Children” he expounds the idea that teachers still face difficulties teaching Shakespeare even though new editions of the plays are available. According to Lemmer (2001) these new editions are available but not accessible to majority of schools because of financial constraints. Teachers according to Lemmer (2001) suggested that use of old copies of the play led to a negative attitude of learners towards Shakespeare. He referred to these old versions of Shakespeare’s plays as past their “sell-by date” (pg 82).

Lemmer (2001) reflects that teachers found it difficult to grasp the rich imagery and complicated examination questions. He added that yet another teacher, from a Johannesburg township, also complained about teaching Shakespeare which she found was inaccessible to her learners. She had made a conscious decision not to allow her learners to study the play because they were English second language learners. This particular teacher also began with the audio book, summary and line-by-line explanation of Shakespeare. Her goal was to prepare her learners for grade twelve examinations since a high pass rate was valued at her school in terms of monetary gain. This style of teaching was reiterated by another teacher in the article.

Lemmer (2001) thereafter commented on one of his postgraduate interns, Monique, who completed her teaching practice at an ex-white school. Learners were described as passive in learning Shakespeare. The teacher’s aim at that particular school was to complete the play. The learners’ performance of the play was limited to reading aloud in class. Again, the teaching strategies that were used by that teacher included notes, themes and characterization. An emphasis was placed on the final matric examination. Jonas (2014) also argues that pedagogical approaches should engage with the learner’s background and context. He also adds that examination questions should allow learners to demonstrate their understanding by applying their own contexts to relevant themes. However, he comments that the examination on Shakespeare does not truly search for the learner’s opinion but a construed or imposed idea of themes and characters. Therefore the teacher does not encourage the learner’s opinion but a demonstration of prescribed answers.

Lemmer (2001) does reflect on successful teaching strategies that enhanced learning. These effective and innovative strategies were implemented in schools where workshops had been held or teachers were well-resourced with new learning material. Examples of these were using the play simply as a performance script. Learners were required to perform scenes and the mark allotted was included in the June Examination mark. Questions in the June examination included learners to imagine they were directors and to plan the theatric elements of a particular scene.

Lemmer (2001) points out that there is a need for teachers to be workshopped in terms of new skills, enthusiasm and awareness on teaching Shakespeare. He recommends “Viva Shakespeare’ and other such workshops that enhances the teaching and learning of Shakespeare. Lemmer (2001) also requests that Shakespeare be taught in a communicative and active way where learning is learner-centred and learners are physically active. He also surmises that there is a need for change in teachers’ attitudes and approaches to teaching Shakespeare to tackle the monotony and unresponsiveness of learners.

Distiller (2009) like Lemmer (2001) also highlights that there is a lack of teaching technologies and resources to foster teaching and learning of Shakespeare by the teacher. Distiller (2003) is in agreement with Lemmer (2001) that plays written by Shakespeare should be modernized (pg 230). She argues that Shakespeare is historically (in terms of language and cultural vocabulary) inaccessible to learners, especially, second language learners of English.

### **2.3 Language, Learning and Achievement**

Ernst-Slavit, Moore and Maloney (2002) conducted a Canadian study that showed that learners who are taught in their own home language achieved 37% better on standardized tests. The authors further add that many learners perform poorly in the matriculation examinations because the medium of instruction and assessment is not in their mother tongue. Hattie (2009), and McCaffrey, Lockwood, Koretz, Louis and Hamilton (2004), have shown that learners’ performance and motivation is impacted by their learning opportunities.

It is essential to understand the existing language barrier of many learners in South Africa who are not reading Shakespeare in their home language. For many learners, English is their second or third language. This language barrier issue is further demonstrated by the research undertaken by the University of Witwatersrand on behalf of the Department of Education. In this research, *The Status of the Language of Learning and Teaching in schools* (2007), 81.4% of grade twelve learners studied English as their home language. The research also revealed that a mere 7% of these learners were actually native English speakers. Research is reflecting the imbalance in language acquisition. Thus, the vast majority of learners who are taking English as home language are not mother tongue English speakers. This has implications for their ability to engage with the requirements of the home language curriculum and their achievements.

The Umalusi report (2011) indicated that English home language papers from 2008 to 2011 were more difficult compared to papers set in other official languages (isiXhosa, isiZulu, Setswana, Sesotho, Sepedi, Tshivenda, isiNdebele, Siswati and Xitsonga). The report also stated that in these papers there was a lack of appreciation and evaluation questions which would require personal responses from learners. Since 1910, English had been an official language of South Africa. According to Prinsloo (2002), there was an adjustment in 1996 that included the other official languages. The Umalusi report (2011) reflected that in 2007, 81.4% of South African grade twelve learners opted to write their matric examinations in English. This was evident in 2011, where 87 785 learners sat to write the English home language matric examination. However, according to the report, 80–85% of these learners were not first language English speakers. It is also disconcerting that only 53% passed the English home language examination papers.

The learning opportunities presented by teachers of English have not been highlighted in research specific to South Africa. Possible exposure of learning opportunities, a key feature of PCK, is lagging in South African educational research. There is much research and statistics available on the annual matric examinations. However, these remain statistics, not probing into what and how high school teachers are teaching.



## 2.4 Teacher Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

The research on teacher knowledge can be traced back almost thirty years ago from Shulman (1986), who initiated the research on understanding of teacher knowledge. PCK is a term coined by Shulman (1986, 1987). It is the knowledge that teachers draw on in order to transform subject matter and their understanding into instruction viable for their learners' understanding. Teachers thus employ productive strategies and instructional tools to enhance teaching of a specific subject matter.

Shulman (1987) and Geddis (1993) make reference to PCK as distinctive to the teaching profession. This particular knowledge can distinguish a teacher from a non-teaching expert. The dimensions of PCK incorporate analogies, exemplars, explanations, demonstration, strategies, assessment techniques, among others that teachers use in order to make a particular subject topic accessible to learners. Thus this study explores the PCK of English teachers teaching Shakespeare, focusing on what kinds of analogies, explanations, resources (for example, films, different versions of the play), teaching strategies (for example, role play) and assessment strategies that are used.

A teacher's PCK includes attention to aspects or sections that are difficult to learn by learners. PCK takes into account a learner's social and personal background. Teachers therefore restructure lessons accordingly to accommodate any misconceptions so that fruitful learning takes place. It does not seem presumptuous to state that PCK increases as teachers increasingly make use of appropriate strategies for clearer understanding.

Grossman's (1990) research, *A Tale of Two Hamlets* demonstrates the PCK of two teachers teaching *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. Each teacher employed a different strategy and the end result was evident by the learners' understanding. The first participant spent seven weeks teaching *Hamlet*. His learning outcomes were textual analysis, links between themes and for learners to have an appreciation of the language. His teaching strategy included a word by word analysis and a focus on themes and language. His assessment strategies included an analysis and performance of a soliloquy, an essay paper on any theme prevalent in the play, as well as a formal examination on *Hamlet*. The second participant used less than three weeks to teach the play. His learning outcomes included learners identifying scenarios and themes from *Hamlet* and relaying it to their own lives. By learners drawing on their own experiences

he hoped this would create interest in the play. This participant provided learners with summaries and then allowed them to watch ‘snip bits’ from the play. He held class discussions with his learners and continued to refer to learners’ personal experiences and the themes of the play. The learners did not read the play, however, but completed an assessment task on the relevance of themes or characteristics in *Hamlet* which were evident in society today. The text was then used for learners to find evidence to support their arguments. This participant expressed that his learners reacted with enthusiasm in learning Shakespeare.

Both these participants had different notions on the purpose of teaching Shakespeare. Their knowledge and beliefs of teaching Shakespeare stemmed from their own learning, tertiary education and practical experience. However, the second participant had completed a course on teacher education, specifically on teaching English. This suggests that PCK is influenced by many aspects, including beliefs and formal learning. Secondly, PCK develops as a teacher is exposed to a variety of sources, be it practical or formal. Each teacher’s PCK is unique and develops inimitably. However, these teachers in Grossman’s study were teaching English home language learners. Empirical studies on PCK of teachers of English teaching second language learners are absent in South Africa.

According to Gess-Newsome and Lederman (1999), and Feiman-Nemser (1983), the more experienced the teacher the more likely the increase in PCK. It appears that teachers become better equipped to deal with any difficulties or challenges faced by learners and then apply a strategy or representation accordingly. A teacher’s educational background, personal background, teaching practices and experiences influence his or her PCK. PCK grows with experience.

Shoemaker (2013) looked at five approaches or strategies that teachers could employ to teach Shakespeare. He, like many other researchers, recommends the following teaching strategies to engage learners in Shakespeare: 1) modern translations of Shakespeare, 2) graphic novels, 3) watching the film of a Shakespearean play, 4) comprehension tests, and 5) learners keep journals. However, these strategies may be difficult for South African teachers to employ as there are financial and time constraints. Financially, many South African schools are feeling the pinch where the school budget does not allow for the purchase of new resources or even new text books. Secondly, a teacher is constrained or governed by time in that there are other

aspects of the English curriculum that need to be covered besides Shakespeare. Therefore, a teacher may not be able to make use of new resources or teach at the depth that he or she would like to because there is just not sufficient time. It is also essential to impress the idea that different countries do not necessarily teach Shakespeare with the same purpose or outcomes. This implies that not all strategies are viable, especially in a country like South Africa, where the purpose of teaching Shakespeare is different and where there is a marked language barrier. Therefore, it would be interesting to uncover the teaching strategies that are used in the South African context.

Joyti Chandegra, a secondary school teacher in the United Kingdom, recommends in an Oxford University podcast (2013) that teachers teaching Shakespeare need to be creative. She also recommends that teachers make learners aware that it is a play and not a novel that they are studying. Chandegra makes use of song and rap in her classroom where she asks learners to identify metaphors and other imagery that modern artists, like Tu Pac, use. She then begins a discussion on how this is also used by Shakespeare. She makes use of modern film, especially with unenthusiastic learners. However, she does not allow her learners to watch an entire film, as the film offers a modern day interpretation. Chandegra also employs the use of the internet to find clips of what other learners' comments are about Shakespeare. She finds that her learners enjoy listening and watching other learners. She also provides suitable links for learners to watch on their own, since learners are not always forthcoming with their misunderstandings. Lastly, Chandegra suggests that teachers relate a theme to lived experiences of learners. For instance, she had a learner who was disinterested in *Romeo and Juliet*. However, when she questioned him about his girlfriend, his comments gave him a better understanding of how Romeo felt towards Rosaline earlier on in the play.

It is vital, when reading Shakespeare, for learners to have understanding of relevant themes and plot. Otherwise a textbook lesson rendition will fall on deaf ears or could lead to rote learning. Learners may struggle to link themes and analogies critically to reality. According to Shulman (1986), teaching is not merely presenting information or knowledge, but it is where a teacher fosters learning, resulting in understanding and meaning. Alonzo et al. (2012) equally recommend the use of everyday experiences and real-life examples as a teaching strategy to foster understanding in learners.

Goodnough (2006) conducted a study entitled *Enhancing Pedagogical Content Knowledge through self-study: an exploration of problem based learning*. Park and Oliver (2008) also carried out a study called *Revisiting the Conceptualisation of Pedagogical Content Knowledge*. Goodnough (2006), and Park and Oliver (2008) agree with Shulman (1986) that, firstly, teachers should have vast knowledge on how to use a range of instructional material. In 2015 this would include the internet, YouTube and other social media where resources can be obtained. When Lemmer (1987) conducted his research, these modern tools or resources were limited.

Park and Oliver (2008) assert the idea that questions from learners strengthen a teacher's PCK. This suggests that PCK grows as a result of interaction with learners. As a teacher interacts with his or her learners the teacher is made aware of possible misunderstandings or common mistakes made by them. Therefore, teachers are able to provide clarity and remedy the mistakes. They also come to a conclusion that verbal and non-verbal communication by learners influences a teacher's strategies. This reiterates Shulman's (1987) concept '*wisdom of practice*', where teachers develop their knowledge through experience and practice, as long as there is conscious and structured reflection on their experience. According to Armstrong (2009) teachers with sufficient teaching experience and who have specialized in their subject tend to significantly contribute to the overall performance of their learners.

A teacher with strong PCK is able to draw on strategies and resources that make learning effective and accessible. This is further reiterated by Koehler (2011). Shulman (1986, 1987, 1992) states that effective teachers should complete six actions, or steps, and that these actions develop a teacher's PCK.



**Figure 1: Shulman's (1986, 1987) six actions required to develop a teacher's PCK**

Firstly, teachers must have understanding of their content and be able to relay it to learners in a lesson. Shulman (1986) expresses it so: "... the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others" (p. 9). It is ineffective if a teacher is an expert in a subject but cannot transfer that content to learners (NPEAT, 2003; von Frank, 2008). Kind (2009) recommends a good knowledge of the subject matter.

The second step requires the teacher to consider contextual, social and biographical factors. These factors may include the learner's age, gender, socio-economic circumstances and culture. Teachers are able to draw on learner's prior knowledge. An example of teachers drawing on learners' prior knowledge is where learners participate in a discussion sharing their views on love, revenge, and the role parents have in their child's relationship. This discussion takes place prior to reading the play *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare. Learners, therefore, can see how the relevance of their opinions is evident in *Romeo and Juliet*. The teacher, therefore, activates prior learning to make learners eager to read the play and be able to understand the play. The teacher uses appropriate analogies for learners. The role of the

teacher of English changes as the nature of the learner changes. There are discipline issues with unwilling learners refusing to cooperate. Labaree (2000) suggests that teachers, unlike other professionals, are forced to deal with matters and readjust according to the situation. Labaree (2000), therefore, promotes teaching approaches that are suitable to specific learners. Grossman (1990) advocates teachers adapt their knowledge or their content to the school context and learners. The school location, setting, needs, expectations and departmental protocol are taken into consideration. Kind (2009) reflected on studies that show the importance of classroom experience, and refers to studies showing noteworthy changes on the PCK of teachers. When teachers are placed in a practical situation they begin to take cognisance of the needs of learners.

Teachers, in the third step, should have viable instructional strategies, a means to communicate with learners that allows for understanding. This includes a range of teaching strategies that facilitate learning. The teacher here also focuses on the management of the class. In the fourth step of the cycle, the teacher is able to informally and formally assess the learners and adjust the teaching strategies and use new explanations if necessary. Goodnough (2006), and Park and Oliver (2008), are also in agreement with Shulman (1986) concerning the need for a teacher to have an understanding of assessment and assessment tools. This is also demonstrated in an American study called the Horizon Research, Inc (HRI), which was conducted by Smith and Banilower (2008). They suggest that teachers should be able to pose questions to learners, as well as answer questions posed to them by learners. In the assessment programme provided by the Department of Education in South Africa the formal assessment tasks are transparent. These include essays and contextual questions based on Shakespeare. Shakespeare is tested formally through these means three times a year. This would include the mid-year, third-term and end-of-year examinations. Learners have a choice in answering the essay question or the contextual question. However, the more informal assessments (question and answer, role-play, discussion, quizzes) have not been scrutinised and evaluated. Yet, informal assessments such as teachers posing questions to learners probably occur unnoticed.

The penultimate step is where the teacher reflects on their practice, which should lead to improvement and change in his or her teaching strategies. As Ornstein (2000) suggests, teachers are able to improve if they consciously reflect on their practice. Finally, the teacher

has new comprehension, learning and adjusting his or her teaching. Therefore, PCK increases as teachers become experts. Park and Oliver (2008) recommend the need for a teacher to use learner misunderstandings to foster understanding. The misunderstandings will help guide better instructional strategies to avoid misconceptions. If common mistakes are identified and rectified through research, there could be a rippling improvement in the understanding of Shakespeare. This is also highlighted by Alonzo et al. (2012), and Entwistle (2009). According to Entwistle (2009), the teacher should place himself or herself in the learner's shoes and envisage what it is like not to understand, and then reflect on instructional strategies that would facilitate understanding. Grossman, Schoenfeld and Lee (2005) are in agreement with this. PCK is the knowledge that a teacher draws on so that what is unknown for the learner becomes known, misunderstanding leads to comprehension and the inexperienced become trained.

Park and Oliver (2008) state there are two types of reflection. The first is reflection-in-action. This is when a teacher suddenly is faced with a challenge while teaching which requires immediate action. The second type of reflection is reflection-on-action, where the teacher takes the necessary action after the lesson. These two types of reflection develop a teacher's PCK according to a particular context in different ways.

Shulman's cycle seems like a trial and error method where a teacher improves constantly by completing this six step cycle. Over time, learners, contextual factors and needs of learners change. Therefore, PCK can be seen to develop on a learning continuum where the teacher is able to draw from experience in a conscious manner. An example would be when a teacher teaches the same lesson to various classes in the same grade. By the third lesson the teacher is able to reflect and select what works and what does not. Teachers adapt the content to suit the learners. Basically, teachers learn to modify from past experiences and this has an undulate effect on future teaching. Teachers are able to adjust their teaching practices and become well equipped in time.

Studies on PCK of science and mathematics teachers have been explored, however, there is less research in the languages. Examples of this include studies on science by Mohlouoa (2011) and Peng (2013). In the study conducted by Mohlouoa (2011), there were common strategies that two teachers used: lecture method, diagrams, explanations, discussions, oral

questioning, graphs and text books. However, one of the participants used demonstrations, which enhanced understanding. In this study Mohlouoa (2011) suggests that PCK develops with experience if the teacher is willing to reflect and improve. A teacher's PCK helps him or her to understand the challenges of learners and be able to use time wisely to ensure that understanding takes place. Teachers are consciously devising or using strategies for effective learning (Shulman, 1986, p. 9 &10).

