

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE ROLE OF A LANGUAGES HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
(HOD) IN FACILITATING SCHOOL-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHERS'
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL.**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the academic requirements for the
degree of Master of Education: Teacher Development Studies.**

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DECLARATION

I, Mbuyiseni Jollies Sikhumbuzo Dlamini, declare that this research report, “**An exploration of the role of a language Head of Department (HOD) in facilitating school-based Language teacher’s professional development in a secondary school.**” abides by the following rules:

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An undertaking of such a study is not an easy thing to do. I would like to acknowledge and dedicate my work to the important people in my life.

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TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my son Cebo and my daughter Thando. My beautiful children are the reason why I look at life with its challenges in a positive way. A special dedication is given to my beautiful wife Ntombithini who never complained even if the study is taking much of my time.

ABSTRACT

The study explores the role of the Languages HOD in facilitating school-based teacher professional development in a secondary school. It focuses on activities organised by the language HOD within the language department and teacher participation on those activities, what teachers learn from them and the kind of support given to language teachers.

A qualitative case study, located in an interpretive paradigm, was employed in this study. Data was collected from the Languages Department of one secondary school in Umgungundlovu District, where seven teachers participated in the study. Data was generated through the use of interviews, poetry, observation and document analysis. Data generated was analysed using thematic and poetic analysis. The study used Wong's (2010) five dimensions of an effective Professional Learning Community (conceptual framework) as a lens to make sense of the data and to answer the research questions.

The aim was to investigate to the extent to which the Language HOD facilitated professional development of teachers in his/her department. Furthermore, the study sought to understand how the language teachers took part in the organized activities and in turn became better teachers for the advancement of learner achievement. The findings suggest that teachers participated in sharing goals and visions which result in improved learner achievement. The study concluded teachers in the Language department valued a positive working environment. It became evident from the study that the Language HOD supported, coached and assigned duties to the Language teachers according to their capabilities hence the Language teachers exhibited the ability to participate in the planned activities.

The implication from the findings was that Language HOD needs to be further capacitated to develop and support other language teachers. The Department of Education in general can apply the findings in the study such as networking, shared personal practice, collective focus on learner achievement and shared goals and values to advance teacher learning, collaborative functioning and professional development of teachers in a school-based Professional Learning Community.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANA	Annual National Assessment
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DoE	Department of Education
ELRC	Education Labour Council
ENGFAL	English First Additional Language
FET	Further Education and Training
HOD	Head of Department
IPDT	Initial Professional Development for Teachers
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Education and Development
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Material
NPTFTED	National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PLC	Professional Learning Community
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
SMT	School Management Team
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TRG	Teaching Research Groups

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Leadership in teaching and learning plays an integral part in improving education. Research studies and according to Burello, Hoffman and Murray (2005, p.3) “leadership is a crucial factor in school effectiveness and key to organisational success and improvement”. In the South African context, schools are led and managed by school management teams (SMTs) made up of the principals, deputy principals and heads of departments.

There is consensus in literature regarding the importance of effective development programmes for teachers (Butler, Lausher, Jarvis-Selinger & Beckingham 2004; Caskey, 2007). At the departmental level of a school, the leadership of the HOD in professional development activities plays a major role in creating a positive climate in curriculum delivery.

The focus of this study was on the role of the Language HOD in developing the language teachers professionally. The main purpose was to obtain insights into the role of the Language HOD in facilitating the professional development of language teachers in a language department of a school. The study further attempted to establish what type of learning, language teachers engage in when collaborating in the workplace and find out language teachers’ feelings or opinions regarding their engagement in the activities organised by the Language HOD.

1.2 Rationale

The motivation for this study comes from my interest as a language teacher for twenty-six years, a deputy principal for sixteen years and a principal for five years. One of my duties is to supervise HODs and check whether they supervise teachers and ensure that teaching and learning takes place in a school. For learning to be effective, HODs are responsible for ensuring that teachers are professionally developed.

Throughout my teaching career, I have witnessed learners battling with reading, spelling and presenting their ideas in a logical sequence using the language. HODs are the immediate supervisors of the teachers and can give guidance where it is needed. The supervision of

teachers and learning is the core duty of the HOD (Botha, 2010). I am therefore interested in the activities of the Language HOD in the Language Department of a school. The interest of conducting this study also emanates from the awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the HODs as prescribed by the Personnel Administrative Measures (2003) document in achieving the instructional outcomes in developing the teachers professionally.

1.3 Background and context

Education is regarded as societal issue. It is the responsibility of the state to provide education for its citizens. Chapter 2 of the South African constitution states that “everyone has a right to a basic education, including adult basic education and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible” (Act108 of 1996, p, 14). SASSA, 1996 (Act 84 as amended) states that all learners have the right to access quality education. The quality of public education has been increasingly subjected to scrutiny since the department invests a lot of taxpayers’ money in funding it. Furthermore, the medium-term strategic framework makes provision for “the improved teaching and learning through development, supply and effective utilisation of teachers (Five Year Strategic Plan,” 2015/16 – 2019/20, p.15).

Current trends show that the unemployment rate was 27,7% in the second quarter of 2017. This leads to a high crime rate and poverty in South Africa. Quite a substantial number of learners drop out from school and they are unemployable. The minimum qualification potential employers look for is matric. On the contrary, there are those who have completed matric but cannot express themselves fully in the language determined by the potential employers during interviewing processes. The ANA reports for 2012, 2013 and 2014 identified weaknesses of South African learners in the language competence in grades 3, 6 and 9. This is supported by the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (2012), which concluded that South African teachers do not engage learners in a wider variety of readings (NEEDU, 2012, p.25). The report further highlighted that South African teachers lack knowledge (NEEDU, 2012, p.29) and exhibit generally poor subject knowledge in language skills. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTED) (RSA, 2007a:4) states that:

the majority of teachers have not yet been sufficiently equipped to meet the education needs of a growing democracy in a 21st century global environment...This includes

poor grasp of their subjects as evidenced by a range of errors made in content and concepts during lessons. Many teachers' poor conceptual and content knowledge contribute to low levels of learner achievement.