## **2.5 Teacher's Beliefs on the Purpose of Teaching Shakespeare**

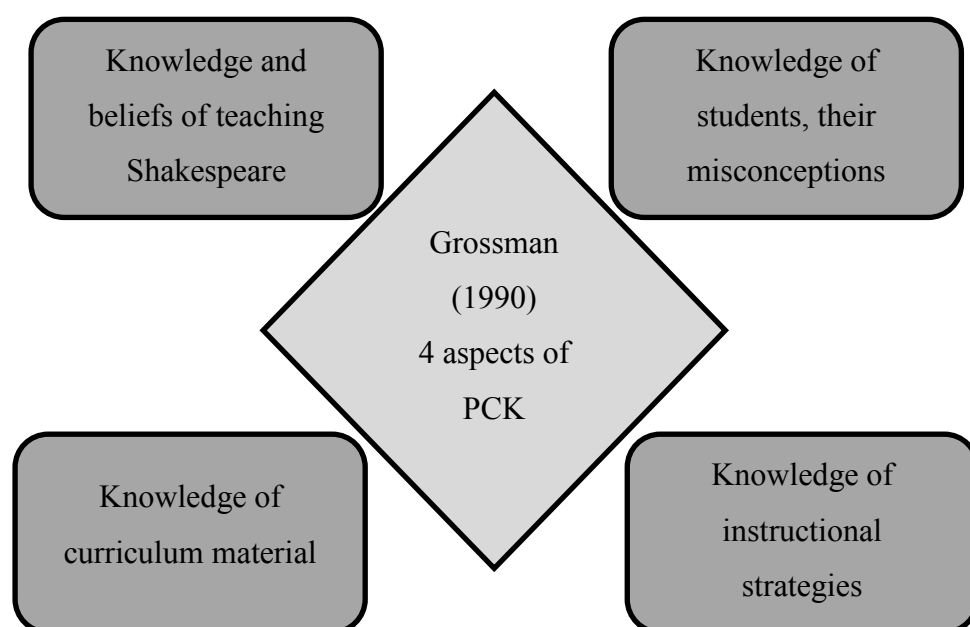
Personal knowledge, as described by Kelly (2006), Day and Gu (2004), and Bertram (2011), encompasses the deep seated beliefs of teachers about the nature of disciplinary knowledge and the purpose of learning that knowledge. A teacher's subject knowledge and own beliefs, or personal subject construct are intertwined. Beliefs have a strong affective and evaluative element (Pajares, 1992). According to Ball (1996), PCK can be affected positively or negatively depending on a teacher's experiences and attitudes towards the subject. Therefore, a teacher's own experience of learning literature could impact on the way he or she teaches. Park and Oliver (2008), and Goodnough (2006), put forward the notion that teachers' beliefs about their teaching direct their choice of instructional strategies and materials, and thereby influence their PCK. Davidowitz and Rollnick (2011) also show that beliefs of teachers impact on their PCK.

Davidowitz and Rollnick (2011) suggest that the beliefs of a teacher have a bearing on the teacher's knowledge. They argue that beliefs shape personal views or theories as well as individual practice. These beliefs motivate a teacher's actions in his or her classroom. They strengthen the way in which a teacher teaches. A teacher's belief about the purpose of learning particular subject matter influences his or her practice. For example, a teacher who believes that an in-depth study of a Shakespeare play is important is more likely to enlist detailed analysis as part of his or her teaching strategy.

Grossman (1990) clarifies PCK into four central components. These include: 1) the knowledge and beliefs about the purposes of teaching a specific subject matter; 2) knowledge of students, their understanding and misconceptions of a specific topic; 3) knowledge of curriculum materials available for teaching a specific subject matter; and 4) knowledge of instructional strategies and representations for teaching particular topics. Grossman (1990)



has added to Shulman's criteria of PCK by including knowledge and beliefs of a teacher about the purposes of teaching a particular subject matter.



**Figure 2: Grossman's (1990) four central components of PCK**

The identification and study of these beliefs could provide insight on how these beliefs influence a teacher's PCK. The domain of teacher's beliefs, which is missing from Shulman, could also provide details into how teachers of English think and feel about teaching Shakespeare to second language learners.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides a close view on current literature available on the PCK of teachers and their beliefs. However, the evidence and research is not specific to the domain of teaching Shakespeare. It appears as if research on the PCK of teachers of English teaching Shakespeare is lacking. My research questions still need answering, which leads to the next chapter on the methodology used in investigating the PCK and the beliefs of teachers.

# Chapter 3: Research Methodology

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## 3.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two the literature on Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and beliefs of teachers is reviewed. This chapter presents the research methodology and data gathering methods used in this study to illustrate PCK and the beliefs of teachers teaching Shakespeare to second language learners.

## 3.2 Research Paradigm

This study falls under the interpretative paradigm. This paradigm enables gathering subjective data from the perspective of the participants. This study was conducted in a naturalistic setting without any manipulation. Creswell (2005) considers the natural setting to be a major characteristic in qualitative research, where there is one-on-one interaction in the context of where participants interact with the problem. Patton (2001) also advocates that in qualitative research, use of the naturalistic approach helps to understand an issue or problem in a specific setting, where the researcher does not manipulate the phenomenon. In this research, participants' context refers to their specific classrooms where teaching of Shakespeare to English home language learners as well as to second language learners takes place. The observations occur within the confines of the school environment, that is, the classroom.

The idiographic is specific to this study; hence, the research is based on four individuals. The intention is to seek deeper understanding from the participants. This is a hermeneutic study allowing for interpretation and understanding. The methodological approach is qualitative. This is based on the perceptions and meanings of a participant. Methods of data generation include: semi-structured interviews (Appendix 4), and observation of lessons (Appendix 6). The data collection instruments include interview schedules, *Listening Guide* by Carol Gilligan and observation schedules. The data sources are field notes from classroom observation, audio recordings and written transcripts of interviews, and I-Poems created by the researcher from the interview transcripts.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The purpose of qualitative research is to achieve insight into a specific phenomenon. This study explores the PCK of teachers as well as their beliefs about teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as a situated activity comprising of interpretive practices. Patton (2001) suggests that qualitative researchers are involved deeply in the research process. The above mentioned researchers are supported by Lofland and Lofland (1996), claiming that to gain understanding of words, their meanings and social knowledge, one has to participate in the mind of another human being. The aim of this research is to establish how the four teachers make meaning of Shakespeare and impart this knowledge to learners effectively. The use of the data collected aims to shed light on these teachers' beliefs on Shakespeare and how this influences their teaching. The intention of collecting and collaborating data is to draw analyses on these four teachers' perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings, experiences and teaching strategies of Shakespeare in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon. The specific phenomenon is the teaching of Shakespeare to second language learners. Niewenhuis (2007) recommends qualitative research which seeks to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles.

### **3.4 Sampling**

Convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling allows the researcher the freedom to select participants who are also easily available and accessible. The time and cost involved was minimal. There was only one criterion that the participant be a teacher of English in the Further Training and Education phase. Unfortunately, the request for teachers to participate in this study was much harder to achieve than anticipated. The intended participants from the surrounding area were not obliging for various reasons. Some of the intended participants were either unavailable while others were unwilling to participate due to personal and professional responsibilities. Therefore, the location of participants had to be broadened. The small sample size enables the generation of indepth data, but makes it difficult to generalise about the wider population. Convenience sampling can lead to either over or under representation of a group. However, due to constraints, convenience sampling was employed by the researcher which means that generalizations about teachers of English teaching Shakespeare cannot be made.

### 3.5 Research Participants

The research participants were four English teachers from four secondary schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The four schools are co-educational, with a population ranging from 600 to over a thousand learners. These participants ranged in the number of years of their experience and in their qualifications; the sample reflects a cross-section of novice to expert. The tables below describe the teachers' qualifications and school contexts.

Name	Teaching experience of Shakespeare	Qualifications	Majors	Grades currently teaching
Betty	31	Bachelor of Education	English and History	11, 12
Anne	1	Bachelor of Education Bachelor of Commerce Bachelor of Commerce-Honours	Business and Marketing Management	8,10,12
Violet	29	Bachelor of Education Masters in Education Diploma in PC Diploma in Media	History and Human Science Movement	8–12
Amy	11	Higher Diploma in Education Honours in Science Education Bachelor of Arts Honours in African Literature	Zoology and Biology	9, 12

**Table 1: Biographical details of the four teachers**

Participant	Number of learners in school	Staff size	Resources	Matric Pass rate in 2014 (%)	Matric pass rate in English 2014 (%)
Betty	1432	60	Textbooks, paper, data projector, white boards, internet	93	98
Anne	800	19	Textbooks. Paper, data projector, audio book	74	93
Violet	1047	34	Resources scarce: some text books (not for every learner) Paper is available when there is money.	61	74
Amy	620	24	Textbooks, projectors, screens, audio book	89.2	88

**Table 2: School size, resources and National Senior Certificate pass rate**

### **3.6 Data Generating Methods**

Multiple sources of data provide credibility and validity to qualitative research, according to Creswell (2005). Therefore, this research employs the use of interviews and lesson observations of participants' narratives to generate data. These research practices are valuable in this study to expectantly ascertain and generate rich and important data. Each research practice has its own merit and value as well as challenges. The description of each method follows. In describing each method the advantages and disadvantages are established and evaluated.

#### **3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Fontana and Frey (2005) explain interviews as taking place through conversation between persons which are relational in nature. Conversation is a part of life. Interviews are conducted in a qualitative inquiry where the interviewee is understood on his or her own conditions and language. In this research the language of the interviewee was encouraged during the interview process in an attempt to derive meaning from lived experiences and intellectual procedures. Brenner (2006) also describes the semi-structured interview as where participants are understood on their terms in an interactional relationship between interviewee and interviewer.

The interviews were conducted in an hour or less. The interview schedule is included as Appendix Three. Neutral places were used to conduct the interviews where participants felt comfortable and non-threatened. The convenience of the participants was of most importance to ensure they felt comfortable and it was necessary to have a quiet place to conduct each interview. The interview setting was different for each participant. The first interview was conducted at a quiet restaurant during the school holidays. The setting was close to the participant's home and enabled her to meet without any undue stress or inconvenience. The second interview was conducted at the participant's home. The third participant agreed to be interviewed in her classroom during her free lesson and the lunch break. The last interview was done by means of Skype. It was most challenging to secure a time or setting for this interviewee. The solution was suggested by the participant to conduct the interview through Skype.

Seidman (2006) suggests that interviews should be casual, fluid conversations steered by a fundamental topic of inquiry. Questions are open-ended to elicit ‘stories’. It is an ongoing process of creating meaning. According to Diamond (2007), interviews generate a holistic depiction allowing us to understand a larger context. Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) also concluded that interviews allow for a transaction of views and gives us insight into an understanding of how one views the world. Thus, interviews in this research allowed for the exploration of PCK and the beliefs of participants teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. The interviews aimed to seek and supply information, an ongoing process of making meaning.

The interview questions focused on teaching practices and strategies used in the classroom as well as personal beliefs and reflections on Shakespeare. Participants were encouraged to express what they did and why they did so. The interview schedule for this research was scrutinised and re-evaluated by the researcher, supervisor and colleagues before an attempt to interview any participant. Questions selected aimed to promote the interviewee to converse discursively on the research topic. The interview schedule was initially piloted with a fellow colleague. Piloting the interview helped to eliminate questions that were monotonous or repetitive. Question that evoked ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses were also removed. The time of the actual participants was valuable, therefore it was important to ask pertinent questions that would yield as much information as possible within an hour.

The study tried to encapsulate the fundamental types of question recommended by researchers. An excellent example is the use of the grand question: the opening question that solicits the interviewee to give a broad account on a particular topic. It is the all-purpose starter and best known question type. Interviewers are advised, according to Brenner (2006), to begin with big questions and then to detailed questions. The first few questions intend to be influential tools in shaping how the interviewee constructs responses. This setup enabled the interviewee to set the tone and direction of the interview. It is only the beginning question of the interview journey which commences the probing. Thereafter, the interview schedule probes deeper to elicit responses from the interviewee.

The essential aim of interviews is to attain detail and capture information about a participant. Therefore, it is vital for the interviewer to remain the objective outsider who builds the

interview. According to Patton (2000), descriptive questions should be used to access the interviewees' knowledge and proficiency. The interviewee should speak more and the interviewer should listen. These interviews made use of longer questions to evoke longer responses. Questions that began with: how, why, when, what, needed to be clear to gain information. It was imperative to remain neutral throughout the interview process. Particular responses could not be praised or frowned upon, as this could influence the interviewee to respond either in the way she thought the interviewer wished or, possibly antagonistically, should views of interviewer and interviewee differ.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) recommend follow-up questions that aim to clarify meaning. Responses were clarified through probing. Clarification probes checked the interviewees' understanding about what they had been told for rectification and amplification. Encouragement probes were also used, such as "tell me more" or "interesting" to obtain further detail. Pausing or silent probes allowed the interviewee time to consider and to reflect. The aim of the pauses encouraged participants to take their time in being reflective.

Interviews were recorded with a voice-recorder. This was an essential and useful tool to record the data. The voice-recorder was switched on instantly to avoid technical errors. It was necessary to keep in mind that a voice-recorder can be intrusive and intimidating. Hence, it was left on the table without interference of constant inspection of the recording. Questions and clarifications were scribed and addressed towards the latter part of the interview. This strategy was employed to avoid disturbing the interviewee's thoughts and reflection. Even though the interviews were recorded, it was important to listen attentively in case probing was needed. It was a necessity to make the interviewee feel validated.

Interviews allowed for information to be gained where it is probable that validity, reliability and trustworthiness could be achieved. It is a traditional research practice that has much academic insight and knowledge. Due to the limitation of the study, each interviewee was interviewed only once. Building rapport with participants was useful for two reasons: Participants start to trust the interviewer, and the research gains credibility during member-checking. The researcher probed when answers were given and extended the answer to provide more detailed responses. The interview questions allowed for personal responses that

sometimes eliminated a “perfect” or “right” answer. This is a qualitative study that required indepth and rich data. Participants’ experiences were not contrived to suit the study.

The interviewer needs to be truthful and considerate of the interviewee. The wellbeing of others should not be compromised. To this end, informed consent through a letter spelled out the nature of the study procedures, privacy, list of contacts, to where grievances and questions about the research could be directed, as well as the risks and benefits of research. The interviewee is considered more significant than the data or study. By this, I mean that the interviewee should not be sacrificed in the name of data. The rights and dignity of participants must be protected even if values and attitudes differ from the interviewer. Appropriate pseudonyms shield the identity of the participants.

There is an influence of the researcher where the voice and authenticity of the interviewee is questioned. Of course, the researcher will have an impact on motivating the narration and in editing. Thereby, the researcher cannot remain absolutely clinical. There should be ongoing consultation between researcher and interviewee, but the power relation must be reduced.

The first step on analysing the interviews was coding the data. This is where data was grouped or identified according to themes. Participants teaching experience and other biographical information were categorised. Even the participants’ attitudes and values were coded for further analysis. The researcher then looked for main ideas and common threads amongst the participants. Therefore this was a five step process. The raw data was reviewed and analysed. The second step was colour coding the data. The third step required searching and extracting the information. The fourth step included identifying relevant themes and patterns. The last step involved a summary of the identified themes. This process was conducted at least four times should some data have been neglected in the initial process. In the analysis chapters, quotes were included from participants to support the analysis.

### **3.6.2 Observation**

The observations were conducted within the confines of the classroom. Observation allows for the collection of data from a natural social situation. This validates what people say they



do and what they actually do, according to Robson (2002). Participants demonstrated their ability to teach Shakespeare using strategies necessary to foster learning and understanding.

This study makes use of direct observation without deliberate obtrusiveness and preconceived notions. The aim was to observe the four participants teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. Through observation, the study also viewed non-verbal clues that participants used. Observation provided firsthand experience, and not mere hearsay. This allowed for ratification and triangulation of the data generated through the interviews.

Participants differ in their experience, qualifications and the number of years of teaching English. This provided a richer understanding of PCK and beliefs and how this differs in terms of each participant accordingly.

Only one lesson per teacher was observed, using an observation schedule (Appendix Four) to record data. It was vital, in this study, to strengthen authenticity and accuracy by taking field notes. It was imperative to use the observation as a means to record details such as setting, participants, conversations and strategies. Biklen and Bogdan (2007) suggest observation provides contextual data that might have been missed during interviews. They also point out that the researcher does have some effect on the observation process. This type of effect can be called the Hawthorne Effect, where the characteristics of the researcher influence the study. However, the intent was to avoid prejudice in the study. The learners of participants were not informed of the purpose of the study, to minimize behaviour adjustment. The researcher sat at the back of the classroom while the lesson was conducted. The researcher in no way participated in the lesson but sat silently observing. The teachers were made to feel comfortable and at ease. Through previous interactions the researcher aimed to gain the trust of the participants. To minimize behaviour adjustment of participants and prevent an “act” the researcher did not provide the participant with great detail pertaining to what in the lesson was exactly being observed.

The observation data either refutes or confirms what the participants had said in the interview. The observer merely noted down factors relating to the study. Time sampling was used where the researcher noted what was happening precisely every 30 seconds. The

observation included recordings of participant's verbal and physical teaching styles, physical appearance of the classroom, as well as the behaviour and activities of the participant.

### **3.7 Analysis of data using I-Poems**

My study uses the concept called an I-Poem as a way of re-organising and analysing the interview data. I-Poems are created in a distinctive way: Every "I" (first person) sentence in the interview transcript is underlined, then cut and pasted into a new document and the sequence is maintained. These sentences are then reviewed; verbs and vital phrases are underlined and, thereafter, lines are composed. The direct speech of the participant is included. These poems exhibit the beliefs of participants. I-Poems make use of the personal pronoun "I", as the poem is written in the first person. Special attention is given to the narrative, characters, plot, context, images and themes. The interviews are read and listened to until the researcher gains complete understanding of the phenomenon and action Balan (2005) states common themes and experiences can be identified.

Zambo and Zambo (2013), and Balan (2005), used poetry in their research. The poems were built on *The Listening Guide* by Gilligan (2002). The Listening guide method is where data is analysed by listening to transcripts instead of merely reading it. This makes the researcher more attentive. Zambo and Zambo (2013) concluded that the researcher can reveal the intricacies and tensions of participants. I-Poems were used to ascertain beliefs of participants. Gilligan (1982) had used the I-Poems in her study in helping women discover their voices.

This study uses I-Poems as a means to uncover the beliefs of participants teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. Therefore in this research, I-Poems cannot be considered a data generating method because the researcher writes the poem, but rather as a method of data analysis, as a way of representing the participant's interview data. Hence the stress and pressure is taken off the participant. I-poems are unlike the conventions of traditional poems. Chronological transcripts are used and listened to, in order to comprehend the participant's experience. Data of transcripts are scrutinised to understand who is speaking, to whom and why. According to Gilligan et al. (2003), the aim is to reveal each participant's narrative in terms of context (Where?), characters (Who?) and plot (Why? Where? When? What?).

Poetry in research is a powerful and versatile tool. Poems are extremely condensed where a few words can express emotions and description, and this is supported by Furman, Langer and Taylor (2010). Poetry is unlike a systematic or scientific model of study, which has a goodness fit. It does not have to be conventional. Poems can take form through free verse, a pantoum where particular lines are repeated, or even shape poems. Poetry explores the mood, feeling, and tone of the speaker; in this case, it is the participant. It can even suggest the atmosphere of context and amplify what has been said in interviews. Faulkner (2007) and Hooks (1990) advocate conversation and communication with others in relation to the larger contexts. Poetry can be seen as a magnifying glass.

This research practice is arts based, where it serves as a metaphor to rebuild experiences and allow for denotation. Bhattacharya (2008) maintained that poetry allowed for diverse ways of presenting and viewing the world, both metaphorically and figuratively. Poetry is an imaginative and communicative methodological tool which includes intuition. The researcher becomes personally drawn into his/her work. It can be planned around a narrative. Leavey (2009) suggests that poetry captures essentials of social reality. This may lead to social action.

Sullivan (2006), Leavey (2009) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) contend that poetry attracts a different readership compared to typical academics and the audience is broader. The audience is impacted and may be left with profound understanding. Burg (2004), Furman and Langer (2004), and Cahnmann (2003) promote the notion that participants' voices are brought to the forefront. Richardson (2000) also promotes the poetic form, as it recreates the lived experience and evokes emotional responses. It allows for collaboration, conversation and agency. Strong emotional responses or themes are amplified.

There are risks using poetry, as it moves the boundaries of traditional research, according to Eisner (1997), and Piirto (2000). It is also a subjective approach, where the researcher eliminates certain words. However, Eisner (1997) claims that poetry is gaining authority and authenticity as a rigorous and important qualitative research approach to document lived experiences in an artistic manner. Member-checking helps to eliminate any distortions.

### **3.8 Trustworthiness**

The intention of this research was to collect data that was honest, rich and deep. In order to strengthen the trustworthiness both interviews and observation methods of collecting data were used for triangulation. According to Creswell (2005) and Patton (2002), multiple sources of data provide credibility and validity to qualitative research. Member-checking also contributes to the trustworthiness of a study; therefore, participants received interview transcripts to verify data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend concepts called “dependability” or “inquiry audit” instead of reliability in a qualitative study. These terms basically mean verifying or examining the process or product of the research. This included examining the raw data, field notes, etc.

This study is less concerned with generalisability, transferability and comparability, but instead it wishes to provide a thick description. Creswell (2003) recommends “record retention”, where data is kept for a limit of a decade and destroyed to avoid revelation. It has also been suggested that record retention be only for a period of five years. The data for this study was stored in Drop box, and with the supervisor of the study. The data will be destroyed in five years and confidentiality will remain.

Creswell (2005) encourages researchers to present negative information, since life has many perspectives. This refers to an analysis of paralanguage: tone of voice or laughter, as well as facial expressions, body language and gestures. This is important for the true essence of the observation and interviews to be captured.

One of the limitations of this study is that a teacher’s PCK may not be apparent and cannot be fully captured through the confines of one interview and one classroom observation. Beliefs of a teacher may change as a result of experience. The research questions were thus complex. Possibly, a larger study over an extended period may yield longitudinal data and greater grasp of the current PCK of teachers. Unfortunately, as this is a coursework thesis, the depth of the study does not allow for extensive data to be examined and understood. This study serves to provide a snapshot of four teachers of English in KwaZulu-Natal. Therefore, generalization is not possible. It is also worthy to note that the challenges identified in this study are not necessarily typical, or atypical, to other parts of South Africa and other parts of the world.

### **3.9 Ethical Issues**

Permission to do the research was granted by the Department of Education (Appendix One). Ethical Clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in June 2015 (Appendix Two). Permission from the participants and school authorities (principals) was obtained. In the participants' consent form (Appendix Three), a statement covering the opportunity to withdraw at any stage of the research is listed. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions about the research, and to withdraw from it if they chose to at any point in the research process.

In great detail, the nature of the research was explained, both formally and informally. Participants understood that their participation was not an obligation. They were reassured about confidentiality at every stage of the research process. Names were kept confidential by using pseudonyms. The intent of the study was that it be conducted in a neutral, non-judgmental, non-influential and impartial manner.

The anonymity of those involved in the research was guaranteed. Interviews, observation schedules and poems remain anonymous and confidential. The information gained is solely for the purpose of research. Creswell (2007) indicated that reflection and collaboration should be openly given to participants. Therefore, this research did not involve any dishonesty or trickery. No remuneration was offered for participation.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter describes the research methodology, the research design, research instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques used in this study. The population and sampling procedures are discussed as well as the ways in which trustworthiness was strengthened. This investigation allowed for the exploration of PCK and beliefs about teaching Shakespeare. The next chapter provides the findings on the first and third research questions: What are the beliefs of teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners? In what ways do teachers' beliefs influence their practice in the teaching of Shakespeare?

# Chapter 4: Findings – Teacher’s Beliefs about Teaching Shakespeare

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## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on analysing data in an attempt to answer the research questions:

- What are the beliefs of teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?
- In what ways do teachers’ beliefs influence their practice in the teaching of Shakespeare?

The focal point of this chapter is on the beliefs of participants in relation to teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. The data was created from extracts on the interview transcripts. Subsequently, I-Poems were created. These I-Poems are based on *The Listening Guide* by Carol Gilligan. I-Poems were used to determine the beliefs or assumptions of participants teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. Each line in the interview transcript that began with the word “I” was extracted to create the I-Poem. According to Gilligan (1982), when participants begin a sentence with “I,” it reflects their personal beliefs on a specific aspect. Therefore, this chapter is guided by the following specific beliefs of participants: 1) concerning current learners, 2) regarding learners’ attitude towards Shakespeare, 3) in relation to Shakespeare in the curriculum, 4) on their own learning of Shakespeare and the influence of this on their practice, and 5) on professional attributes required to teach Shakespeare.

## 4.2 The I-Poems of the Four Teachers

The first part of this chapter provides an I-Poem of each participant regarding their beliefs regarding teaching Shakespeare.

## **Interview: Participant 1: BETTY**

### **POEM 1**

I've got English III.  
I majored in English.  
I spent two years in Phoenix that was from 1984 to 1985.  
I teach in the senior phase, grades 11 and 12.  
I would say that my school is average because we have children from the local homes.  
I'm going to say we are starting to experience the lack of school fees.  
I think the turnover in my school is moving in the direction of second language learners.  
I think that is basically our biggest challenge because we offer English as a home language.  
I think Shakespeare is a unique writer.  
I think he is magnificent.  
I feel somebody who is doing English home language should be exposed to him.  
I think Shakespeare is for all times.  
I would not say that he belongs to a particular era; he is so contemporary in his works.  
I think Shakespeare helps improve their literacy level.  
I think that's the purpose.  
I think at the beginning the learner finds it difficult.  
I think as a teacher you've got to break up Shakespeare to the level of the learner.  
I've been doing *Romeo and Juliet*, and they found that they appreciated the book.  
I thoroughly enjoy it.  
I am motivated.  
I really, really feel that Shakespeare has a place in the modern day world.  
I am highly motivated to teach.  
I think there's so much our children can identify with.  
I think the mature kid is able to grasp it initially.  
I strongly recommend that Shakespeare should not be taken out of our curriculum.  
I believe it has a place for us.  
I think firstly you have to contextualise Shakespeare and do a historical background.  
I think once we get into the text they slowly have a change in their mindset.  
I don't think there is any child willing to tell you that they enjoy Shakespeare.  
I'm not going to say they perform poorly because grade12s are not studying Shakespeare.  
I believe that the dynamics of the world are changing all the time.  
I believe as teachers we adapt, adjust and accommodate the kind of learners that we have.  
I would say you put the ball in their court.  
I would ask them to research, analyse, whatever and take the discussion from there.  
I believe you must do reading and analysis side by side otherwise it loses its effect.  
I'm going to say that with the new methodology my teachers at school were very traditional.  
I felt those traditional methods where it was a chalk and talk did not empower us.  
I think they could have made the lessons more stimulating.  
I try to use a variety of strategies.

I find that I'm very openminded about how my lesson may go.  
I have definitely changed.  
I ask them to make points in terms of how they understand.  
I think that is important.  
I also believe that copious notes run out are not of help.  
I believe if the child does not understand, what's the value of the notes?  
I don't think English encourages that kind of thing because every answer is unique.  
I think that we need to look at the background from where our children are coming.  
I think that is important.  
I have to make information accessible so they are travelling on the same journey as me.  
I think you need to give them more tasks and work the tasks with them.  
I find it works.  
I'm looking at it's resources all the time.  
I believe in the dynamic nature of the world; no human being is an island.  
I believe that if you are going to look you are going to find things that can actually help you.  
I know that for certain children they just close off when they know this is not my like.  
I will send him to go wash his face and come back.  
I think you need a whole term to do justice.  
I think the energy in the teacher is to be fully resourced before they get into the class.  
I believe you have to know and cannot say that I will get it from the classroom or learn there.  
I think that is very important.  
I would love for my teachers to keep abreast with times, to be reading all forms of the media.  
I would like them to be able to build capacity in themselves.  
I feel the new things in society is making me want to love and be passionate.  
I think knowing that English is not our mother tongue we really have to work at it to improve.  
I don't see it as a burden.



## **Interview: Participant 2: ANNE**

### **POEM 2**

I have a Bachelor of Education degree and I also have an Honours Degree in B.Com.  
I teach grade 8s, grade 10s and grade 12s.  
I teach English home language, but it is not really their home language.  
I teach in a dysfunctional school.  
I think the problem is their culture.  
I feel as a new generation of learners, their families are beating the drum of the past.  
I feel that is a challenge.  
I think all teenagers have to face the fact that English is not their home language.  
I think Shakespeare is included because of the lessons, values of the sixteenth century.  
I believe we are still experiencing the same lessons and values today in modern society.  
I think there is a purpose.  
I would say it's life's lessons that you get from English.  
I like Shakespeare because maybe I was exposed to it when I was learning.  
I am familiar with Shakespeare.  
I like the characters and I like the era.  
I like the 16<sup>th</sup> century.  
I am drawn to that personally.  
I find it interesting.  
I find the way they lived, spoke, viewed life, their culture, you know... is what I enjoy.  
I enjoy the way a play is set.  
I do feel a play should be seen to be appreciated.  
I mean the learners do read it but to really enjoy a play, it should be performed.  
I think when a play is performed you get to appreciate it more.  
I will ask them to volunteer to act.  
I would firstly get the learners to watch the play or the film.  
I have difficulty understanding some of the vocabulary.  
I will have to plan the lesson before I even start it.  
I will go over the vocabulary, put up vocabulary so that learners get a better understanding.  
I would go around teaching them act by act, scene by scene and nominate learners to act.  
I will ask the learners for their input, understanding, because learners perceive differently.  
I will put up the vocabulary which they must take down so they can understand.  
I could be wrong, but I believe the learner must make their own notes.  
I studied for a long time on my own through UNISA.  
I hardly got notes from the school I attended.  
I have no choice but to make notes for them depending on the nature of the learners.  
I liked learning Shakespeare.  
I enjoyed it because we had a good teacher.  
I don't normally act for my students.  
I want them to do the acting.

I will correct them where the tone is not right, I will.  
 I find it useful to get an audio book.  
 I find they do not pronounce the words correctly.  
 I say, "Learners take out your books; I will play the audio book. Read along."  
 I have lots of learners.  
 I want to teach but half the lesson is gone because we have other problems.  
 I see them in the seventh period, the last period and they are not in the mood to learn.  
 I find PowerPoint presentations very important.  
 I would make them read it first on their own, and gage from there, how are they getting it?  
 I bring the audio book in.  
 I make them follow with the audio book.  
 I would discuss what they had heard and then I would put up a PowerPoint presentation.  
 I said English must be fun.  
 I ask them questions.  
 I ask them to take out their books.  
 I make them see how a theme is relevant.  
 I feel, in my opinion, literature is an expression of emotions.  
 I ask them to identify with it, if they can see it and then discuss it.  
 I would use an interactive quiz.  
 I give out web addresses because learners have access to the Internet.  
 I really haven't a network of teachers.  
 I have stuff to share but no; I don't know.  
 I haven't found out.  
 I haven't asked.  
 I think one way is to network.  
 I don't know, but so far it's been something I've been doing on my own.  
 I find is that children start to sleep.  
 I mean, literally sleep.  
 I don't know what to do.  
 I just tell him to wake up, and send him outside, get some air, run on the spot and come back.  
 I had the audio-book on, half the class was sleeping.  
 I haven't figured out a way to manage these grade tens who are supposed to be out of school.  
 I do get some good days.  
 I do get some co-operation.  
 I put questions on the board.  
 I ask them to answer it and I go around marking it.  
 I would ask them questions which I would get all kinds of answers.  
 I prefer to call it an assessment.  
 I can go around marking it.  
 I think when you look at our CASS grid, and the tasks, I think it's right.  
 I can't deal with more than that.  
 I think it is worth it.  
 I would ask them.

I will never have anyone who will put up their hand and say they don't understand.  
I found that PowerPoint presentations or anything that's visual keeps them interested.  
I have learnt to create a PowerPoint presentation within which I have parts of the film in it.  
I have parts of the film in it, so they watch a little and that captures their attention.  
I think it goes back to the teacher who has to have a passion for it.  
I think a teacher has to understand the work first and get to be in the learner's situation.  
I don't think teachers need to be retrained when you have a Bachelor's degree.  
I would definitely want that play to be out somewhere, for the learners to watch it.  
I mean a play is a play.  
I wish I had the time to give the learners a chance to act.  
I think the British not studying Shakespeare is the reason people are not able to write.  
I think it's a disservice not to teach them.  
I don't think we are burdening the learners or the teachers.  
I personally feel that teaching Shakespeare is a good experience.  
I don't know if I speak for everyone else but that's my thoughts on that.

## **Interview: Participant 3: VIOLET**

### **POEM 3**

I have a degree, a BPaed Degree from the University of UKZN.  
I have a Masters Degree as well.  
I have a Diploma in Personal Computing and a Diploma in School Media Centre Science.  
I teach from grade 8 to 12.  
I'm in favour of Shakespeare.  
I don't feel that any study of literature could be complete without Shakespeare.  
I admire Shakespeare as a person.  
I think the purpose of teaching of Shakespeare is the same purpose of teaching other texts.  
I feel Shakespeare is included because he was such a literary genius.  
I found that with experience one learns to adapt one's methodology.  
I enjoy teaching it.  
I prefer to tell the story, however, not in its greatest depth.  
I leave that to be uncovered in the classroom.  
I think that it creates an interest for them and it is quite exciting.  
I enjoy teaching Shakespeare because I am such a great admirer of the man himself.  
I feel it is important for us to teach.  
I am hoping that the influence of Shakespeare can have some impact on them.  
I mean greed, revenge, hunger, love, hate, jealousy was relevant then, and it's relevant now.  
I believe it will still be relevant a hundred years from now.  
I think it is up to the teacher to get a feel of the learners and see what they appreciate more.  
I explained the concept of the groundlings.  
I always tell the story.  
I use storytelling with my dramatics.  
I love my dramatics so I really dramatise it.  
I use my story telling techniques to tell the story.  
I did not tell them the end.  
I told the story, but I left the end.  
I set at least two to three periods for discussion.  
I always make the texts relevant to the child.  
I find that Shakespeare is such a beautiful platform for the language teacher.  
I believe a teacher can teach learners life skills, and deepen understanding about concepts.  
I use my Shakespeare for problem solving skills.  
I let them work in groups.  
I just walk around and listen to what they have to say because very often the truth is said.  
I'm suggesting teaching the importance of friendship, commitment and loyalty.  
I devote maybe ten to fifteen minutes having concluded the play.  
I don't do it at the beginning.  
I do it at the end.  
I will use a couple of lessons to see if they enjoyed Shakespeare.

I teach them techniques how to read past the language, how to read for understanding.  
 I have to contextualise.  
 I will water it down to suit the need of the learner.  
 I will in another other class use an approach that will be far more intellectual.  
 I always take in the context of the learner.  
 I have to say it didn't really make an impact.  
 I suppose perhaps it was the way it was taught.  
 I remember *Wuthering Heights* quite vividly and *The Tale of Two Cities* quite vividly.  
 I don't want to slight or slander my teacher, but we used to listen to the audio book.  
 I went to university, I suppose, I had a better understanding and, you know, of English.  
 I always liked, well, loved reading.  
 I can't say that yes Shakespeare really made a great impact at that stage.  
 I think it was more at university.  
 I like to think my approach is facilitated and learner-centred.  
 I use technology in the classroom as well.  
 I will use my computer showing them various snip bits.  
 I think learners should be exposed to different genres, different aspects.  
 I believe the more exposure that we give them the better for them.  
 I like to appeal to these different learning styles.  
 I use in terms of strategies, very mixed strategies because of different learners.  
 I also glean a lot from the learners' own personal experiences.  
 I use subtlety to teach life skills as well.  
 I'm not very competent in the IsiZulu language, but I use it for concepts.  
 I really want the learner to understand, I will use another learner who is competent IsiZulu.  
 I say, when you enter this classroom, it's a non-isiZulu zone.  
 I just put that in; to get a sense that when they enter here it's all about English.  
 I also use informal assessment.  
 I use it to teach transactional writing.  
 I'll use it to teach poetry.  
 I've used it to teach other skills: language skills, metaphors, similes, alliteration.  
 I think informal assessments are very important.  
 I use this in terms of filling those gaps through informal assessments.  
 I must do an informal assessment at the end of every lesson.  
 I need to revisit this concept to change my methodology and in terms of how I approach it.  
 I think it is the amount of enthusiasm the teacher himself or herself possesses.  
 I always like to reflect.  
 I do a lot of things now that I haven't done, that I maybe didn't do initially.  
 I think when I taught Shakespeare initially I was still learning it.  
 I used these approaches, but not to the extent that I would have liked to.  
 I am more aware of the learning styles of the learners.  
 I like to explore different approaches, different methodology.  
 I have changed.  
 I have changed in the process and my approach, my methodology has changed as well.

I am sure you must have gleaned by now that I'm passionate about Shakespeare.  
I think Shakespeare has so much to offer.  
I mean one can spend an entire month trying to understand the subtleties of it.  
I read the same book three or four times, but each time I'm reading something new.  
I see something I haven't seen there before.