This calls for Language teachers to be developed in the content of the subject so that they can have confidence when delivering their subjects to their learners.

This policy aims at providing an overall strategy to recruit, retain and develop teachers professionally to ensure that:

- Teachers are equipped to undertake their essential and demanding tasks;
- Teachers can continually enhance their professional competencies and performances;
- There is a community of competent teachers dedicated to providing education of high quality, with high levels of performance as well as ethical and professional standards of conduct (RSA, 2007a:1).

During the Teacher Summit of 2009 challenges were identified and the summit resulted in the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Education and Development in South Africa, 2011-2025 (ISPFTED)*, a policy that currently guides teacher professional development. The Department of Basic Education's strategic goal no. 16 is aimed at improving professional teaching skills, subject knowledge and the computer literacy of teachers throughout their teaching career (DBE, 2016:20). Schools are regarded as key sources for teachers' professional learning (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p.267). The role of the HOD in teacher development can be instrumental in addressing these challenges. King and Newman (2001, cited by Steyn, 2008, p.15) believe that teachers have the most direct, sustained contact with students, as well as considerable control over what is taught and the climate of learning. It is reasonable to assume that improving teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions is one of the most critical steps to improving student achievement.

Furthermore, Steyn (2008) emphasizes that "professional development is focused on the learning area or subject content and how it is taught." Teachers can share experiences, skills, and reflect on problems encountered during their practices, in this case the school becomes a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Stoll (2011, p.104) defines a Professional Learning Community as "inclusive and mutually supportive group of people with a collaborative,

reflective and growth-oriented approach towards investigating and learning more about their practice in order to improve pupils' learning.”

Giles and Hargreaves (2006, p.106) identify three key components of professional learning communities, collaborative work and discussion among school's professionals (educators), a strong and unflinching focus on teaching and learning, and the assessment and evaluation of teaching and learning process over time. This view was also held by Fullan and Watson (2000, p.456), who explain that professional learning communities consists of educators who are focused on the work of learners and revise and alter their instructional practice accordingly to achieve better results. Research evidence indicates that where educators share good practice and learn together through collaboration, the potential for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning is enhanced (Harris & Townsend, 2004, p.174). This corresponds with the view of Visscher and Witziers (2004, p.785), who by drawing on the works of Louis, Marks and Kruse (1996), state that the work of educators in these communities is “collaborative, coordinated, interdependent and focused first and foremost on learner learning.” A collaborative environment allows educators to actively complement and develop each other's knowledge and skills, which presents prospects of educators learning from each other (Steyn,2008, p.25).

Therefore, there is a need for continuing professional development for teachers in general and language teachers in particular. Schools are regarded as key sources for teacher's professional learning (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p.267). Therefore, the role of the HOD in teacher development can be instrumental in addressing these challenges.

This study contributes to the current understanding of the roles of the HOD in developing language teachers professionally. It will further explore whether the HOD has the necessary capacity and skills in performing the development tasks. A contribution will be made in helping HODs to gain pedagogical and leadership knowledge to professionally develop teachers through their engagement with them.

1.4 Research questions

The aims of this study are:

- To explore the role of the Language HOD in facilitating language teacher professional development.
- To gain insights into what teachers learn in their engagement with the activities of the Language Department.
- To explore and afford language teachers the opportunity to share their views/ experiences of the activities of the Language Department.

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

- In what ways does the Language HOD facilitate professional development for language teachers in the Language Department?
- How do language teachers participate in the Professional Development activities organized by the Language HOD?
- What are the Language teachers' perceptions of their participation in the departmental activities towards professional development?

1.5. Review of literature and conceptual framework

Literature on the concepts of teacher professional development, instructional leadership, teacher knowledge, the role of mistakes in language teaching and how to fix errors teachers make with the language learners was reviewed.

Teacher professional development can be envisaged as the key to school improvement, teacher learning, transformation of practice and improvement of learner achievement (Avalos, 2010; Desimone, 2011; Hardy, 2009; King, 2016; Jita & Mokhele, 2014, Kelly, 2006). Teacher professional development is underpinned by various activities in which teachers engage in to increase and improve their knowledge base, teaching practice, self-efficacy, skills, classroom management, and personal and emotional growth (Desimone, 2011; Bertram, 2014; Day & Gu, 2007). These activities are categorised as informal and formal (Desimone, 2011, Bertram, 2014).

HODs are instructional leaders and therefore, they are influential. Their job is to motivate and support teacher's effort to learn and change their instructional practice (Mestry & Singh ,2007 Mpisane, 2015).

Kelly (2006) argues that there are two theories of learning that explains how teachers learn and expand their professional development. These are the cognitive theory which follows a linear model of development and the socio-cultural theory where teachers learn with and from each other in a community of practice and learning is distributed.

According to the Personnel Administrative Measures document (2003, p.c-66) the HOD is expected "to participate in agreed educator appraisal processes to regularly review their professional practice with the aim of improving teaching, learning and management". It further elaborates that the HOD must "keep up with developments, research and publications in his or her learning area and sustains a lively interest in his or her learning area to the extent that, in addition to teaching it well, this teacher leads learning area committees, contributes to workshops and is capable of lecturing to trainee teachers in the learning area (Personnel Administrative Measures , 2003, p.c-95). The Personnel Measures (2003) further elaborators that the HOD engages in class teaching as per workload, assesses and record the attainment of learners taught. The work of the HOD entails provisioning of guidance to the educator in his or her department and jointly develop policy for the department with the teachers. The HOD provides support to the teachers. The HOD should facilitate communication channels and negotiate with senior leadership and external officials on behalf of the teachers. It is the responsibility of the HOD to meet with parents and discuss with them the progress and conduct of their learners.