## **Interview: Participant 4: AMY**

### **POEM 4**

I did a Higher Diploma in Education through Springfield College.

I went on to my Honours in Science Education.

I went on to a B.A. in Language and Literature.

I just completed my Honours in Literature.

I think we could step up, in terms of being technologically advanced, and things like that.

I would say that majority are extremely poor because they cannot afford to bring lunch to school.

I think we are still assimilating into English home language.

I don't think even with the grade eights, they are definitely not English home language.

I suppose the learners can basically learn from the characters themselves.

I always believe that we are shortchanging it, because we are not teaching it as a drama.

I enjoy Shakespeare.

I am very passionate about Shakespeare.

I've written many papers on different sonnets and poems.

I feel there are so many different angles and there are so many different things to analyse.

I love analysis in English.

I like the dramas.

I like the sonnets, poems and messages behind it, but I prefer teaching Shakespearian drama.

I like the sexual innuendos with all his dramas.

I don't ignore it when I teach learners.

I bring it out, I play on it, and I highlight it.

I feel that gets them to enjoy it more.

I also like the dialogue, you know, it's not monotonous.

I think nobody can ever come close to Shakespeare's characterisation.

I'm trying to say that you see the experiences of characters, the lessons that they learnt.

I feel you see how they react to situations.

I think it equips them with the ability to deal with real life situations.

I mean its rich in metaphors, idioms and it will definitely improve communication.

I have a discussion on all the themes they will encounter during the course of the play.

I do a list of characters.

I don't say too much about the characters.

I just list the character and their relation to one another.

I wouldn't give character traits.

I would go into the play itself.

I interchange.

I don't read the play for them.

I also download the audio book.

I would make them listen to the audio and follow in their books.

I would get learners to read certain characters.

I also paraphrase for them because many of them battle with Elizabethan language.  
 I would have to interpret into modern English and then paraphrase.  
 I find that if in a scene there's a key idea there I analyse that extensively.  
 I focus on that.  
 I ask learners to extract quotations to substantiate an argument.  
 I ask them to take down quotations.  
 I teach them how to quote, and cite correctly because it's important for correct citation.  
 I will summarise and give them notes, from my head.  
 I discourage and dissuade the use of the Internet: Spark Notes.  
 I dissuade that.  
 I feel they have to experience it.  
 I read it with them.  
 I prefer reading it with them, through the entire play.  
 I don't miss a line with them in class.  
 I manage to finish the syllabus on time, so it's fine.  
 I set a goal.  
 I would know exactly which scenes would contain important themes.  
 I know exactly how much of time I am going to spend on certain scenes.  
 I have a target, a reading target.  
 I have been studying for so many years, I know from experience that I cannot learn from a text book.  
 I cannot learn from typed out notes.  
 I emphasize, I stress, I nag that they have to have notes in their own hand-writing.  
 I know that there are certain teachers who go to town running out worksheets.  
 I feel it is more important that they understand and then they write.  
 I feel the notes that I give them are superior to the ones they can get on the Internet.  
 I'm so pedantic about that, that I actually check, I supervise.  
 I know it's difficult but it's a must have, especially literature books, they must have notes.  
 I think why I insist on them writing, is if we give them a worksheet, it will be filed away.  
 I insist on them taking down notes.  
 I need them to pay attention, pens down and listen to what ma'am has to say.  
 I don't think they know they have a choice, but the plays we do with them they have been enjoying.  
 I had a very good English educator in grade 11 and grade 12.  
 I follow a very similar pattern to the way in which he taught.  
 I can read and express it better than the learners then I do it.  
 I enjoyed Shakespeare in school.  
 I allow my learners to bring their tablets.  
 I've been here every Saturday in school.  
 I allow them to record me if they can't write fast.  
 I allow them to record me on their tablets and their phones.  
 I go much slower.  
 I am always the last one to finish syllabus in my school.



I don't care.  
I rather that it sticks.  
I don't fly.  
I crawl when I'm teaching *Othello*.  
I use resources, I use the PowerPoint presentation.  
I got it on my laptop.  
I do a line by line analysis in terms of drama as well.  
I feel focus should be given to every line and every word, especially in our schools.  
I would never just read.  
I've never ever done that.  
I've never ever looked at it that way.  
I think all matric educators focus on literature.  
I don't think there is a correlation.  
I think it is important to do in-depth analysis, definitely.  
I don't think that Shakespeare counts for only 6 %; it is not justifiable.  
I use the audio book and then they read aloud.  
I explain in discussion.  
I will entertain role-play.  
I will get them to perform a role-play.  
I do soliloquies on my own, especially long winded ones, to create an interest.  
I haven't used group work with Shakespeare.  
I'm not sure how that would work, but I do not teach like that, no.  
I asked them to do a eulogy.  
I keep the lecture style of teaching to a minimum because learners are from different backgrounds.  
I always harp on, am adamant about, the fact that they can never be wrong in their interpretation.  
I think the hurdle that most educators of English face is that learners resist Shakespeare.  
I use these strategies: learner involvement and humour.  
I know they will probably have a giggle out of it.  
I will elicit interest and arouse their interest so that they would want to study.  
I don't want my learners to regurgitate everything I say, that's not what I want.  
I want to train analytical minds and by analysing everything the way I do.  
I'm actually fostering that love for analysis in them and that is what I want.  
I want them to want to do it, you understand?  
I make my lessons exciting.  
I find my strategies do work.  
I'll tell you, certain learners I will trust them to do it, but the majority of them plagiarise.  
I don't like that.  
I teach to instil that love for analysis.  
I am able to equip them with skills to analyse; they don't need the Internet.  
I don't have any resources with me in my hand.  
I am able to teach my dramas without any resources.

I am able to analyse and I want them to do the same.  
 I don't think that these study guides and things will help in that way.  
 I don't have any discipline issues.  
 I have to curb their enthusiasm because it takes too much of time.  
 I don't allow them sometimes to go on for too long.  
 I'll have to curb it, but that's it.  
 I don't have discipline problems where children are out of hand, disruptive and things.  
 I don't have that at all.  
 I make them write the essays that they are required to write, especially with the grade ten.  
 I start teaching how to write a literature essay from grade nine then into grade ten.  
 I break it down for them and I get them to practice in the first term.  
 I just give them five quick questions so they have an opportunity to recapitulate what we did.  
 I do not teach it in the same way.  
 I think a teacher must not be set in her ways.  
 I have a notepad next to me and I take down the errors that are recurring that I see.  
 I don't like them going on the Internet.  
 I like them to look at a production of a Shakespearian play or even a movie.  
 I don't allow them to watch the movie before we do a reading in class.  
 I like to do the entire play first before they actually watch the production.

### **4.3 Teachers' Beliefs about Current Learners**

The interview data, and the I-poems reveal general contextual factors that influence the beliefs and PCK of the participants. It is apparent that there is an economic crisis and learners as well as their parents are facing financial challenges. These financial constraints impact the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools. Betty suggested that the decline of school fees was an indication of her learners coming from average or poor income households. Violet considered her school learners as disadvantaged due to the ripple effects of apartheid. She pointed out that classrooms were cramped. School fees were not paid due to predominant unemployment, and that additional staff could not be employed as there were no funds. Amy, like Betty and Violet, described her learners as socially and economically disadvantaged. Anne expressed that not all learners had financial difficulties. Factors, including lack of personnel and resources, would influence the teaching at a school. The constraints bear a heavy weight on teachers who would have to extend their PCK to accommodate socio-economic factors of a developing country.

Anne regarded her school as dysfunctional and highlighted this was a factor contributing to ill-disciplined learners in her classroom. She described her ill-disciplined learners as “bad apples”. This challenge of discipline was addressed by Violet and Betty. It seems that discipline issues are not tackled on a large scale within the confines of the school where marked improvements can be seen. It could also reflect that learners are antagonistic about learning Shakespeare in particular. Anne is yet to find a remedy to improve learning and teaching of Shakespeare in her classes. An intervention is required to help her foster a culture of learning and teaching in her classroom. Shulman (1987) suggests that teachers ought to have knowledge on classroom management that will enable effective teaching and learning. Anne was the only participant who was inundated with discipline issues that impeded learning of Shakespeare and other aspects of the English curriculum. Even though Violet suggested there were discipline issues in her school; her class was well disciplined during the observation. In fact, their hands went up when answering a question and they were generally well behaved. However, learners did arrive late to the lesson. There was also poor attendance on a normal school day. This could be attributed to better discipline as well as the presence of the researcher. There was a learner who hid and ate his lunch during the group work. Nevertheless, Violet was firm with learners. Betty and Amy also had good discipline during the observation lesson. Learners were attentive and engaged in the discussion. Anne’s plight was highlighted during the observation: Learners were not really focused; many were having their own conversations and laughing; There was a lack of interest and it impacted on those who wanted to learn.

Violet affirmed that many of her learners completed their primary education in schools where the language of learning and teaching was isiZulu. Therefore, when that learner began high school at her school, the medium of instruction changed, but the learner was not competent in the new medium of instruction: English. She further claimed that her learners did not enjoy reading and this impacted on learning. This is a concern, because a learner who begins learning a new language at twelve or fifteen is ear-marked for failure, unless the child is constantly working on language skills. It does not appear educationally sound for a learner who has been studying the majority of his schooling career in his mother tongue to suddenly change his medium of instruction in grade ten, for the three remaining years. It suggests catastrophe on the part of the learner. Realistically, the learner is thus placed in a predicament and will likely perform worse than English speakers. According to The South African

Language in Education Policy (LiEP) of 1997 and the Department of Education National Curriculum Statement (2003), learners are required to study in their mother tongue for three years of the Foundation Phase. English is recommended as the Language of Learning and Teaching from grade four upwards.

Shakespeare is taught in the Further and Education Training (FET) band, where a learner ought to be competent in the language and is able to deal with the issues and genre of Shakespeare. The amount of work that needs to be covered in those three short years is a challenge in itself. English is not a subject that has components taught in isolation. To understand a text or drama like Shakespeare requires a learner to be competent overall in understanding English.

There seems to be a lack of rules and regulations in place, where the Department of Education intervenes and protects learners from failing dismally by changing at such a crucial point. According to Violet, learners speak and practice English only within the classroom. Once they leave the English lesson, or even school, they converse in their mother tongue. Therefore, learners are in a quandary as well as their teachers. There seems to be real issues that should be addressed that would improve marks and learning at schools. This would, therefore, improve the marks and understanding of Shakespeare. This type of challenge was identified by the participants, but it is beyond their realm to find teaching strategies to accommodate such dire needs. Participants are able to be creative, design or implement strategies to improve learning, but they are not magicians who can eradicate the dilemmas of society. Teachers can, and should, be accountable for effective teaching and learning with the learner in mind. However, teaching Shakespeare to learners who do not have strong English competence is a complicated task and a tall order.

Anne discovered that learners were not in the mood to study Shakespeare, especially in the seventh lesson of the day. She thinks it would be logical to allow the teaching of literature to be the first lesson of each day, as it is compulsory for a learner to pass his or her home language of choice. However, the weighting of various subjects needs to be considered. It could be argued that mathematics or life science should be studied in the morning. Timetabling is an internal school policy. Anne's PCK thus needs to be broadened to find instructional tools that will enhance the mood of learners effectively. Violet's observation

lesson was conducted in the fifth lesson. However, she was energetic and created an effective lesson. Betty also established good classroom control in the observation lesson which was conducted in the third lesson of the day. Learners were seated quickly, ready to begin the lesson. Amy's learners were equally behaved during the observation lesson conducted in the second lesson.

Anne's perception was that learners were repeaters who did not make it in other schools. She contended that her learners were "beating the drum of the past" whereby they were still holding onto past issues of apartheid, although South Africa was twenty years into democracy. Both Anne and Violet indicated that most of their learners were in their early twenties. Anne called her learners "old". Anne felt that the ability of her learners to move past issues of apartheid and beyond was stagnant. However, this could be a result of the age disparity and that these learners were born at the same time that democracy was established in South Africa. In South Africa, since 2014, learners who fail grade twelve are allowed to return to school in a second attempt. This poses further implications. Learners who are now young adults often do not take discipline, dress code and rules seriously enough. Their interests differ. Also there are learners who are of different ages in a class, which could pose serious problems to teachers where they are faced with another classroom management issue: to find ways of making learning relevant to learners of diverse ages and interests.

Amy believed that even though South Africa was two decades into democracy, learners at her school were still having language difficulties. Learners were studying through the medium of English, that is, taking English as home language, in the FET phase, but they were not competent in the language. They, with their parents, had made the choice to study at a school where the medium of instruction is English even though it was not their home language. Amy contested that learners were far from competent and they communicated at their optimum in their mother tongue IsiZulu. Violet also mentioned the rippling effects of apartheid. There seems to be a historical and social influence. English, for many learners and their parents, is a way for social progression. However, actual competency and efficiency is not necessarily evident. South Africa is still a young democracy and it will take time to progress. In the meantime though, the existing learners are the ones facing the consequences.

Anne said that she felt stuck; she needed a solution. It is important to emphasize that Anne is new to the teaching profession. She has a commerce degree and has been teaching English for a year. She has also been tasked to teach three grade twelve classes, which could be considered educationally unsound and a mammoth task for any new teacher. Anne identified that she was unable to try different things to stimulate learners' interest and motivation. The participants are aware of the circumstances of learners, but can only extend their PCK so much. The social constraints seem to be overwhelming.

#### **4.4 Participants' Beliefs about Learners' Attitude towards Shakespeare**

Betty felt that the mature learner, who might not be an English home language learner, could grasp Shakespeare from the outset. This seems to be her first positive comment which gives hope that there are second language learners who study the English home language curriculum and are successful in learning English and Shakespeare. Some second language learners are able to grasp and understand Shakespeare just like their first language English counterparts. Betty explained that most learners initially would not express a willingness to learn Shakespeare and that some learners literally shut down when they do not understand or like Shakespeare. Anne reiterated that it was highly unlikely that a learner would willingly say he or she did not understand. Betty and Anne have had learners who have put their heads on their desks and have fallen asleep. Betty does not entertain such behaviour and would immediately send that learner out to "freshen up", so that he or she could participate in the lesson. Anne also sends learners out if they are asleep to go for a run or have a splash of water.

All the teachers noted that their learners are obviously not keen on learning Shakespeare. At the end of the play they might appreciate the themes relevant to their lives, but the drawn out process of a term of studying the play seems torturous. Learners falling asleep in two different schools and environments indicate that Shakespeare is not embraced positively. A learner who falls asleep and has to be sent out to freshen up gives one something to consider regarding their motivation. Anne and Betty expressed that their learners did not relate to the context with plays by Shakespeare, and were not too keen on learning Shakespeare. A number of Betty's learners lacked motivation. However, with the teacher's help of breaking down the play, scene by scene, Betty believed that her learners are able to understand, engage and appreciate the plays. She noticed that there was generally a change in mindset where

learners engaged positively by the end of the play. This was evident this year with her grade elevens studying *Romeo and Juliet*. Betty makes a valid point that teachers ought to break the play down to the level of the learners. She has similar learners to Anne, and is able to apply strategies to break down the drama to assist learners. Anne has yet to resolve her situation or “take baby-steps” in improving the existing ethos of the class. Therefore, the PCK of both these teachers who face similar predicaments are different. The one significant difference is that Betty has been a teacher for much longer and is the head of her language department at school.

Amy found that learners were resistant initially to learning Shakespeare. She does not have discipline issues. She did establish that as time passed learners grew to enjoy Shakespeare and that she even had to curb learners’ enthusiasm and take control of discussion time. Amy felt her learners enjoyed studying Shakespeare because of the themes and messages that became evident. Even in Amy’s school, there was resistance initially. Perhaps good discipline in a school gives learners little choice or chance to protest. Learners in all the schools, according to the participants, seemed to enjoy the oral aspect of Shakespeare, and that was through the discussion and debates. However, at the end of the year, the examination simply tests on content and there is no oral component for Shakespeare, despite that a learner has to complete four generic oral components at the end of the year. Perhaps an oral on Shakespeare would be fruitful, especially to those learners who have difficulty in expressing themselves through written form. It seems that the process of studying Shakespeare is difficult for many learners.

Violet often discovered that learners felt Shakespeare was “above their heads” until they completed a play and could relate and understand themes and messages. However, Anne, Violet and Betty’s school chose not to teach Shakespeare at grade twelve. This raises a concern as to why teachers like Betty and Violet, master teachers, would not include Shakespeare at grade twelve. They thought it was difficult and that other dramas by other playwrights were more accessible to their learners. Their thoughts and beliefs about Shakespeare are not demonstrated in their work, where a conscious decision was made not to teach Shakespeare at grade twelve. They find that their second language learners struggle with answering questions based on Shakespeare. Therefore, a true reflection of learners’ achievement in Shakespeare cannot be reflected. In fact Betty points out that Shakespeare

cannot be blamed totally because her learners perform poorly in other aspects of literature as well. If the basics of language is not taught or understood because of certain external factors (contextual, social and economic), then the requirements for English, home language, for learners needs to be re-evaluated. There is an injustice in heaving learners into the deep end with insufficient language skills and expertise.

Some of Anne's learners found Shakespeare boring, and that was a huge concern for her. The language of Shakespeare was difficult for her learners. Learners could not relate to the era of Shakespeare and she suggested that maybe it was a cultural difference. She felt her learners did not see the relevance of learning Shakespeare and generally were frustrated. They did not appreciate the plays. Anne's learners often questioned her about why they had to learn Shakespeare. Instead, they wished to study something they could immediately identify with, like South African plays. Anne was most open and realistic about her situation. She provided the backdrop of her teaching crisis. Her learners seemed to be quite verbal about their feelings on learning Shakespeare. The questions the learners pose are crucial and justifiable. Our examinations might be too difficult for the second language learner, and might be testing beyond the scope of the learner's ability within the English language. This was confirmed by Umalusi (2011), in their statement that the English home language papers were more challenging compared to other first language examinations in matric. The report reflected that almost 85% of learners who enrolled to write the matric examination selected English home language. The examination needs to be re-dressed and be inclusive of second language learners attempting the examination. However, then the high flyer also becomes a casualty because he or she is not challenged. Even with Barrett's Taxonomy (a weighting criteria for cognitive demand of assessment questions), Betty suggested, a second language learner's performance in literature remains dismal. These important issues definitely weigh heavily on participants' PCK, where their teaching needs to consider the external examination outcomes.