International and national studies have over the years concentrated on the leadership role and administrative duties of an HOD (King ,2002; Harris, 2008; Robinson 2006). The role of an HOD had been that of influencing the supervisees to do their work and manage departmental resources.

For South African teachers, the importance of professional development has been emphasized through numerous frameworks. The declaration of the Teacher Development Summit of 2009 for teacher development resulted in the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025. The aim of this plan is to improve the

quality of teacher education and development for better learner attainment. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTEd) states that “all educators need to enhance their skills, not necessarily qualifications, for the delivery of new curriculum” (RSA, 2007a:4).

The aims of the study were to interpret and understand the role of an HOD in facilitating teacher professional development in the language department and how teachers felt about activities that they were engaged in; therefore, it falls within the interpretive paradigm.

The study was interpreted through the lenses of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) in a school-based site using Wong’s (2010) five dimensions of an effective PLC. PLCs are now regarded as an efficient tool to improve teacher’s professional competence, student learning, achievement and outcomes (Wong,2016; Moosung & Jihyun, 2016; Salleh, 2016; Borko, 2000).

1.6 Methodological approach

The researcher has chosen a qualitative approach for the study. Meyer (2009) maintains that “the research method is a strategy of enquiry, which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design and data collection.” Qualitative research is naturalistic, it attempts to study the everyday life of diverse groups of people and communities in their natural settings and it is particularly useful to study educational settings and processes (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The study is located within the interpretive paradigm.

Interpretive researchers believe that reality consists of people’s external world (Krauss, 2005). Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.26) maintain that “interpretivists aim to understand the social world,” and they recognise the existence of multiple realities. The research design that is adopted in this proposed study is a case study. Yin (2003, p.18) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined”. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) further point out that a case study strives to portray ‘what it is like’ to be in a situation, to catch the close-up reality and ‘thick description’ of participants’ lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for a situation.

In a similar vein, Rule and John (2011, p.4) describe the case study as “a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context in order to generate knowledge.” Therefore, it is a study of a bounded system. The case may be a program, an event, or activity bounded in time and place. The case in my study was the Language department of a school. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, document analysis, poetry and collages. A detailed account on these methods are presented in Chapter Three.

1.7 Overview of the dissertation

The research study is divided into five chapters.

Chapter One gives the overview, focus and purpose of the study. It highlights the rationale, background and context of the study. The key research questions are provided in this chapter. A brief review of related literature and the conceptual framework which underpins the study are provided. It further highlights the methodological approach employed to generate data.

Chapter Two focuses on the conceptual frameworks that underpin this study. It further discusses the literature review on the role of the HOD in facilitating the professional development of teachers. An international and local literature review is undertaken.

Chapter Three provides a detailed account of the research methodology, design, and procedures followed in conducting the research study. It highlights the instruments used to generate data.

Chapter Four presents data generated through semi-structured interviews, document analysis, poetry and collages. A detailed discussion, data analysis and interpretation are given in this chapter.

Chapter Five presents the summary of the study, findings and recommendations.

1.8 Conclusion

The background and context of the study was provided. The general problem that informs the study was also highlighted. The focus of the study, the rationale and the conceptual frameworks were given. The key questions, the paradigm that underpins the study and the methodological approach, design and instruments for data collection were also indicated. A brief overview of the literature review was given, and the next chapter discusses it in detail.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the general outline and the background of the problem was presented. The research design and methodology were also discussed. It was important to know the role of the Language HOD in facilitating the professional development of language teachers. This chapter reviewed literature on teacher professional development, instructional leadership, transformational leadership, teacher knowledge, the role of HODs as middle managers and the mistakes in language teaching and how to fix them. The literature review drew from the existing literature and empirical studies done locally and abroad.

2.2 Teacher professional development

Teacher professional development aims at improving teacher learning and practice, subsequently leading to better learner achievement. There is no single definition of professional development and different authors came up with different definitions. Professional development, in a broader sense, refers to the development of an individual in his or her professional role and capacity. Adey (2000, p.41) describes teacher professional development as “the growth a teacher achieves because of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically. Day (1999) defines professional development as how teachers and other members of the teaching profession improve and broaden their knowledge and skills to develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives. Desimone (2009) maintains that effective professional development can result in teacher learning and changes in attitudes, beliefs and teacher performance. On the other hand, Richardson and Placier (2001, p.23, cited by Tam (2015) describe teacher change in terms of “learning, development, socialization, growth, improvement, implementation of something new or different, cognitive and affective change, and self-study.” These authors further describe teacher change as “provision of activities designed to advance the knowledge, skills and understanding of teachers in ways that lead to changes in their thinking and classroom behaviour” (p.24).

The concept of professional development therefore, as Adey (2000, p.41) puts it, involves the “growth that occurs as the teacher moves through the professional career cycle.” To support

teacher growth and development, teachers should be actively involved in their own learning (Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 1997; Sparks & Hirsh 1997). Teachers need to reflect on their understanding and practice and they need to play a major role in collectively constructing their knowledge on teaching and learning. Therefore, professional development can take an active learning role such as observing other teachers practising, discussing and preparing lesson plans together and receiving feedback from others during their practice.