Amy conjectured that the amount of time dedicated to the teaching of Shakespeare was not justified in relation to the marks allocated. She considered a lot of time was consumed on teaching Shakespeare, yet the weighting of just six percent for the total year mark was not justifiable. She recommended that the Department of Education should possibly shift the weighting of Shakespeare and afford it a higher mark. She gathered that the purpose of teaching a drama in matric was solely for exams and not for life skills. The mark was more



important. Hence, the final result was more important than the process. It does seem unjustifiable to spend a term, approximately eight to ten weeks, on content that will be tested and counted for a mere six percent, that is, twenty-five marks in the exams. This suggests that over twenty hours or more are spent on teaching Shakespeare for a mere six percent of the total year mark. Paper three comprises creative and functional writing. This paper counts for 100 marks in the final examination which equates to 25 percent in the final examination. In comparison Paper three outweighs Shakespeare; yet most teaching time, according to all participants, was spent on Shakespeare.

#### **4.5 Participants' Personal Beliefs about Shakespeare in the Curriculum**

Betty enjoyed Shakespeare and was highly motivated to teach Shakespeare's plays. She considered Shakespeare magnificent, a unique writer and felt that anyone studying English should be exposed to him. She likewise expressed that Shakespeare was not specific to a period in time, but was for all times. Amy shared these sentiments and described Shakespeare as anachronistic, a man whose works would be timeless. She found his works contemporary and that they aided learners in improving literacy skills. Violet pointed out that the relevance of Shakespeare would "stand the test of time" and that he is a "man for all seasons".

Betty and Anne recommended that Shakespeare not be removed from the curriculum. Anne considered it a disservice to learners not to teach Shakespeare. Violet also was in favour of teaching Shakespeare and felt that any study of literature should include his works. Violet admired Shakespeare and considered him a literary genius. She considered it fundamental for learners to be exposed to this genre of literature for the learner's benefit. She recognised that a learner gained appreciation of literature. Betty did not see Shakespeare as a burden, instead studying Shakespeare helped learners to compete with others from first world countries like England. It is essential to state that these four participants are English mother tongue speakers. Their experiences would be different to their learners, who are second language learners.

It suggests from the data that these participants are great admirers of Shakespeare. However, their enthusiasm and passion needs to be translated or transferred to learners. Therefore,

teachers need a further knowledge domain for conveying the passion and flair for Shakespeare to persuade learners to study him and feel as convicted.

Betty posits that Shakespeare has a purpose and place for South African learners. She affirmed that Shakespeare was universal. Betty apprised it was important for learners to realise that Shakespeare's greatness was prevalent then and still relevant now. Amy doubts Shakespeare will ever be out of fashion, since the themes highlighted in his plays are applicable even now. She called his themes contemporary that reflected experiences of old and young in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Anne, furthermore, identified the values found in Shakespeare and the sixteenth century to be relevant to her learners and accredited Shakespeare for preparing them to deal with situations and for providing solutions. Amy discerned that themes of good and evil helped learners to make choices in the future and in the real world. Violet thought it was important to make the text accessible and relevant the learner.

Betty, moreover, observed that there were so many things learners could identify with in the plays of Shakespeare and relate to their own lives. Anne found that Shakespeare's plays taught life lessons and exposing learners to him expanded their learning experiences. Betty remarked that by using Shakespeare as a springboard other aspects of English could be taught. Violet, too, expressed her ability to teach other aspects of the English language using a play by Shakespeare. In her own words she said that "Shakespeare was a beautiful platform for the language teacher".

Violet advised that her learners benefitted with problem solving skills, life skills and learnt the importance of friendship, commitment and loyalty. She was enabled to teach other aspects of the curriculum where she could teach transactional writing. An example of this is demonstrated when she taught *The Merchant of Venice*. Antonio, the protagonist writes a letter to his best friend Bassanio. Violet asked learners to write the letter Antonio wrote to his best friend. Amy and Violet added that the play lent itself to teaching figurative language often found in poems. Violet demonstrated this with two references from Shakespeare's plays: "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" and "the green eyed monster". Amy added that learners' communication skills also improved.

Violet believed that Shakespeare contributed immensely to the English language in terms of vocabulary and expressions, while Amy concurred and suggested that Shakespeare's use of idioms and metaphors benefitted the learner, expanding their vocabulary. This notion remains undisputed by the four participants. However, it may not be necessary to read the entire play in order to do this. Anne suggests the play should be watched first to appreciate and understand Shakespeare. There are many plausible reasons for the inclusion of Shakespeare, but teachers are facing challenges transferring not only the content, but the skills of analysing Shakespeare. It would appear that the lessons and themes can be identified by learners. However, the actual breakdown of the text in an examination proves difficult. Therefore, it is probable that teachers' PCK needs to deepen to provide learners with thinking tools to analyse Shakespeare. Anne found the teaching of Shakespeare painstaking because her learners are resistant. However, different teaching strategies and instructional tools may prove useful in helping her and her learners.

Violet, furthermore, believes that Shakespeare influenced writers like Steinbeck and other contemporary writers. She expressed that teaching Shakespeare made her learners better citizens of the world. Anne believed that exposure to Shakespeare could instil a passion in learners to be writers and that it was not a burden on teachers to teach Shakespeare.

Amy enjoyed teaching Shakespeare and was passionate also about his works. She had even written papers on Shakespeare's sonnets and plays at university level. She found that Shakespeare's writing was never monotonous or bland and that no other writer was as "spot on" with characterisation as he was. During the observation lesson, Amy's content knowledge was immaculate.

All the participants reflected on the beauty and depth of Shakespeare, and that his plays were brilliantly written and stood the test of time.

#### **4.6 Participants' Beliefs about Teaching Shakespeare**

Anne found that Shakespearean language can be difficult to understand and therefore required her to prepare prior to teaching it. This is in keeping with the first step of the cycle in developing one's PCK. Amy understood the purpose of learning Shakespeare was so that learners could learn from the characters. However, she concluded that Shakespeare's works

should be taught as a drama and not a novel. Therefore, aspects like space, stage direction, characterisation, dialogue and staging is neglected in the study of Shakespeare. Amy referred to teachers “shortchanging” Shakespeare, as the process was reduced to textual analysis only. Amy surmised that Shakespeare offered numerous interpretations. She found Shakespeare to be full of figurative language and imagery. According to her, the text is never predictable but is filled with many colourful twists and eventful turns.

Amy believed in a three way process when teaching Shakespeare. Firstly, she wanted learners to be involved in classroom discussion. Secondly, learners should listen in order to attain information. Lastly, learners should write because the action involves thinking. Amy felt that if learners have a negative attitude towards Shakespeare from the outset, it can be detrimental, since learners would not enjoy anything and gain little. It was primary for her learners to absorb from the lesson. Amy, who is a seasoned teacher, seems to have identified a system or a three-way strategy that fosters understanding. None of the other participants were this specific. This also contributes to effective classroom management. She instils this kind of process from the time learners are in grade nine. She has expectations of her learners regardless of their linguistic abilities.

Violet hoped that teaching Shakespeare would impact her learners by making them want to read other plays by Shakespeare and that they learned the important themes present in the plays. It was salient for Violet to teach learners how to read past the language and read for meaning. Therefore, she did not focus on every word or line by line analysis. Instead, she looked on the whole play for meaning. Violet’s suggestion seems viable and provides learners with a tool to understand the context and content of the play. Very often learners may become bewildered by the intense figurative language and this obstructs them from engaging with the text. Therefore, learners who are aware that the dramatic lines can be broken down further into everyday English, and are not as intimidating as they appear, will help them to move forward positively.

Amy maintained that it was important to teach Shakespeare at a much slower pace. It was far more consequential for learners to understand than merely completing the syllabus. She said that she would rather “it sticks,” that she does “not fly”, but rather “crawls”. It was necessary

for her to walk her learners through the study of Shakespeare. All participants considered an entire term necessary in order for learners to study one Shakespearean effectively.

#### **4.7 Participants' Reflections on their own Learning of Shakespeare and the Influence on their Practice**

Amy reflected on her own learning and felt she taught similarly to the way her teacher had taught. She enjoyed learning Shakespeare at school. She, like her teacher, chose to read particular scenes from the play that they could express better than their learners. She pointed out that her classmates had all been first language English speakers, which probably impacted the fast pace of the lessons. This suggests that teachers are in fact influenced or guided by their own teaching experiences of Shakespeare. In some way or another, the teaching process is adapted or modified. However, the basics of their own learning style may be used to facilitate understanding.

When Betty reflected on her own learning of Shakespeare, she found her teachers to be robust and traditional. When she viewed the new methodologies she felt that her own teachers had not empowered her but had stuck to the standard practices. She referred to the standard practice of her teachers as “chalk and talk”. This meant the teacher did the talking and wrote notes. She had wished that her learning of Shakespeare had been more stimulating and thus Betty aimed to be stimulating and innovative in her lessons. She spoke about using different strategies and trying to be open-minded when teaching Shakespeare. She enjoyed being challenged and motivated by the new resources and learning materials available through new forms of technology and this ignited her passion to teach Shakespeare. On the other hand, Betty does not employ any of the teaching strategies she was exposed to. She was able to reflect on them as being less functional and more routine, where creativity was not encouraged.

Anne was familiar with Shakespeare and reported that she was introduced to Shakespeare in her schooling career. She enjoyed the characters, setting, language and era of the sixteenth century, as illustrated in Shakespeare's plays. Anne had enjoyed Shakespeare at school and described her teacher as a “one man show” who was entertaining. However, Anne would not act for her learners. That was the task of the learners. Anne, although impressed by her own teacher, is not confident to teach in his manner. Instead, she uses the teaching strategy of

acting as a task for her learners to complete. She has expressed that learners enjoy acting and find it humorous.

Violet was not impressed or taken by works of Shakespeare at school. She had found that the audio book was boring and that her teacher did not stimulate the love for Shakespeare. At school she preferred her novels. However, at university she found a great appreciation for Shakespeare. Violet seems to be the most exploratory in her choice of teaching strategies. She abandoned how she was taught and found strategies applicable to her learners and their context. This is exactly what PCK is about: It is about finding teaching strategies that are specific to the transference of information in an understandable way that takes the learner into consideration. Therefore, there is no one size fits all method in teaching Shakespeare. One has to consider other factors of the learner. Betty and Violet, who are the master teachers, seem to understand the need for teaching according to the environment and learner.

Amy is traditional in her teaching and maintains the best classroom management. Her results are good and her learners seemed to have a solid foundation. This requires some consideration that the core strategies of traditional methods (teacher-centred, formal notes, use of the text book only) have some value and contribute to effective teaching and learning.

The participants considered their teaching styles to be mostly learner-centred. Amy indicated that she used a lecture-style approach ten percent and the learner-centred approach ninety percent of the time. Violet called her two approaches the facilitated approach and the lecture style approach. The latter was used when introducing new concepts and where the learner had no prior knowledge. All participants reflected that themes, lessons, characterisation and dialogue were of importance.

The CAPS document on English Home language (Department of Basic Education, 2013) recommends three similar teaching approaches to teaching Shakespeare: text-based, process and communicative. This basically encapsulated what the participants were already doing. The text-based approach fosters competency, confidence and critical learners. Learners read, view, and analyse the purpose of the text. This eventually leads learners to evaluate different genres. The communicative approach encourages that learners are exposed to the target language and they are able to read and write using the target language. The process approach

involves learners reading and demonstrating through oral and written form. Learners, therefore, can express themselves naturally. CAPS also suggests that creative writing should be encouraged and should be joined to the study of the text studied, that class discussions should lead to written work activity and that literature is not about right answers.

Violet included the creative aspect while teaching Shakespeare. Amy, however, felt that the examination did not allow for personal responses. Therefore, according to Amy, the National Senior Certificate examinations were not in keeping with CAPS, which encouraged an appreciation for the drama. Lastly, none of the participants concluded their discussions with written activity. Again, it can be illustrated that CAPS supports the learner to communicate verbally, but there is no oral task or component that tests literature, specifically Shakespeare.

According to the data, it appears that the process of studying the play leaves learners' with ambivalent feelings. However, it is good to note that different genres of literature are not for everyone. Therefore, there is not a direct cause and effect relationship, where teachers are the cause for lack of enthusiasm of learners. It is also a different time period and age. These learners are studying a play not only written 400 years ago, but a play that was studied over 30 years ago by their own teachers. The type of learner the teacher has is probably very different to the type learner the teacher was.

#### **4.8 Participants' Beliefs on Professional Attributes Required to Teach Shakespeare**

The four participants indicated that teachers needed to be knowledgeable about the text. Lessons needed to be planned. Teachers ought to have a direction to guide the lesson and for learners to grasp content. According to Betty, teachers needed to be open-minded. Betty disparaged teachers who sat at their desks and taught. She was well informed and this was apparent in the observation. She knew her content well. Violet, Betty, Amy and Anne moved around the class during the observation lessons and this made them more accessible and involved in the lesson. The teacher needed to know his or her content before transferring it to learners. The success of a lesson was dependant on how equipped a teacher was in terms of resources, knowledge, methodology and execution of a lesson. The above suggestions from participants highlight their understanding of content, which is part of the first step in

developing their PCK, according to Shulman (1986). However, whether these beliefs are practiced and to what degree have to be considered.

Betty expressed that the world is constantly changing, therefore, teachers need to adapt and accommodate learners of 2015. Anne advocated that a teacher ought to have empathy for her learners and consider that they are from a different time and background to Shakespeare. Anne aspired to the notion that a teacher should be passionate about Shakespeare, understand his work and put himself or herself into the learners' shoes when attempting to teach Shakespeare. This seems like an idealistic view, since Anne is yet to show empathy. She is still a novice and should grow as time progresses. Violet said that it was important for a teacher teaching Shakespeare to "have a feel" for his or her learners.

Betty, Violet and Amy felt that they had changed. Amy asserted that she did not teach the play the same way every year. This is evident from the interviews, observations and the I-poems. Betty also pointed out that it was essential for teachers to keep looking for new ideas, fresh resources and to research Shakespeare. She simply stated that "no one is an island", meaning that teachers ought not to work in isolation. Betty also suggested that there were available resources and materials that could help to improve one's practice, but one has to take the step to explore new avenues. Betty promoted the idea for a teacher to be fully resourced before he or she entered a class to teach Shakespeare. This is what Shulman (1986) postulates. It is obvious that Betty's PCK has grown and that she is able to ascertain that there are various strategies to use. It is important to note that novice teachers generally leave university with idealistic theories and approaches. However, the classroom is very different to the theories and content taught at university. The practical experience is just as important as the academic aspect. Therefore, there is a need for a balance between these two types of knowledge. She also believed that it was impossible for a teacher to expect to gain understanding herself or himself simultaneously with learners, but that the teachers need to have full understanding of the play prior to teaching it. The more experience one has teaching the play, the more competent one becomes. This is glaring when comparing Anne and Violet. Therefore, PCK grows with experience. However, PCK can never stop changing and adapting, because learners and other factors are never static. Betty fostered the idea that the level of the class had to be considered and that the methodology and approach to teaching Shakespeare was determined by the level of learners.



Amy expressed that it was imperative for a teacher to know the text well before teaching a Shakespearean play. Anne endorsed that a general degree was sufficient for anyone to teach Shakespeare, and that teachers didn't need retraining in order to teach English to second language learners. Anne's belief that content or academic knowledge is sufficient is refuted by Shulman (1986), who believed that this is just one type of knowledge that teachers need. Knowing how to explain content to a learner in a way that fosters understanding is what divides a teaching expert from a non-teaching person. None of the participants were trained specifically to teach second language learners. The tools these participants hone are skills for first language learners. There are significant differences in teaching those who are competent in a language to those who are less knowledgeable about the basics of English. Therefore, it seems plausible to suggest that actual training needs to be considered to improve the teaching of Shakespeare.

Betty believed teachers were starting to share resources. However, it was an individual's choice. Anne had never considered sharing resources or networking with teachers. It is something that she would like to do, but was not sure how to go about doing so. Lastly, this type of knowledge gained from other colleagues could be considered as another domain to be included, because teachers can learn from each other and increase their PCK.

Violet argued that a teacher who talked for more than twenty percent of the lesson had failed. She fathomed that learners need to explore and be given tasks or activities to foster learning. She understood that certain teachers become comfortable in their teaching zones because of teaching the same plays for many years. Amy does point out that if a teacher has been teaching the same play for ten years in the same manner, then the teacher only has one year of teaching experience. It was critical, according to Amy, for teachers to change because of the dynamics of life. She felt that new resources were needed and that her school needed to keep up with new trends of technology. This is ironic. Amy was least eager to try new methods and worked with what she knew best. She felt teachers who were passionate about teaching Shakespeare would constantly be involved in research, which she is and her content knowledge is impeccable. Amy believed that the teacher ought to be flexible and change with the times. She also suggested that it was significant for the teacher to have direction, because Shakespeare was already so abstract. This could explain her line by line analysis to remove

the intangible from the play. Therefore, she reduces it to basic words. Amy concluded by saying that teachers could not “faff around” since Shakespeare was already so abstract.

Violet believed the amount of enthusiasm a teacher possessed influenced the teaching of Shakespeare. She explained that if a teacher approached teaching Shakespeare negatively, this would result in an unsuccessful lesson. Anne was somewhat negative in her depiction of her classroom. Personal reflection was paramount to Violet to ponder on what worked and what didn't work in the lesson. She surmised that a second or third read of the play resulted in teachers always finding something new and believes that teaching is never static but ever-changing. She argued that teachers and learners should reflect. Yet, reflection was not a constant practice with these participants. In fact, no time was actually allocated. It was almost incidental, and through experience, participants could determine what worked.

## **4.9 Conclusion**

Betty, Amy, Anne and Violet expressed that there was a definite challenge for learners who were English second language speakers, and this impacted on other areas of their learning. There is consensus that there is an issue relating to teaching English to second language learners. It is not just the physical constraints, but definite challenges in the actual transference of English home language content to second language learners. There is an impact of beliefs on the strategies the participants use. However, the beliefs of the participants are not necessarily influencing their PCK because of greater constraints outside the classroom walls. Participants are enthusiastic admirers of Shakespeare, but it is difficult to transfer this love of Shakespeare to learners. Three of the participants do not recommend Shakespeare to learners and choose alternatives to Shakespeare which are viewed as far easier and accessible.