Teacher professional development is carried out through various activities to improve the teacher knowledge base, teaching practice, self-efficacy, skills, classroom management, personal and emotional growth (Desimone, 2011; Bertram, 2014; Day & Gu, 2007). These activities are categorised as informal and formal (Desimone, 2011, Bertram, 2014).

Day and Gu (2007, p.427) assert that “schools are the primary sites for teachers’ professional learning.” Therefore, collective participation takes place when teachers from the same school, department and grade in a school attend professional development activities together. This creates a platform for teachers to discuss common problems and strategies to engage in to improve their practices (Grant, 2006; Liberman & Mace; 2008). To have the greatest impact, professional development activities must be designed, implemented and evaluated to meet the needs of teacher’s settings (Guskey, 2002).

For the purposes of this study, teacher professional development will be viewed as those activities that the HOD engages in with the languages teachers and brings about change in behaviour, better teaching methods, collective planning, solving problems together, collaboration in many ways, and the improvement in learner achievement.

The continuous development of professional skills is a crucial element of improvement and teacher quality is the key to improving learner performance. Steyn (2011) argues that The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa aims at providing suitably qualified teachers. The framework, therefore, identified two complimentary subsystems: The Initial Professional Development for Teachers (IPDT) and Continuing Professional Development for Teachers (CPTD). The policy framework entails that the teachers should develop the professional knowledge and skills to develop their competency and performance. The school context plays a vital role in the professional development of teachers and this includes the school culture, teacher collaboration and teacher commitment. This study seeks to understand the role played by a Language HOD in both the IPDT and CPTD of the language teachers in the language department.

2.3 Models of professional development

Reimers (2003) defines models as “specific processes and opportunities that are planned to provide professional development to teachers from the beginning and throughout their planned career journey.” This implies that models do not happen in an unplanned manner. UNESCO (2003) groups models into two categories. The first one being organisational partnership models which includes professionally developed schools, school networks, and teacher networks. The second category known as the small group or individual models include workshops, seminars, courses, action research, coaching and mentoring, cascade models, teacher narratives, observation of excellent practice and lesson study.

The second group is the same as the nine models categorised by Kennedy (2005) namely; the training model, award-bearing model, deficit model, cascade model, standards-based model, coaching/mentoring model, community of practice model, action research model and transformative model. The traditional form of development adopted model has been the in-service training. Teachers attended workshops in one setting are expected to change in their practices. Criticism levelled against this model is that, it is a “one-shot” experience completely unrelated to the needs of teachers and provides no follow-up.

The cascade model, mentoring and coaching model, community of practice model, individual- or self-directed and lesson study models will be discussed.

2.3.1 The cascade model

This type of model involves individual teachers attending ‘training events’ and then disseminating or cascading information to colleagues. It is commonly employed in situations where resources are limited (Kennedy, 2005, p.240). The focus is on the rapid dissemination of information, specific skills, knowledge and content. Presenters share the skills and knowledge face-to-face with large groups of educators.

2.3.2 Mentoring and coaching model

Mentoring and coaching are characterised by a one-on-one relationship. Mentoring means helping the mentee by providing guidance and support. The mentor helps the mentee to develop insights and understanding through observation and being aware of experiences. The objective of a coach is to develop the person being coached by building self-confidence (Fielden, 2005).

This type of model gives the novice and the master teacher opportunities to learn from each other. It can help new teachers to creatively and effectively meet the day-to-day challenges of teaching. Activities such as classroom observation, collaborative teaching and feedback from and to learners can be incorporated in this model.

2.3.3 The community of practice model

This type of model involves more than two people and would not necessarily rely on confidentiality (Kennedy, 2005). This model is embedded in Wenger's social learning theory. Learning happens due to community interaction and is collaborative in nature.

2.3.4 Individual or self-directed model

This type of model focuses on the individual. The initiative stems from an individual to be professionally developed. This might be for personal gain and self-enrichment. An alternative approach to professional development is self-development. (Salleh,2016) considers that theory and knowledge can transform a teacher's beliefs and values. In the process of reflecting on one's performance, interaction with educational theory may not dictate a change of practice, but it transforms the outlook of the practitioner.

2.3.5 Lesson study model

This is a multi-step process in which teachers work together to create, study and improve their lessons (UNESCO, 2003). In this approach, a member of the study group teaches a lesson while others make detailed observations. After the lesson, all members meet to discuss their observations and to consider how the lesson might be improved. The lesson is then taught again in a different group of learners and the same process of observation, analysis and discussion is repeated. Positive criticisms lead to professional development and teacher change.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher was observing which development model the HOD uses and what results it yields or if the HOD used a combination of models to a certain extent.

2.4 Instructional leadership

Educational leaders are at the centre of all activities and actions that take place in a school. There are four key roles of instructional leaders as identified in literature. Instructional leaders

are responsible for curriculum management and implementation, planning, assessment and monitoring (Bush, 2007).

For instructional leadership to be effective there should be a culture of practice at school where things are done in a collective way. Instructional leaders provide supervision, set clear goals, evaluate teachers, monitor lesson plans and assign resources to instruction. A true leader is characterised by adaptability and flexibility. Good leaders influence followers towards goal attainment, therefore, leadership requires competency to influence followers and should result in achievement of goals entrenched in the vision and values of the school, or else mediocrity or failure may result (Christie & Limerick, 2004). Fullan (1999, cited in Coleman, 2005) advocates that leadership is the ability to work in teams and the ability to develop others, having ambition, confidence and a vision, being accountable and the ability to use influencing tactics and thinking styles. As skilled leaders, HODs are competent people who know the means and methods for carrying out their responsibilities.