This chapter provides the findings of the participants' beliefs on teaching Shakespeare and its influence on their PCK. The I-Poems were presented first, followed by a detailed analysis of the participants' beliefs. The next chapter analyses the data regarding the development of the participants' PCK. The final chapter provides a discussion on the findings in relation to the literature and offers recommendations where necessary.

# Chapter 5: Findings: Teachers' PCK

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## 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter described and reported participants' beliefs about Shakespeare using I-Poems and analysis. It also reported on how participants' beliefs influenced the development of their individual PCK.

This chapter analyses the data and reports the findings according to the second research question:

- What is the Pedagogical Content Knowledge of teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?

This chapter reports the findings regarding the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of each participant: Betty, Anne, Violet and Amy. In this chapter, data was analysed from the four interviews with the four participant high school English teachers in the Durban area.

Shulman (1986) describes PCK as the knowledge teachers use when they reflect and interpret subject matter and then find methods to represent the subject matter that makes it understandable to learners. This representation may include analogies, examples, explanations and demonstrations. The learner's gender, capability, prior knowledge and misunderstandings are taken into consideration when selecting methods or strategies to teach subject matter.

Shulman (1986) highlights a cycle teachers ought to complete to develop their PCK. The cycle includes, firstly, **teachers demonstrating an understanding of their content and transferring it to their learners**. This step includes teachers building upon learners' prior knowledge, as a form of scaffolding. Secondly, **teachers take into consideration learners' backgrounds, contextual and social contexts**. Thirdly, **teachers use strategies** that facilitate learning. In the fourth step **teachers assess** formally and informally. The penultimate step includes **teachers reflecting** followed by the sixth step of **new comprehension** and understanding of teachers of their learners. Teachers are able to adapt and accommodate new strategies to foster better understanding.

The initial steps can be differentiated; however, there are overlaps by the end of the cycle. Nevertheless, I aimed as best as possible to analyse data according to the six steps proposed by Shulman (1986). Thus, this chapter organises and presents the findings using these six steps.

## **5.2 Teachers' Understanding of Content Knowledge**

The participants ranged in terms of years of experience and qualification. The table below presents the qualifications, subjects majored, years of teaching experience and the grades which participants presently teach.

The data revealed that these participants were vastly qualified, but not specifically in English. It is interesting to note that, besides Betty, none of the three participants set out to be teachers of English. This is clearly indicated in their chosen fields of study. Violet was a physical education specialist. With the introduction of new subjects and the removal of others, Violet found that her subject had become redundant. Therefore, she had to teach a new learning area. Amy qualified as a science teacher, however, just like Violet; she was left with little choice but to move to the language department at her school. This redeployment protected her from becoming excess in her school and being deployed to another institution.

Anne, a commerce graduate, was unable to secure employment for a lengthy period. She applied for teaching vacancies and was offered a teaching post to teach English home language in the Further Education and Training phase.

Nonetheless, the participants appeared passionate and knowledgeable about Shakespeare and his plays. The three participants, Anne, Amy and Violet, were initially non-experts of Shakespeare. However, over time, Amy and Violet's content knowledge of Shakespeare increased through teaching experience, practice and initiative. Violet and Betty seemed most progressive in their development of PCK at this stage.

Violet, Betty and Amy appeared confident and articulate about plays written by Shakespeare. Anne, however, is novice at teaching, and her knowledge of Shakespearean plays is limited. In fact, in her one year of teaching experience she has been exposed to only two plays. Therefore, in this initial phase of PCK, the other three candidates are competent in terms of

their content. It is appropriate to state that PCK develops over time and exposure to the subject matter.

### **5.3 Participants' Consideration and Understanding of Learners' Social and Contextual Factors**

Anne and Violet were from schools where the learner population comprised one hundred percent learners who are isiZulu first language speakers who study English as home language. Therefore, they are English second language learners. Amy and Betty's schools included both Indian and Black learners, so some learners would have English as their mother tongue and others would have isiZulu as their mother tongue. The participants' language of instruction in their schools is English. Typical school challenges were highlighted by Betty, Anne and Violet. These included peer pressure, drugs, ill-discipline and poor attendance. Violet indicated that her learners were financially and socially disadvantaged.

The social plights that Betty, Anne and Violet identified were not used as a platform to teach Shakespeare. It is, moreover, essential to consider that these issues are not evident in Shakespeare. It could be possible that Shakespeare's themes such as love, greed, jealousy, friendship, and others, might be universal and fit into learners' schemata, but that their economic realities do not feature in Shakespeare's plays which make them difficult to expound.

Violet has considered some aspects of her learners context. For example, although textbooks were few she allowed learners to borrow the books. She also chose from a selection of plays by Shakespeare ones that were age appropriate and relative to learners' experiences. For instance, she chose *The Merchant of Venice* since the themes were identifiable: friendship, love and mercy. Fifteen year-olds would easily identify with such themes, according to Violet. The shortage of textbooks was evident during the observation lesson where Violet issued one textbook per group of seven learners. The data also reveals that Violet's PCK is well developed, however, it can be suggested that due to the social constraints and economic challenges that her learners face, the English results of her learners in 2014 were the lowest of the four participants.

Violet, at times, used code switching so that learners could understand new concepts. However, to encourage the use of English, learners had to speak in English in her classroom. This was established in the observation lesson, where Violet asked learners in IsiZulu to applaud after each group presented. The use of isiZulu was informal and it engaged the learners. Violet referred to her class as “a non isiZulu class”. She believes that learners become better equipped in a language with more practice. There is also research by Mati (2004) and Myers-Scotton (1992) to support the notion of code switching and how it should be done.

Amy’s learners also faced poverty. Part of the surrounding area was impoverished. Despite the fact that learners were English second language learners, both the learners and their parents consciously chose a school where the medium of instruction was English. Parents adhered to payment and fees were up-to-date. She even went on to describe her school’s bank balance as “quite healthy”. Lunch was provided for learners at Amy’s school. This seemed to impact on learning and teaching positively. If learners’ appetites are satisfied they can concentrate better and contribute effectively in class. Amy pointed out that her school and classroom faced no discipline issues, or factors evident in the other three schools. In fact, the only issue she highlighted was learners were unable to complete homework because of the distance some had to travel as well as the chores the learners needed to attend to after school. However, these social factors were not taken into consideration by teachers and homework was still issued regardless. It seems that consistent parent involvement and well nourished learners results in an effective and positive school environment. None of the other three participants suggested a parent component that was actively involved in improving the smooth running of the school. Reflecting on Violet’s school, it is possible that her learners are simply hungry, which in turn leads to poor discipline and lack of concentration.

Betty described her school as average. Learners were from the surrounding area and from the local children’s home. Many learners were placed there based on the assumption that they lived in the area. She stated the school was starting to “feel the pinch”, as school fees were often not paid. According to Betty, there was a growing number of English second language learners.

Betty tried to take cognisance of where her learners were coming from and attempted to gain every learner's attention. Her position was that there were many themes her learners could identify with in plays written by Shakespeare. She said that she used analogies to help learners identify with the themes of the play. In *Romeo and Juliet* she presented the analogy of hatred and animosity in families of the 21<sup>st</sup> century compared to the two families in the play. Another example she used was from *Hamlet*. She pointed out to learners the difficulty a child faces when the mother has a relationship with a family member. This could result in dysfunctional families. She used this example to illustrate the difficulties Hamlet faced when his mother marries his Uncle Claudius. Her last example referred to *Macbeth*. Here she looked at different leaders in present society who start off good, but greed and power destroys them. She then uses this analogy to explain how Macbeth similarly becomes destructive and demises over greed and power.

In the observation lesson Betty also drew on breast feeding and how a bond is created between a child and mother. She, therefore, demonstrated the bond created between Juliet and her nurse, who breast fed Juliet. This provoked learners to understand how the nurse, a minor character was willing to help Juliet. She then referred to South Africa, where domestic workers and children of the household establish a bond. She related an incident where the domestic worker was able to provide details of a learner at school who had run away. The domestic worker had in fact had more facts about the learner than his own parents. These examples of PCK worked effectively as learners could identify and understand the themes that Betty was teaching. Betty moved from concrete, everyday analogies to abstract themes found in the play.

Amy used celebrities to present examples to learners, comparing their actions to the actions of characters in the play. Violet gave an example of the analogy she used in her class whilst teaching *The Merchant of Venice*. She asked learners if they would sacrifice their lives for a best friend in the same way Antonio was willing to sacrifice his life for his best friend Bassanio. The analogies used were not necessarily specific to the learners' personal experiences. Scenarios were suggested by the participants instead, to foster understanding in their learners.

Violet was the only participant who revealed that she drew on her learners' prior knowledge. In grade eleven she would ask learners to draw on their prior knowledge of the grade ten Shakespearean plays they had studied. She would ask these learners to identify different genres of literature and when they reached grade twelve they were able to decipher genres they were reading.

Betty and Violet, who were more experienced, indicated that they needed to adapt and change according to the factors of their learners. Participants were quite aware of the social and financial standing of their learners. The trend seemed to be the same, where even though learners were English second language learners, the participants taught them as first language learners. The researcher found a lack of passion and empathy for the learners and at no point in the interview was there reference to personal involvement or concern. In some ways, the strategies and PCK appeared mechanical without personal reference.

Shulman (1987) recommends that teachers take the contextual factors surrounding learners into consideration when drawing on strategies and analogies to foster understanding. These contextual factors include age, gender and culture. Participants were fully conscious of their learners' circumstances; however, actual representations that learners could identify with were not deliberately used. Firstly, it seems that participants are not concerned with these issues. However, on the other hand, examinations or tests on Shakespeare do not consider that there are English second language learners studying Shakespeare. Therefore, teachers are compelled, especially in matric, to teach the requirements and desired outcomes of the curriculum and examination. Secondly, the examinations do not test on how learners relate to the plays personally. Therefore, it is understandable that participants place little emphasis on learners' personal connection to the play.

Shulman (1986) recommends the importance of making the content or subject matter accessible to learners. They are, therefore, able to identify with themes and issues in a play. Nevertheless, it begs the question as to how would a teacher of English incorporate the background of learners who face rife poverty, abuse, hunger, crime, among other issues, into the scheme of teaching Shakespeare as suggested by Shulman (1986)? Sometimes teachers themselves differ from their learners culturally and historically. Therefore, what may be unmentionable to learners may be acceptable to teachers and vice versa.



Shakespeare makes many sexual references that might be difficult to communicate to learners who are conservative. Teachers who are equally conventional may not highlight or refer to the sexual innuendos. In this study, Amy was the only participant who made reference to Shakespeare's sexual inferences while teaching.

Anne, who was a new teacher, made no comment about using learners' own experiences as a tool to create understanding and meaning. It is also imperative to know the boundary and how far a teacher may go in her interaction with learners in terms of including lived experiences and beliefs of learners. There are many sensitive issues that a teacher cannot address. If learners do delve into their own prior knowledge and experience, what may be exposed can be difficult for a teacher to address, as he or she may lack the skill to deal with such issues. There is a possibility that working with learners' personal lived examples may leave learners vulnerable.

The intensity of Shakespeare's plays may be beyond the scope of an eighteen year old. This may pose great difficulty for teachers to present content viably. Furthermore, there are some aspects of the play (climax, denouement) that cannot be represented by the teacher. Therefore, the teacher has to present the information without representation and demonstration.

From the interview data, it appears that Betty and Violet have considered their learners' contextual factors to some degree. Amy has learners who pose no discipline problems and issues with the way they learn, as a result, she continues to teach without particular consideration of learners' positioning. Anne has not taken into consideration, or is not aware, that she ought to consider these factors of her learners when teaching.

In the second step of Shulman's cycle (1986), teachers take into consideration learners' backgrounds, contextual and social contexts. Shulman (1987) recommends this vital step to support learning. However, it is evident that Amy, who pays little attention to this step, is able to teach effectively regardless. It is a key point that if and when these learners reach tertiary institutions and attend lectures with students from different backgrounds, it is highly

unlikely that a lecturer will be able to package information or content in an understandable representation suitable for every individual.

## **5.4 Teaching Strategies**

The teachers' own knowledge of the plays and their knowledge of the learners inform the teaching strategies that they use in the classroom. This section describes the teaching strategies that participants spoke about in their interviews. It also includes details from the classroom observation by the researcher of the participants.

### **5.4.1 Contextualising the Play**

The play was contextualised by Betty, Anne and Violet. Contextualising included a historical background so that learners could understand the Shakespearean era. Anne investigated places mentioned in plays to help learners visualise these countries or cities. She used an example of the city of Belmont as mentioned in *The Merchant of Venice*; however, the place could not be located or probably was renamed. Violet went a step further and secured the help of the geography educator from her school, who provided learners with information on the location and setting of the play. Betty felt that it was imperative that learners know how Shakespeare was inspired to write the play. Amy made no reference to contextualising the play, but said that she “jumped” straight into discussion about themes.

Lemmer (1998) also noted in his study that teachers began with a historical background of the play. It seems that thirty years later teachers are still employing the identical strategy. It is also worthy to note that the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements document only encourages the use of historical background if it will enhance understanding. In addition is it significant that examination papers do not test on historical background or the playwright.

### **5.4.2 Reading the Play**

The four participants encouraged reading the play for understanding. None of these participants contemplated reading the entire text over two weeks as suggested by the CAPS document (DBE, 2013). Hence, they did not do what CAPS advocated. Curriculum reform may have taken place, but it appears as if teachers favour their core practices of teaching Shakespeare.

Amy, Anne and Violet nominated learners to read the different characters. Anne encouraged learners to read the text prior to the lesson and discussion. However, this was not as simple as it sounded. Anne found learners to be disruptive and uncooperative. Therefore, reading was not always effective. Violet said that her reading lessons were positive. She read with learners in class. However, the entire text was not read. Important scenes were selected and read out loud. She wanted her learners, like Betty, to read for deep understanding. This entailed looking at important scenes to achieve clearer meaning for the learners.

Amy's approach to reading was similar to Violet's, but she was adamant on reading the entire play, cover to cover. She employed a reading target where more time was spent reading and analysing important scenes. It was not essential for learners in Amy's class to read the text beforehand. She enjoyed classroom reading and unravelling the play together.

Amy and Violet often read for their classes, as they felt they could express certain scenes or soliloquies far better than the learners. Anne and Violet were aware that many learners are shy or uncomfortable reading English texts in front of peers for fear of making mistakes. It was fundamental for Anne that learners read with the correct tone, as meaning could be misconstrued.

### **5.4.3 Analyzing and Breaking Down the Texts into Understandable Units**

The third strategy involved simplifying the play to the level of the learners. Betty referred to this as a "critical breakdown", as it fosters understanding as to how language works, as well as what Shakespeare intended, and advocates an appreciation of this genre. She said that she simplified the message and themes to encourage understanding. Anne and Amy used vocabulary to help learners understand a specific scene. The four participants drew learners' attention to the rich imagery and figures of speech presented by Shakespeare.

Betty showed her skill of teaching her learners to analyse in the observation. She gave learners the word love and asked them to break down the concept of love. The learners were able to categorise love accordingly: requited love, attraction, infatuation and real love. All participants used the strategy of analysing. This included looking at various lines, breaking down the implicit or explicit meaning, explaining or discussing it with learners for clarity and better understanding. Betty advocated the use of reading and analysis simultaneously. She

maintains the idea of “putting the ball into a learner’s court” to research, analyse and discuss. Therefore, she enabled her learners to be active in learning. It is pertinent to her that real understanding takes place. Anne also conducted her lessons similarly, act by act, scene by scene.

Both Betty and Amy commented that learners’ responses should be marked on interpretation. Learners who provided good analysis and strong arguments would obtain a better score. These two participants reflected that good analysis revealed understanding. Betty, during the observation lesson contributed ideas to learners on how to write a literature essay in the examination. She encouraged them to “build a case”. She pointed out the importance of quotations. She used a famous quotation, “Live by the sword” and the learners were able to complete it by saying, “Die by the sword”. This aided learners to establish writing skills.

Violet encouraged learners to make a comparative analysis, something she termed as “inter-textual analysis”. This allowed learners to think and reflect. She provided an example where learners in grade eleven had prior knowledge from studying Shakespeare already in grade ten. Thereby, they were able to compare and contrast plays.

Amy enjoyed the analysis and looking at things from different angles, and the messages or themes found in the plays. She started her lesson with characterisation, followed by reading and analysis. She was inflexible and made sure that she conducted line by line analysis. The CAPS document discourages line by line analysis and considers this style of exploration negative. According to the CAPS document, “Most of this work should be text-based, but line-by-line analysis of any text is destructive to its subtlety” (DBE, 2013, p. 12).

Amy reasoned that a learner should be able to analyse critically, use quotations to substantiate an argument in an essay and provide correct citations. Anne believed that learners’ understanding or perception of a play is valid. She was adamant that any piece of literature carried emotions and that learners ought to identify and explain these feelings. Amy was equally adamant that a well substantiated view cannot be marked wrong in an examination. Amy did not want learners who regurgitated what she had said, or the notes given, but they had to be able to respond independently. She wanted to create analytical minds and a love for analysis. Her point of reference was: should the character Othello be considered a villain, a victim or an honourable murderer.

Amy, in the observation lesson, taught learners how to write an essay for the examination. She broke down the requirements of the introduction in an essay. She spoke about each essay needing a hypothesis. Learners seemed aware of this term. She also discussed the three steps required in each paragraph. This included the argument, citation and evidence. She also explained the importance of writing in paragraphs and how each paragraph should “allude to the next link”. She used terminology such as “juxtapose” and “subsequent”. The learners seemed to understand Amy clearly. She asked learners to draw on “Aristotle’s criteria” of a tragic hero and to analyse accordingly in an essay.

#### 5.4.4 Learning Resources

All four participants mentioned that they tried to create innovative lessons. Amy, Anne, and Violet made use of **PowerPoint presentations**. Anne found the use of PowerPoint extremely helpful as she could include **notes**, **film extracts** and **images** to stimulate her learners. She had a good knowledge of **Internet resources** and pointed out how “beautiful” and “helpful” **YouTube videos** are in that they provided a “plethora of information”. She would **google** a play by Shakespeare and find **cartoon representations** of the play within minutes. Violet, likewise, used **technology** in her classroom and would show the **film** or snippets relating to the play. Amy counted herself as her learners’ best resource and therefore had not attempted to expand her repertoire of resources.