HODs are instructional leaders and therefore, they plan, monitor curriculum implementation, evaluate teachers, engage with learner assessments and above all, are influential. Influence is central to the process of leadership because leaders affect followers. The influence process is purposeful in that it is intended to lead to specific outcomes of being able to lead and motivate the actions of others to achieve certain goals by taking initiatives and risks (Mampane, 2017). Leaders direct their energies towards influencing individuals to achieve something together. The results of school effectiveness research suggest that instructional leadership is an important characteristic of effective schools. Effective instructional leadership is characterised by the performance of leadership tasks which are positively connected to student achievements such as emphasis on basic subjects, provision of an orderly atmosphere and learning climate, setting instructional strategies, coordination of programmes, supervising and supporting teachers, orientation towards educational development and innovation, mission orientation and dissemination of a school's vision (Kruger, Witziers & Slegers, 2007, p.1-20). The HOD's job is to motivate and support teachers' efforts to learn and change their instructional practice (Mestry & Pillay, 2013, Mpisane, 2015). Bush and Glover (2003) further elaborate that leadership is about influencing followers to achieve their desired goals. HODs lead and manage teaching and learning in the school instructional leadership context (Bush, 2007).

As leaders, HODs give instructions to teachers. The primary aim of the instruction is about managing teaching and the learning process- the core duty of the HODs (Bush & Clover, 2005).

Instructional leadership is defined as a multi-task leadership approach which includes supervision of teachers and curriculum development, planning, organising, facilitating change and motivating teachers (Bush & Clover, 2003). This study explores the role of the Language HOD in carrying out his/her function of developing teachers professionally through instructional tasks by giving positive instructions that will not belittle teachers and instead, teachers should learn positive things from that engagement.

2.5 Transformational leadership

The concept of transformational leadership was first introduced by James V Downton, a sociologist in 1973, (Dionne, S, 2004). She defines transformational leadership as a theory of leadership where a leader works with teams to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration and executing the change with committed members (Bush, 2007). The theory was further developed by Burns and Lowe (1996) who maintain that transformational leadership refers to a style of leadership where:

leaders and followers make each other advance to higher level of morality and motivation. Through the strengths of their vision and personality, transformational leaders can inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions and motivations to work towards common goals (p.25).

Such leaders are moral exemplars working for the benefit of the team. In this style of leadership, the leader works with his or her subordinates to identify the needs, changes, create a vision to guide change through inspiration and works with the subordinates to execute change. For the purposes of this study, observation was made for the Language HOD to be working for the system, solving challenges and wanting to know what must change and maximize his or her team's capability and capacity.

2.6 Distributive leadership

The notion of distributed leadership has emerged in educational literature over the last twenty years. Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004, p.535) have affirmed that the distributed leadership framework includes the “practice of those multiple individuals in a school who work at mobilising and guiding school staff in the instructional innovation process.” Despite the criticism and misconceptions about distributed leadership, it continues to be followed and supported. Hammersley-Fletcher and Brundrett (2005) examined issues of leadership

involvement in the primary school sector in England. Their study revealed that both head teachers and subject leaders were in favour of leadership models in which there was an involvement of staff in collaboration on school development discussions. In the South African context, distributive leadership can be practised within the school departments where the HOD leads a team of teachers.

2.7 Teacher learning

Kelly (2006) argues that there are two theories of learning that explains how teachers learn and expand their professional development. The cognitive theory follows a linear model of development. In line with this theory, a teacher attends a developmental activity in which he will acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in one setting and it is believed that the acquired knowledge will be used in another setting. This type of knowledge resides in the individuals' mind. This simple notion of acquiring knowledge does not account for 'knowledge in practice' (Kelly, 2006, p. 506) which the author terms tacit knowledge. Furthermore, cognitivism also suggests that for teachers to become experts, they need to learn the defined "body of knowledge" (Kelly, 2006, p.508). Kelly further argues that cognitivism ignores the wider context in which teachers work and the meaning they bring to the workplace including their identities as teachers.

Scholars such as Lave and Wenger (1991) introduced the concept of the community of practice. These scholars emphasize that learning is social in nature. The socio-cultural theorists highlight that teachers learn with and from each other in a community of practice and learning is distributed. Socio-cultural theorists maintain that teacher learning forms an integral part of generative practices of the "lived-in-world" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.31). Furthermore, the social learning theorists maintain that teacher learning in a workplace considers what teachers do in their daily activities. Social learning theorists propagate the socio-cultural perspective of teacher learning based on the following views:

- Expect that teachers have an active and productive relationship with their knowledge-in and knowledge of practice (Kelly, 2006).
- The process of knowing in-practice does not reside within individuals; rather it is distributed across teachers, students, books and computers (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

- Teacher expertise is closely linked to the circumstances to which it pertains not to precise situations, but to the working practices and their associated ways of thinking which define their school circumstances (Lave & Wenger, 1991).
- Teacher learning is the movement of teachers from peripheral (novice) to full (expert) participation in the specific working practices and their associated ways of knowing and thinking which define school circumstances (Lave & Wanger, 1991).
- Teacher identities are significant and revealed in the stance's teachers adopt in their working lives (Lave & Wenger, 1991).
- The socio-cultural approach to teacher learning is made up of four areas central to the social learning theory, namely teacher knowledge, teacher knowing, teacher identity and teacher practices (Kelly,2006, p.507).

Studies on teacher learning reveal ways and forms through which teachers learn in various contexts. Teacher learning is characterised by acquisition, participation and construction (Sfard, 1998; Cobb & Bower, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Different writers advocate different forms. For some, learning is located within an individual while for others, learning is influenced by the situation in which teachers work and learn (Beckett & Hager, 2002; Engstrom, 1999; Billet, 2001). Groups of teachers learning from each other has become a wide spread phenomenon (Stoll & Louis, 2007; Whiteford & Wood 2010). Schools have been recreated as professional learning communities. In such learning communities, teachers collaborate with each other, have reflective dialogues on their daily practices, and learn and develop from each other (Grossman, 2001; Little, 2007; Stevens & Kahne, 2006). This notion has been sustained by Ndovela (2014) who maintains that collaborative learning provides an opportunity for professional growth and needs to take place within the context of ongoing professional development. Furthermore, Bruffee (1999, p.21) propagates different collaborative models such as peer tutoring, collaborative project work, writing peer reviews and consensual responses to lectures. Teachers reflect critically on their practices through a shared level of inquiry, exploration and general activities in the subject that they teach. In analysing data from my participants, I'll look at the extent to which they work collaboratively, whether they do critical reflections together and learner achievement analysis. Moreover, I'll look at the extent to which teachers view their departments as a context for ongoing professional development. I will also look at how teachers learn from their engagement with

the HOD, do they learn collaboratively (Ndovela, 2014) and is their learning through participation (Sfard, 1998).

2.8 Review of research on the role of an HOD

The HOD directly influences the quality of learning and teaching in the school. The position of an HOD requires leadership in relation to curriculum development and implementation, teaching and learning, leading and managing teachers, efficient and effective allocation of staff and resources, planning, evaluating teachers and holding regular meetings.

2.8.1 Curriculum implementation and development

The HOD implements the departmental policy regarding the teaching of languages in a school. The HOD develops the subject or language policy, plans and targets within the school context. Professional development of teachers is a priority that should be well managed for school performance to improve (Mampane, 2017). The role of the HOD is to directly influence the quality of learning and teaching in schools. Globally, HODs are perceived as resource providers, departmental representatives, communicators and mediators (DBE, 2011). HODs develop the ability to enforce policy during their leadership of teachers while giving support to teachers' areas of need. They develop strategic plans for the improvement of learner results.

2.8.2 Teaching and learning

An HOD ensures that effective teaching and assessment processes take place in the department. The HOD evaluates the quality of teaching and learning, achievement of learners and improves the attained targets for different years. Steyn (2008) maintains that HODs provide active leadership for all those involved in teaching or supporting the department. This includes mentoring, collaborating and sharing important information so that staff motivation is at optimum level to encourage continuous improvement quality.

2.8.3 Leading and managing staff

The HOD provides active leadership for all those involved in teaching and supporting the department. This is done through mentoring, collaborating, motivating and information sharing to encourage optimum participation. The quality of leadership is what makes a difference to school and learner achievements in many parts of the world, including South Africa (Mampane, 2017). Schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible

education for their learners (Bush, 2011). HODs as teacher leaders play a dual role function; they are teachers as well as leaders/supervisors of phases and subject areas in the school (Mampane, 2017).

2.8.4 Efficient and effective allocation of staff and resources

The HOD manages all the allocated teaching and support staff and assists in recruitment for the department. HODs identify appropriate resources for the department for effective and efficient use and to create effective teams through inspiration and motivation. HODs organise their teachers into highly effective teams, sharing their expertise on their common learning areas to improve teaching and maximise learner outcomes. Bush et al. (2007) maintain that, where management teams operate successfully, they have great potential to improve classroom practices through HODs. Teams share ideas, develop school-wide policies and enact consistent practices throughout the school to achieve the intended outcomes of the school curriculum.

2.8.5 Planning, teacher evaluation and regular meetings

HODs work at strategic and operational levels of the department. An HOD needs to engage in strategic planning of the department and set short-terms and long-term goals of the department. According to the PAM document (2003, p.c-66) the HOD is expected “to participate in agreed educator appraisal processes to regularly review their professional practice with the aim of improving teaching, learning and management”. This is done through the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The IQMS is informed by Schedule 1 of the Employment of Educators Act, No. 76 of 1998 where the Minister is required to determine the performance standards for educators in terms of which their performance is to be evaluated. The Personnel Administrative Measures document further elaborates that the HOD must:

Keep up with developments, research and publications in his or her learning area and sustains a lively interest in his or her learning area to the extent that, in addition to teaching it well, this teacher leads learning area committees, contributes to workshops and is capable of lecturing to trainee teachers in the learning area (PAM document, 2003, p.c-95).

The document further states that the HOD should participate in departmental committees, seminars and courses to contribute to and/or update one’s professional views/standards (2003, p.11). The Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) management system

requires that educators' individual efforts to improve themselves will be recognised through the system of awarding points.

Steyn (2008) argues that the HODs should plan their programmes such that the focus is on school-driven activities such as workshops, seminars and conferences. Professional growth in teachers occurs when a professional dialogue can be entered, and the learner results improve, this becomes possible through numerous meetings that the HOD engages into with members of the department. Minutes of the meetings should be recorded.

2.8.6 The HOD's role in general

Studies have revealed that principals of schools are tasked with the responsibility of driving change and teachers must implement it. The HODs link the principal and the teachers. HODs have the responsibilities of influencing the teachers in a horizontal and vertical way (Dinham, 2000; Gunter, 2001;). School effectiveness and improvement is the ideal situation that is envisaged by all communities. The HOD, as a middle manager, achieves that.

The international and national studies have over the years concentrated on the leadership role and administrative duties of an HOD (Dunham, 1978; Kruger, 2003; Leithwood, 2002). The role of an HOD had been that of influencing the supervisees to do their work and manage departmental resources. Scholars have identified that HODs are effective subject leaders and they influence the quality of teaching in the school (Hammond, 1998; Hopkins, 1995).