Anne also made use of an **interactive quiz** that she had sourced from the Internet, which helped to reveal learners’ understanding of the play.

Violet used **story telling** and **dramatics** to engage learners. Amy made use of **humour** to inspire and stimulate them. This included drawing on sexual innuendos, which she thought made the class giggle. These sexual references in the play were highlighted to shock the learners and elicit or arouse interest.

The data revealed that three of the teachers are becoming technologically advanced and are utilizing resources available on the Internet. Anne, who had the least experience, was found to be most informed by internet resources. In fact, she stated how easy it was to find useful instructional material to use in a classroom. Amy, however, was the most reluctant and

avoided the use of the Internet for fear of learners plagiarising. However, she made use of the Internet for her own personal and professional development. Betty was of the opinion that it was equally important for learners to have accessible information on the plays they studied so that both teacher and learner were on the same journey. Anne and Betty made available **resources, website addresses and references** to learners, since they had the access to the Internet.

Although Anne utilised various resources, she still had the most difficulty in terms of discipline and control. Amy, who used the least resources, faced little or no challenge from learners. The question that is raised is, if traditional methods are actually more effective than new innovations.

It is pertinent that participants praised learners in the observation lesson. This encouraged learners. Violet said, “There you go!” The participants wore friendly facial expressions. Each classroom of each participant was creative. Amy’s classroom was recently painted in red, which brightened her learning space. While there were charts, none of the classes had charts on Shakespeare and his plays. The learning space did not include any posters that were specific to Shakespeare.

The participants, except Violet, used the audio book with which learners followed using their text books. She and Anne believed in interchanging reading out loud and using the audio book. Anne, however, found learners who would fall into a deep sleep during such lessons. However, she continued to use this resource. Violet indicated that from her personal experience she found the audio book boring and mundane and did not enjoy learning through the audio book.

Amy also encouraged learners to video record her lesson through the use of tablets and smartphones. Amy was the only participant who allowed this. She found it effective, as learners listened for understanding and could refer to the video anytime for consolidation and reference. However, this seems to contradict Amy’s initial response that her learners were quite poor, yet could afford tablets and smartphones. Amy also held Saturday lessons and allowed her learners to use smartphones or tablets to record her because sometimes learners were slow in writing.

### **5.4.5 Group Work**

Betty and Violet made use of group work consistently. Violet would encourage her learners at the outset to investigate and report on information about Shakespeare. The learners presented a biography of Shakespeare. In groups, learners were allowed to discuss themes. When groups presented a task, other learners could challenge or comment. These participants made use of group work as they said that it assisted weaker learners. High flyers served as mentors in a group. Learners, according to these two participants, felt more comfortable and were able to express themselves better rather in a one on one discussion. Betty and Violet agree that group work is successful.

It is useful to bear in mind that these learners are products of Outcomes Based Education, a curriculum implemented in South Africa between 1999 and 2010, which encouraged the teacher to be a facilitator and for learning to be learner-centred. Therefore, drawing on learners' prior knowledge of group work enhances and fosters learning in a manner that learners are accustomed to. During the observation lesson, Violet walked around and probed group members for responses to extend their thinking. She also provided learners with clues while probing. Violet began the group work activity with a brief explanation of the task at hand. Each group was assigned a specific theme and she ascertained if learners understood the brief. Learners were then taken out of the classroom and were assigned into groups. These were then allocated a space in the classroom to work. Violet provided learners with pens and A3 paper.

The group work was noisy but constructive. Learners were allowed to use the limited textbooks as a point of reference. She then asked them to select a scribe and a presenter per group. Learners were familiar with group work and engaged meaningfully. The groups were given almost twenty-five minutes to collaborate. Sometimes learners engaged in other conversations, and sometimes spoke in isiZulu. Violet walked around constantly and provided positive feedback. Learners appeared affirmed by her. She reminded learners to speak and discuss in English. She also pointed out to groups if they had neglected certain points. Group work in Violet's lesson worked well and the outcome for the lesson was attained. Her teaching approach in this lesson was learner-centred and she was the facilitator. There was constant interaction between her and her learners.

Amy and Anne had never considered group work. Anne attributes this to disruptive learners. Both participants also noted that they had large numbers in a class. Amy was unsure how to use group work effectively.

#### **5.4.6 Role Play**

Anne, Amy, Betty and Violet encouraged role play in which learners volunteered to act scenes. Betty explained that it was very important for learners to use their imagination to envisage the people and period of Shakespeare. According to Violet this helped learners identify with characters. Learners did not have to know words verbatim, as long as the context and intention were prevalent. Violet allowed learners to make use of costumes to convey the era of Shakespeare. In role playing *The Merchant of Venice* learners made use of caskets to convey the scene of the casket test. Anne used role play because this created humour in the lesson and learners seemed to be interested in acting.

#### **5.4.7 Discussion**

Every participant engaged in classroom discussion with their learners. Amy used it to reflect on themes at the start of the play. Learners were expected to contribute to the discussion. New concepts were also explored through discussion. Anne indicated that learners' input revealed their understanding, or not. This was evident in the observation lessons with the four participants. Betty conducted a discursive lesson. She recapped on the different genres of Shakespeare's writing and classified it as tragedy and comedy. She began engaging learners with questions about what a tragedy is. Learners were able to discuss the lovers in *Romeo and Juliet* who died in the end. She also connected the role of minor characters that helped the lovers in the play. Learners asked questions and provided explanations with substance. Betty was able to demonstrate the relevance of a theme and break it down accordingly. Her contribution to the discussion was not watered down and her terminology was appropriate for both English home language speakers and English second language speakers. She used the expressions "upset the apple cart" and the "boomerang effect", which learners very easily understood. During the discussion, she wrote down pertinent points on the chalkboard. Learners were involved in the discussion and Betty consciously asked particular learners to reflect. She would scaffold on each learner's response. She provided clues to elicit responses.



Learners were well behaved and raised their hands should they have a response. They showed understanding and were able to provide references from the text.

The discussion continued to focus on the feud between the two families. The learners laughed at certain points and they felt comfortable in this forum. They were able to discuss the differences between love and infatuation and explain it according to their own experiences. From this, learners understood and differentiated that Romeo's love for Rosaline was in fact infatuation, and his love for Juliet was real. They were critical in their thinking and offered responses that were backed with examples from the play itself. Betty made reference to Hollywood relationships as an extended metaphor in the discussion. This provided a concrete example for learners. Betty's use of intrinsic (personal examples of the learner) and extrinsic (wide-ranging) analogies provided good understanding for learners.

Amy also conducted a classroom discussion during the observation. She made reference to criteria and prior knowledge of *Othello*. Learners were able to respond and relate to the play. The discussion was not watered down and Amy's vocabulary was sophisticated. I would not have assumed that there were second language learners in her classroom. An example of this was the use of the term, "reversal of fortune". Learners were disciplined and contributed meaningfully. They were able to find suitable quotations. They did not write, but concentrated on the discussion.

Anne also made use of classroom discussion in recapping *Romeo and Juliet*. Learners turned up to the lesson at different times which created disruption. She was also trying to provide the breakdown of the examination paper and was focusing on particular questions. She tried to lead the discussion, but instead it turned into a lecture style lesson. Anne did most of the talking and learners contributed ineffectively. She made reference to Friar Lawrence, a character in the play. The learners were distracted and unfocused and moved the discussion to an insignificant joke. They also burst into uproarious laughter for almost anything.

#### **5.4.8 Debates**

Debates amongst learners were encouraged by all participants. Some of the topics that were debated on included relationships, mother's love versus a caregiver's love, and others in relation to the particular drama being studied. Amy indicated that, at times, she had to curb

learners' enthusiasm as debates could take up a lot of time. Violet suggested that learners were encouraged to raise concerns and pose questions to other learners.

#### **5.4.9 Differentiated Work**

To accommodate mixed ability within a class, both Betty and Violet taught according to the needs of the learners. Strategies and methods changed accordingly. Betty would allow a competent learner, "a sophisticated learner", to research, analyse and discuss. In her own words she would "put the ball into their court". However, with weaker learners she would provide scenarios, situations or materials with which learners could identify and work. Hence, she moved from concrete examples to abstract ones and set differentiated work where necessary.

Betty and Violet, the two more experienced participants, encouraged group work to support classes with learners of mixed abilities. Both commented that the weaker learner was guided by the stronger learner. It was a form of mentoring. Violet firmly believed that the skilled learner could not be ignored, because he or she would become bored. With high flyers her teaching strategy was more intellectual, more probing and interrogative. Anne and Amy did not set differentiated tasks for their learners and taught without consideration for mixed abilities in a class.

#### **5.4.10 Notes**

Betty and Violet encouraged their learners to take down pivotal points as they taught, but discouraged copious note taking. Emphasis was placed on understanding rather than rigid note taking.

Anne and Amy supported note taking because of their own personal experience of studying at school and at tertiary institutions. Anne would firstly ask learners to make their own notes. However, with learners who were unwilling to co-operate she would then have to spoon feed and provide notes for them.

It was important for Amy to paraphrase and interpret the Elizabethan language found in Shakespeare's plays. She preferred her own notes for learners to use and dissuaded the use of

the Internet and worksheets. Notes in learners' own hand-writing, according to Amy, helped her learners study easily. Therefore, she felt that learners understood as they wrote. She acknowledges that it was "old fashioned" and she called herself "pedantic" in that she would constantly check and supervise learners' note books. Anne and Amy expected literature note books. Amy was firm with her learners about keeping literature note books, as she felt one could not solely study from a textbook.

None of the participants encouraged the use of worksheets.

#### **5.4.11 Watching the Play**

Participants allowed learners to watch the play live or through film. It was found to be a useful strategy. However, Anne was the only participant who indicated that the play should be watched first before analysing or reading, as this gave learners an appreciation of the text. Amy, Betty and Violet allowed learners to view the play after studying it because it seemed to make more sense to the learner.

Shakespeare intended his plays to be watched and not read. Drama is meant to be enjoyed and appreciated visually. It would be interesting to investigate if watching a play prior promotes improved understanding.

### **5.5 Assessment of Shakespeare**

The fourth step in Shulman's cycle is that teachers assess learners to establish their learning.

#### **5.5.1 Informal Assessment**

All participants conducted formal and informal assessments. The participants encouraged a question and answer session in their classrooms. This allowed them to review the lesson, and understanding and misunderstandings of learners. It was a form of reflection. Betty indicated that by learners speaking in a lesson it showed their comprehension and understanding. Amy and Anne would write questions on the board for learners to complete at the end of a lesson on Shakespeare. It was verified during the classroom observation how Violet made use of questions and answers.

Betty conducted the informal assessment at the end of each lesson. When learners were motivated and there was a change in their mindset she felt this was an indication to her that they had acquired new information. Betty and Violet generally asked learners at the end of the play if they had enjoyed studying a play written by Shakespeare to assess an appreciation of the play, and many a time the response was favourable. Violet and Betty often listened to learners discuss elements of the play in their group discussions. Betty felt that constant interaction helped her to assess learners' understanding.

Violet assessed group presentations. Silence from learners in a response to Violet's questions was another indicator for her that learners did not fully grasp a concept. She would then revisit the content.

Betty extended her learners beyond the requirements of the CAPS document. It was vital for her to work with her learners in completing tasks. She had tried and tested this method and found it to be successful. Violet made use of informal assessments to fill the gaps that were present between formal tasks. Due to fewer formal tasks, she felt a learner who was not constantly reviewing what was learnt may forget and a lot of undoing would occur.

Amy also assessed learners understanding with a task where learners had to write a eulogy on the characters who died at the end of *Othello*. She found this reflected if learners understood characterisation.

Anne felt that there were too many formal assessments already and could not conduct any others, as it would have been an overload. This was understandable, as she not only had some difficult learners who were inattentive, but she also taught three grade twelve classes.

### **5.5.2 Formal Assessments**

The participants conducted the formal assessments required for Shakespeare, set by the National Department of Education. These formal tasks included a literary essay and contextual questions set in the June and November examinations. Betty assessed learners according to their ability to break down the question in an examination and according to substantial answers. Amy focused on how analytical her learners could be. She looked for

learners' own interpretation of the play and favoured learners using quotations. Violet would also ask learners to demonstrate understanding by applying their knowledge of the play in transactional writing.

## **5.6 Reflection**

The fifth step in Shulman's cycle is that teachers reflect on their practice and the extent that learners have actually grasped the concepts, and then should be able to make changes to their teaching in response.

The participants said that they did not consciously reflect on their teaching strategies at the end of every lesson. Violet and Betty expressed that over time their methodology changed or adapted. Discussions, debates and question and answer sessions served as a tool for reflection. The aim of reflection is to change and improve teaching strategies. However, this is not completely evident. This type of reflection does not seem to occur regularly with the participants. Betty and Violet have many more years of experience to reflect on what worked and what did not. Anne is unable to reflect because she does not have much to compare her existing teaching methods and strategies to.

## **5.7 New Comprehension**

Violet understood that there were not enough textbooks. She, therefore, accommodated those learners who wanted to take texts home and read. Through experience she learnt that dramatising the play or using dramatic techniques enhanced the play. Violet also grasped that one needed to build on learners' prior knowledge. She acknowledged that at grade ten, prior knowledge of Shakespeare was nonexistent or limited. She found that asking learners at the end of a play if they appreciated it or not gave her direction as to whether she was successful or not in teaching the play. Most of the time she felt motivated and encouraged, as the responses were favourable and positive. Violet expressed these sentiments by saying, "One thinks one has done a brilliant job only to find out when one is doing the assessment that learners did not fully grasp a certain concept." The learners' responses also made her dig deeper and reflect on what worked and what did not in her teaching of the play. She was able to establish learners' understanding or challenges in studying the play. She would then revisit

concepts to attempt to deepen learners' understanding. Violet demonstrated this in the observation lesson by asking learners to reflect and recap on lesson and themes evident in the play *The Merchant of Venice*. Learners were able to draw on themes of love, friendship, revenge and religious intolerance. There was evidence of understanding reflected in their mind maps.

From past experiences Violet had learnt that the context of the learner needed to be considered. This was evident when she spoke of teaching Shakespeare at the beginning of her teaching career up until the present. Language was a barrier for her existing learners, therefore she employed code switching. She realised that a teacher cannot remain static, that strategies have to be accessible even if it means changing approaches or methodology. She asked herself these questions: 1) What is my understanding? 2) Have I done enough research? Often she found she had answered these questions positively, which impacted positively on her teaching. For Amy, understanding was gained from how learners analysed the text and their interpretations. After eleven years of teaching, her system seems to work for her, so she has maintained this approach. She did keep a note book where she recorded learners' errors or common mistakes when marking scripts. She worked on these weaknesses in her remedial lessons. She was also guided by questions and answers from learners.

Betty, like Violet, considered learners and acknowledged that she had to change, adapt and adjust her teaching. She felt she ought to accommodate learners of mixed ability in a class. Betty mentioned that she was constantly looking for new and innovative ideas to use in her lessons on Shakespeare and tried to be openminded for the facilitation of a Shakespearian play. Betty said her lessons changed depending on the class. So she might teach the same play to different classes, but each lesson was unique and required a different teaching strategy depending on the competence of the learners. She felt times had changed and one could not adhere strictly to a lesson plan.

Anne is yet to establish new comprehension, as she is still overpowered by her existing challenges. It is also difficult to provide one-on-one help. Therefore, mistakes of a pertinent nature to specific learners can be ignored. Participants, sometimes on an unconscious level, adapt lessons.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

This chapter provided a synopsis of the PCK of participants according to the cycle of Shulman (1987). It is evident that the four participants here did not show much evidence of the last two stages of reflection and new comprehension. Perhaps these stages develop over time and with experience. The cycle has overlaps. It is interesting to note that reflection was not an automatic step. If each participant adhered to every step, then their PCK would develop and expand. However, this is not the case with these four participants. They are at different stages or have forgone specific steps which may not be deemed necessary. The cycle is independent of time. Therefore, PCK changes or adapts over time and circumstance. The timeframe is not specific for each teacher. Some teachers, like Amy, probably become used to their comfort zones, and for her, it makes sense not to change what she feels is working.

The final chapter provides the discussion on this research. It also provides a summary of the implications of this study and recommendations.

# Chapter 6: Discussion and conclusion

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## 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide interpretation and explanation on the implications of the findings. It aims to answer the research questions posed, and elucidate how the results give support to answer the questions with consideration of the existing knowledge on the hypothesis. Future research is also recommended.

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. What are the beliefs of teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?
2. What is the Pedagogical Content Knowledge of these teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?
3. In what ways do teachers' beliefs influence their practice in teaching of Shakespeare?

Four participants participated in this research. It was qualitative and used interviews, I-Poems and observations as data sources. Chapter one provided a blueprint of the study. Chapter two provided the existing literature on PCK and beliefs of teachers. Chapter three surmised the methodology that would be used and provided detail into each data source. It also recognised possible limitations and revealed how trustworthiness would be sought. Chapters four and five reported the findings of the data collected.

## 6.2 Research Question One and Three

The purpose of this section is to summarise and discuss how the findings provide insight into these two questions:

*What are the beliefs of teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?*



*In what ways do teachers' beliefs influence their practice in teaching of Shakespeare?*

Shulman's cycle of PCK does not include a domain of teacher's beliefs. This domain has been proposed by Grossman, which includes the beliefs of teachers about the purpose of teaching a particular subject matter. A teacher's beliefs about the learners, her personal learning experiences, academic understanding and purpose of content, is influential on the choice of instructional tools and teaching strategies. This therefore impacts PCK. This view is supported by Park and Oliver (2008), Goodnough (2006) and Davidowitz and Rollnick (2011).

Participants reflected on the socio-economic factors that impacted teaching and learning. The data implies that learners' poverty does impinge on teacher's ability to teach holistically. Participants attempted to extend teaching strategies, however, the social issues are beyond the scope of participants' PCK. The contextual, social and economic crisis impacts on the delivery of content to learners. Even hunger is a contributing factor to lack of concentration within the classroom.