For South African teachers, the importance of professional development has been emphasized through numerous frameworks. The declaration of the Teacher Development Summit of 2009 for teacher development resulted in the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025. The aim of this plan is to improve the quality of teacher education and development for better learner attainment. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTED) states that "all educators need to enhance their skills, not necessarily qualifications, for the delivery of new curriculum" (RSA, 2007a:4). In his study, Ndovela (2014) concentrated on the role of the principal as an instructional leader whereas du Plessis (2014) investigated the role of the Head of Department in the professional development of educators from a distributive management perspective. Studies that have been conducted demonstrate that HODs are effective middle managers where they contribute to learner achievement in schools. However, many of these studies were conducted in Australia, the UK, Japan and Kenya.

Zhang and Wong (2018) argue that teachers in China “have a history of using school-based communities known as Teaching Research Groups (TRGs), to improve teacher performance.” The findings of Zhang and Wong’s study indicated that teachers perform to their optimal level when the middle leaders create a supportive environment. Teachers then adopt a student-centred approach of transmitting knowledge. Little (2002) conducted research in China which proved that when teachers work collectively in a community of practice, they can have ready workable solutions to common problems. White (1999) proposed an integrative framework of organisational learning which incorporates intuition, interpretation, integration and institutionalisation. In China, therefore, teacher learning has been institutionalised through the usage of the TRGs. Furthermore, several studies in London, have investigated the characteristics of teacher learning processes and their effects in school-based settings (Grossman, 1990) and a conclusion was reached that a department functions well if it has an integrated collaborative working and learning culture lead by a strong head of department.

Hannay, Seller and Telford (2003) conducted a study of interpretive narratives of teachers related to their professional learning and came up with a Phase Shift Framework of teacher learning in Australia. According to this framework, teacher learning must be described in holistic terms, educational authorities need to support teacher learning and teachers need to be allowed to choose learning opportunities that focus on their personal needs.

In Scotland, the General Teaching Council for Scotland developed a definition of professional learning as “the long-term and sustained improvement which has a real impact on the quality of children’s learning.” The finding is that when a teacher engages in professional activities; their thinking is stimulated which improves teaching practice.

Brown, Rutherford and Boyle (2000) point out that the UK government has initiated a comprehensive range of initiatives aimed at raising standards in schools and increasingly provide funding for professional development designed for school effectiveness and improvement. The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) was established to provide direction and oversight of funding for the initial training and the continuing professional development of teachers and head teachers.

The concept of teacher development has been prioritised nationally and internationally and other countries has funded initiatives towards professional development. What needs to still be established is the role of the HOD in developing the teachers professionally as the immediate supervisor of the department and in the provision of the PAM document in the South African

education context. This study will contribute to existing knowledge and help to capacitate the Language HOD to engage in the developmental activities with language teachers.

2.9 Conceptual framework

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.6) maintain that “the central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm, is to understand the subjective world of human experience.” The aim of this study is to interpret and understand the role of an HOD in facilitating teacher professional development in the language department and how teachers feel about activities that they are engaged in; therefore, the study falls within the interpretive paradigm.

This study will be interpreted through Wong (2010)’s lens of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) in a school-based site. A PLC is a paradigm shift away from traditional teacher development monitored by external experts to lifelong professional learning in the workplace where teachers share their expertise within a community (Wong, 2010; Wenger, 1998). PLCs are now regarded as an efficient tool to improve teacher’s professional competence, student learning, achievement and outcomes (Wong, 2016; Lee & Kim, 2016; Salleh, 2016). Schools as social organisations are regarded as key resources for teachers’ professional learning (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Lee& Kim, 2016). Learning opportunities for teachers to re-construct knowledge and learning something new exist in schools in a collaborative context. Schools are challenged by the pressure of external accountability from several stakeholders. Therefore, teachers must continually enhance their professional knowledge and pedagogical skills to improve their student’s learning and outcomes. A PLC provides the context for teachers to search for good practice through enquiry (Wong, 2010). In this study, I adopt the concept of a PLC in a language department in a secondary school.

Wong (2010) identifies five dimensions of an effective PLC which I adopt for my study. They are as follows:

- *Shared goals and values.* These are the essence of developing consensus and commitment among members of a community. These goals and values are not static but are constantly reshaped by interaction among members. This further refers to a degree to which the teachers agree with the school’s mission and its operational principles.

In a school environment vision and mission sharing is important. Sharing ideas and views about learner outcomes is also a common way for teachers to work collaboratively. I will analyse to

what extent the HOD in this study facilitates collaboration towards developing a shared vision and the goals in his or her department.

- *Shared personal practice.* This is essentially a process of deprivatisation of individual practice. It is highly dependent on mutual trust which is the basis of collective inquiry and a collaborative culture among team members. It further means that teachers observe one another's classes with the aim of giving and receiving feedback.

According to this dimension teachers attend collective lesson preparation, lesson observations and post lesson meetings. These activities foster collaborative engagement to build teachers' content knowledge based on the climate of trust. It is known as shared personal practice aimed at doing away with individual practice. I will analyse to what extent teachers plan together or across the grades.

- *Collective inquiry.* This refers to members of a community having reflective dialogues which focus on ways to improve professional practice and consequently improve student learning. It further refers to the extent to which teachers engage in professional dialogue about specific educational issues.

Teachers are encouraged to have reflective dialogues and exchange information and ideas in a critical way with the aim of improving their practice. I will analyse to what extent language teachers engage in reflective enquiries about their practice.

- *Collaborative culture.* This is a crucial element of constructing a professional learning community. Within a collaborative culture, tasks that need to be accomplished are perceived as a collective practice rather than individual work. Mutual understanding and a sense of belonging of community's members are essential components. It refers to the extent to which teachers engage in cooperative practices.