The data revealed that participants believed that second language speakers could grasp Shakespeare, however, there was resistance initially to learning Shakespeare. Participants did find learners bored, disinterested and disillusioned by Shakespeare. This gave rise to discipline issues. There is a definite impact on second language learners studying English home language. This is in keeping with Taylor (2011), who suggests that learners who are second language speakers perform worse than their English counterparts. This is also advocated by the Umalusi report (2011) that demonstrates that only 53% learners who wrote the National Senior Certificate examination passed and this has been a constant statistic from 2008 to 2011. There is a further burden placed on teachers who are also faced with learners who change their medium of instruction much later in their schooling career. Teachers' PCK does not necessarily extend or accommodate such challenges.

Overall, participants reflected a great appreciation and admiration for Shakespeare and, with consensus, argued that Shakespeare should remain part of the curriculum. However, this passion and enthusiasm for Shakespeare was not easily transferred to learners. Therefore, this

could suggest another omitted knowledge or domain of teachers where they are able to impart a love and aspiration for a drama like Shakespeare.

Anne, who was new to the teaching profession, struggled with discipline issues and did not have teaching strategies that engaged and stimulated her learners. PCK does develop over time, which was demonstrated by Violet and Betty. However, it is possible that many first year teachers face the same plight as Anne. This raises the question that if it takes years for PCK to develop, then what happens to those learners in the interim? Should certain subjects, especially in the FET phase, be reserved for senior and master teachers and not novice teachers?

The data revealed that the NSC examinations tested on analysis rather than personal interpretation, appreciation and reflection of the play. Themes, background information, dramatic elements and the playwright remain neglected in the examination, yet it was still taught by the teacher to support learners' understanding. There is less focus on actual interpretation and application to everyday life in the examination. The examinations appear to focus less on concrete examples, but more on abstract and academic analysing. Teachers, therefore, focused on the examination rather than appreciation of the drama. CAPS advocates an appreciation of the drama, however, the examination does not include an evaluation and appreciation of the play, as implied by Umalusi (2011). There is also concern that the weighting of Shakespeare in the examination is minute. An entire term is spent teaching Shakespeare, yet it counts for a mere six percent overall.

Teachers seem to be moving away from the study of Shakespeare in grade twelve. The data suggests that teachers find Shakespeare less accessible to learners, especially second language speakers. Three out of the four schools consciously chose to study other genres.

Teachers are guided by their own learning experiences, be it negative or positive. Two of the participants chose not to teach like their own traditional teachers and embraced new approaches such as group work and role play. Two of the participants were also influenced by their own learning styles at school and university and enforced rigid notebooks. Therefore, one's own learning experience does influence one's teaching style and choice of strategies.

Clearly, participants' beliefs do influence the teaching strategies and instructional tools used, as suggested by Ball (2000).

## 6.2 Research Question Two

*What is the Pedagogical Content Knowledge of these teachers of English who teach Shakespeare to second language learners?*

Lemmer's study, conducted in 1987, showed that teachers focused on background information, and teachers in this study still do the same. However, there is a shift, where participants did consider their learners' meaning and interpretation, provided it was substantiated. Teachers have moved away from copious notes. These teachers undoubtedly have a passion for Shakespeare. However, it was difficult to transfer this passion and enthusiasm to learners.

The participants used the following instructional tools and resources to enhance meaning and understanding of Shakespeare in the classroom:

Instructional tools	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analogies</li> <li>• use of prior knowledge</li> <li>• humour</li> <li>• reference to sexual innuendos to motivate learners</li> <li>• contextualising the play</li> <li>• reading the play</li> <li>• analysing and breaking down the texts into understandable units</li> <li>• storytelling</li> <li>• group work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PowerPoint presentations</li> <li>▪ notes</li> <li>▪ film extracts</li> <li>▪ images</li> <li>▪ internet resources</li> <li>▪ YouTube videos</li> <li>▪ Google</li> <li>▪ audio book</li> <li>▪ cartoon representations</li> <li>▪ technology</li> <li>▪ film</li> <li>▪ interactive quiz</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• roleplay</li> <li>• discussion</li> <li>• debates</li> <li>• video recording</li> <li>• differentiated work</li> <li>• notes</li> <li>• watching a live performance of the play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ websites</li> <li>▪ references</li> </ul>
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**Table 3: Teachers’ instructional tools and resources**

Three of the teachers showed that they were embracing the use of technology in their classrooms in teaching Shakespeare. However, there is some resistance, and Amy chose to remain with traditional means of teaching Shakespeare. I am sure that modern South African literature can afford learners with the same insight, themes, lessons and skills. However, from the research, it is clear that there is a need to move away from learning that is mundane and gruelling to teaching strategies that evoke stimulation and critical thinking in learners.

Shakespeare is recognised and renowned in English-speaking countries. However, the beauty of Shakespeare’s language is ruined when dissected and not seen in its entirety. Shakespeare intended for his plays to be watched. However, many South African learners are left ‘frazzled and frustrated’ when presented with Shakespeare. These participants acknowledge the themes and are able to convey it to their learners. However, in the written examination learners are faced with challenging, nail biting questions that are not straight forward.

I agree that the study of Shakespeare should be included in the school curriculum. However, the intensity and volume of work put into the study of Shakespeare needs to be re-examined. Shakespeare provides rich themes and descriptions that can broaden a learner’s knowledge and mind. However, these are fifteen to eighteen year olds who should not be inundated with study that is not promoting positive attitudes to learning. This is ultimately affecting their results. Literature and even Shakespeare is not open to one interpretation. It is not based on

factual content. Therefore, it requires the expression of personal opinion and making links throughout the play, which can be confusing and daunting to second language learners.

The data reflects that there is a lack of teachers sharing and exchanging resources. These teachers are not actively engaging with fellow colleagues when teaching Shakespeare. It appears that teachers work in isolation. Sharing resources could help teachers achieve the benchmark and this would allow for national standardization. It is crucial that Shakespeare be tested according to what CAPS endorses.

Teachers also require skills and knowledge of analysis in order to teach learners how to be analytical. Teachers, therefore, need instructional tools in teaching learners how to analyse Shakespeare, specifically in examinations. Amy, whose learners have the best academic achievement, demonstrated this ability to teach learners how to be methodical and logical in answering essay questions. Secondly, because these are plays, focus should be given to the technical and dramatic aspects of a play, not mere study of the plot and themes.

The data suggest that PCK develops over time. There is no set timeframe. Violet and Betty, the more experienced teachers, have developed their PCK completely according to the cycle proposed by Shulman (1987). Their PCK, however, is still extending, as learners and social factors change. This research is in agreement with Mohlouoa (2011) and Grossman (1990), who suggested that PCK develops with experience if the teacher is willing to reflect and improve. This was quite evident with Betty and Violet. Therefore, PCK seems to be a growing continuum.

This is in keeping with Gess-Newsome and Lederman (1999) and Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1990), who acknowledges that the more experienced the teacher is, the more likely an increase in PCK. This reiterates Shulman's (1987) concept '*wisdom of practice*' where teachers develop their knowledge through experience and practice. There was evidence that teachers with little teaching experience, like Anne, have less complete levels of PCK compared to teachers with more experience.

The data proposes that there is a marriage of both traditional and new methods. Both these methods have their merits, as is evident in the research. Traditional methods such as lecture style methods have not been abandoned.

The participants were trained to teach home language learners. Three of the participants were not English specialists. Therefore, there seems to be a need for training and workshops to impart skills and knowledge on how to transform teachers' content knowledge into actual understanding and learning for learners. It is imperative that retraining or workshops be considered for teachers who were trained to teach English home language but are now teaching English as a first additional language (FAL). Strategies and instructional tools need to be reviewed. There could be greater improvement in results should teachers be advised on how to tackle and help second language learners' difficulties and misconceptions. This can only be advantageous to both the learner and teacher.

Participants did not reflect consciously on their practice at the end of each lesson. The reflection was not conducted as suggested by Shulman (1987). In fact, reflection seemed incidental. This was evident in the study where only Violet actually reflected on her teaching strategies and lessons. Park and Oliver (2008) refer to this type of reflection as reflection-on-action, where the teacher takes the necessary action after the lesson. This suggests that participants are practicing the first type of reflection which is reflection-in-action. This is when a teacher, suddenly, is faced with a challenge while teaching which requires immediate action. Teachers ought to reflect in a conscious way, especially reflection-on-action, to help expand their PCK.

### **6.3 Limitations of the Study**

This study aimed to increase professional development and supports the view that PCK is closely linked to beliefs and longterm experience and practice. This dissertation had a small sample size; therefore, the findings from the study are limited in their scope. The findings are do not necessarily reflect the broad spectrum of English teachers in South Africa. With a greater sample of teachers, more teaching strategies and beliefs can be established to recommend the development of teachers' PCK.

The other limitation is the methodological challenge of describing a concept like PCK, which can take many different forms. In this study, I chose to use Shulman and Grossman's definitions of PCK, and Shulman's cycle for the development of PCK to organise and analyse the data. This provided a specific lens for engaging with the data. However, the beliefs of teachers tended to be neglected in the cycle proposed by Shulman.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

It is suggested that a larger sample size would yield greater comparison and generalisation from research findings to present a more distinct picture of the South African situation. It is also recommended that possible research investigate the missing knowledge in Shulman's cycle: teachers' knowledge about their beliefs about the purpose of specific content, and knowledge of imparting passion and enthusiasm to learners.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The study reveals the PCK and beliefs of the four teachers teaching Shakespeare to second language learners. Through the use of interviews and observations it was possible to identify the teaching strategies and beliefs of teachers. The researcher adapted the I-Poems from Gilligan (2002) to allow for greater insight and indication of how these teachers' beliefs influenced their practice. The I-Poems provided significant insight into teacher's beliefs on teaching Shakespeare. It is also evident from this study that PCK of teachers teaching Shakespeare expands with experience. Therefore there is no specific timeline in the development of PCK. Furthermore it is clear that beliefs held by teachers' do influence their teaching strategies. It can be surmised that a teacher's PCK is affected by socio-economic factors as well as the language barrier that currently exists amongst learners.

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## Appendix 1. UKZN Ethical clearance letter



10 June 2015

Mrs Mary E. Laben 972143952  
School of Education  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Ms Laben:

Protocol reference number: HSS/0291/015M  
Project title: Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English

### **Expedited Approval**

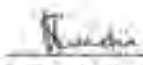
In response to your application dated 02 April 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

  
Dr Shenuks Singh (Chair)  
/ps

cc Supervision: Dr Carol Bertram  
cc Academic Leader (Research): Professor P. Morojela  
cc School Administrator: Mrs B. Bhengu, Ms T. Khumalo & Mr SN Mthembu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

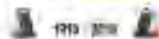
Dr Shenuks Singh (Chair)

Wentworth Campus, Gwelo (Mk) Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X5021, Tzaneen 4300

Telephone: +27 (0) 21 260 0871 (KwaZulu-Natal) / +27 (0) 21 260 0898 (Glen) [ethics@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ethics@ukzn.ac.za) / [ethics@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ethics@ukzn.ac.za) / [ethics@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ethics@ukzn.ac.za)

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## Appendix 2. Permission from KZN Education Department



education

Department:  
Education  
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za

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Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane Tel: 033 392 1004 Ref.:2/4/8/414

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Ms ML Laban  
14 Jacques Mew  
01 Jacques Road, Glenwood  
DURBAN  
4001

Dear Ms Laban

### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS**

Your application to conduct research entitled: **“TEACHING SHAKESPEARE: EXPLORING THE PCK AND BELIEFS OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH”**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.

5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 15 May 2015 to 15 June 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu- Natal Department of Education (See list attached).

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**Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD**  
**Head of Department: Education**  
**Date: 13 May 2015**

### Appendix 3. Interview schedule

1.	What is your educational background?
2.	How long have you been an English teacher?
3.	In what grade do you teach now?
4.	Please describe the context of your school/ classroom.
5.	Can you describe the main challenges faced by the students you teach (e.g. social class, ethnicity, etc.)?
6.	Why do you think Shakespeare is included in the English curriculum?
7.	What do you think is the purpose of teaching Shakespeare?
8.	How do you feel about teaching Shakespeare?
9.	What do you enjoy about teaching Shakespeare?
10.	Do you think Shakespeare is relevant to students today? Explain.
11.	Please tell me how you go about teaching a new play
12.	Do your students think learning Shakespeare is relevant? How do they feel about learning Shakespeare? What was your experience of learning Shakespeare when you were in school?
13.	What kinds of lessons do you teach in your class? (small group work, lecture style?)
14.	What are some of the strategies you use to teach Shakespeare?
15.	Why do you use these particular strategies?
16.	How do you make Shakespeare understandable and relevant to students?
17.	Do you use particular analogies, explanations, resources? Explain
18.	Do you look for teaching ideas/ resources on the web, from other teachers etc?
19.	What kinds of classroom management issues would you expect within the lesson?
20.	What kinds of assessment tasks do you use?
21.	What are the main difficulties that your students experience when they learn Shakespeare?
22.	How do you know that students understand the idea or concepts you teach?
23.	What are the challenges that you face when teaching Shakespeare?
24.	How do you manage these challenges?
25.	What do you think makes a teacher particularly good at teaching Shakespeare?
26.	Is there anything you would like to share about the teaching of Shakespeare?

## Appendix 4. Observation schedule

LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE	
Name:	Date of observation:
Time:	
Lesson/Subject:	
Purpose of the lesson:	
Teacher input :	
Strategies employed:	
Support given regarding language:	
Teacher's interactions with learners:	
Learner's response to task:	
Summary of strengths/difficulties	

## Appendix 5

### **Voice recorder consent letter** University of KwaZulu Natal

#### **School of Education**

#### **Teacher's audio-recording Consent Form for Conducting Research**

**Research Topic:** Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in this study to be conducted by Mary Laban of the University of KwaZulu Natal on *Teaching Shakespeare:*

*Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English.*

I understand that no harm will result from my participation in this study, and that the study is being conducted for purposes of improving the teaching of Shakespeare in our schools. I understand that the material will be used for research purposes only.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I consent to being audio-taped during the interview. I understand that I have a right to listen to the audiotape before transcription so that I can delete or amend any of my remarks. I also understand that I have the right to review the transcripts made of our conversations before these are used for analysis if I so choose. I understand that everything I say will be kept confidential by the interviewer, and my real name will not be used in the transcripts. In addition, any persons I refer to in the interview will be kept confidential.

I understand that my actual words may be used in the research report as quotes, but they will be reported such that my identity is not known. I understand that the results of the study may be presented at a conference and/or published in an academic journal, but my name will remain unknown.

I have voluntarily given my consent to be interviewed and I understand that I can withdraw from the study at anytime.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher on 0847871901.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration: Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

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**Signature of Participant**

---

**Date**



## Appendix 6

### **Teachers' consent letter** University of KwaZulu Natal

#### **School of Education**

**Research Topic:** Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in this study to be conducted by Mary Laban of the University of KwaZulu Natal on *Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English*. I understand that no harm will result from my participation in this study, and that the study is being conducted for purposes of improving the teaching of Shakespeare in our schools. I understand that the material will be used for research purposes only.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I further agree to being interviewed as part of the study, as well as to allow the researcher into my classroom to observe two lessons. I understand that everything I say will be kept confidential by the interviewer and my real name will not be used in the transcripts. In addition, the names of any persons I refer to in the interview will not be revealed.

I understand that my actual words may be used in the research report as quotes, but they will be reported such that my identity is not known. I understand that the results of the study may be presented at a conference and/or published in an academic journal, but my name will remain unknown.

I have voluntarily given my consent to be interviewed and to have my lessons observed and I understand that I can withdraw from the study at anytime.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher on 0847871901.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration: Tel: 27 31 2604557 – Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

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**Signature of Participant**

---

**Date**

**Research Topic:** Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English

Dear sir/madam

**REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

My name is Mary Laban. I am a researcher studying Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I am carrying out a study on *exploring PCK as well as beliefs in the process of teaching Shakespeare by South African teachers of English*. This study is supervised by Dr. Carol Bertram who is a lecturer at the School of Education, UKZN.

My research will benefit the institutions where it is conducted, as well as the South African educational system in improving the teaching and learning of Shakespeare.

This letter is my request to you to consider participating in this study. The aim of the study is to identify teaching strategies, beliefs and values used by South African teachers of English to teach Shakespeare. The study is also to find out why teachers use those strategies. The study will involve my direct observations in your classroom, poetry writing and an interview. I will audiotape the interview.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, no harm is envisaged, and all information will be treated as confidential. You will be able to withdraw from the study at any time.

The results of the study will be presented in a research report, may be presented at a conference and/or published in an academic journal but your name and the people you refer to during interview and observations will be kept anonymous.

I will provide you with a summary of my research results on completion if you would like me to.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number\_\_\_\_\_).

I am inviting you, as a high school teacher of English, to participate in this study.

Yours sincerely

Mary Laban

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 8

### Principal consent letter

University of KwaZulu Natal

School of Education

#### Principal's Informed Consent Form for Conducting Research in English lessons

**Research Topic:** Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English

I \_\_\_\_\_, the principal of \_\_\_\_\_ give permission to Mary Laban of the University of KwaZulu Natal to conduct the study on *Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English*.

I understand that the study will involve interviews and observations. I also understand that no harm will result from my teachers' and my students' participation in this study, and that the study is being conducted for purposes of improving the teaching of Shakespeare in our schools. This permission is on condition that the material will be used for research purposes only.

This consent does not oblige the teacher to participate and I understand that they may withdraw from the study at any time.

I understand that the real name of my school will not be used in the transcripts. I also understand that the names of the participating teachers and those of the people they will refer to in the interview will be kept confidential.

I understand that the results of the study will be presented in the research report, may be presented at a conference and/or published in an academic journal, but the name of my school and that of the teachers will remain unknown.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 9                      Principal letter requesting permission**

**University of KwaZulu Natal**

**School of Education**

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Request for permission to conduct research in your school**

My name is Mary Laban. I am a researcher studying Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I am carrying out a study entitled: *Teaching Shakespeare: Exploring the PCK and beliefs of teachers of English*

My research will benefit the institution where it is conducted, as well as the South African educational system in improving the teaching and learning of Shakespeare.

This is my request for permission to conduct my study at your school. The study will involve direct classroom observations and an interview with teachers of English. The interview will be audio recorded.

Giving permission in this study is entirely voluntary, no harm is envisaged, and all information collected from teacher will be treated as confidential and names not known. My research results will be presented in my research report may be presented at a conference and/or published in an academic journal. In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, all names I use will be pseudonyms.

I will provide you with a summary of my research results on completion if you would like me to.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number\_\_\_\_\_).

**Name:** Mary Laban

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number:** 0847871901

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_