Activities done together help to result in shared responsibility where teachers have a sense of collective contribution to the students' learning opportunities and outcomes. I will analyse to what extent the members of a department create a collaborative culture by doing things together.

- *Collective focus on student learning.* This indicates the mutual commitment of teachers to student success.

Shared values-focusing on learning and ensuring common standards of evaluation and assessment in student learning yields better results. I will try to find out what strategies the HOD uses to ensure and maintain high quality standards within the department. These dimensions of an effective PLC presented by Wong (2010) will be used as an analytical lens for this study.

Teachers need to share the available resources, create platforms of accessing, circulating and discussing various kinds of knowledge that can help teachers to shift their pedagogical skills from being traditionally teacher-centred to being student-centred. Members of a PLC create a shared language and knowledge about their practice and are committed to a high-quality standard for the work of their students.

2.10 Conclusion

This review has revealed that HODs have a role to play in developing the teachers they lead professionally. HODs should monitor and coach teachers regularly with the purpose of reviewing professional practices to improve teaching and learning. A review of local, national and empirical studies was made in terms of teacher professional development, instructional leadership, transformational leadership, teacher learning and the role of HODs.

Finally, very little has been written on the role of the Language HOD in facilitating the professional development of Language teachers and there is a gap in research for more knowledge to be generated. In this respect, I hope that my study can help contribute to closing this gap to some extent.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study explored the role of the Language HOD in facilitating the professional development of the Language teachers. In the process I had to know to what activities did teachers engage in and what did teachers learn from those activities. It further aimed at understanding the teacher's perceptions and experiences of the activities organised by the HOD and found out to what extent did they collaborate and function as a PLC within the Language Department.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a detailed description of how the study was conducted. An explanation of the design and methodology that was followed will be given, as well as the justification for the methods used within the framework of the methodology. Focus will be on the research design, context, sample and data sources, instruments and procedures, data collection and analysis, issues of reliability, trustworthiness and ethical considerations. Finally, the role of the researcher and the limitations of the study will be highlighted.

3.2 Research question

The main research question of the study was:

In what ways does the Languages HOD facilitate professional development of teachers in the Language Department?

3.3 Research approach

To answer the main question above, two specific research questions were formulated.

- How do language teachers participate in the professional development activities organised by the languages HOD and what do they learn?
- What are the Language teachers' perceptions of their participation in departmental activities related to their professional development?

My study was framed by a qualitative approach. Meyer, (2009) maintains that "the research method is a strategy of enquiry, which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design, and data collection." Qualitative research is naturalistic as it attempts to study the

everyday life of diverse groups of people and communities in their natural settings and it is particularly useful to study educational settings and processes (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln, (1994) state that:

[q]ualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter, it attempts to make sense of or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (p.45).

I interpreted the data and analysed the findings through my engagement with the participants in their workplace. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.226) enumerate a number of features of qualitative research which includes inter alia, that:

[it] uses rigorous procedures and multiple methods for data collection, enquiry is a major feature, verisimilitude is required, such that readers can imagine being in situation, data are analysed at different levels; they are multi-layered, criteria for verification are set out, and rigour is practised in writing up reports and the writing engages the reader and is replete with unexpected insights, whilst maintaining believability and accuracy.

Creswell (2012) points out that qualitative researchers build patterns, categories and themes by organising data through inductive and deductive thinking. In the entire research process, the researcher focuses on the meaning the participants hold about the problem or issue. The qualitative researcher also reflects on how the background roles of the participants will have an influence on the study.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.3) describe ontology as “assumptions about the nature of reality” and epistemology as ‘ways of researching and enquiring into the nature of reality and things.’ They further concur that these underlying principles give rise to methodological considerations. Ontological and epistemological aspects concern what is commonly referred to as the person’s world view and this influences the person’s way of perceiving reality. Krauss (2005, p. 759-760) maintains that “qualitative researchers believe that the best way to understand any phenomenon, is to view it in its context.” He further points out that “many qualitative researchers operate under different ontological assumptions about the world. They do not assume that there is a single unitary reality apart from our perceptions.” The qualitative researcher’s worldview is that of a constructivist and believe that there is no objective reality (Krauss, 2005). Reality can be explored and constructed through human interactions and meaningful actions. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.3) point out that added to ontology

and epistemology is axiology which they describe as “the values and beliefs that we hold.” This philosophical world- view underpins the researcher’s understanding of the world and the purpose of understanding the world and what is deemed valuable.

The strengths of this approach are that, different knowledge claims, enquiry strategies, and data collection methods and analysis can be used (Creswell, 2012). Data sources include direct observation of behaviours, interviews questionnaires, documents and text. The researcher becomes immersed in the whole project. The qualitative approach is inductive and there are no set theories to be proved. The researcher understands the social situation from a participant’s perspective. The researcher is considered the primary instrument of data collection and analysis and engages in the situation by making interpretations.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) further highlight the challenges of the qualitative approach. They maintain that the situation may not be clearly defined by the participants and this may lead to false information. The presence of the researcher may cause the participants to react in a certain way (Hawthorne effect). The researcher may be biased of the halo effect and include those participants that are his or her favourites. Sources or subjects may not all be equally credible. The findings cannot always be generalised to other contexts and there are challenges in explaining multiple realities. I have adopted a qualitative approach for this study given that education as a phenomenon is a societal issue and participants yield multiple realities that can be explained using words.

3.3.1 Research paradigm

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) maintain that the research process has three major dimensions, namely, ontology, epistemology and methodology. These authors further argue that the research paradigm “is an all-encompassing system of interrelated practice and thinking that defines the nature of inquiry along these three dimensions,” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p.7).

Kuhn (cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p.5) describes a paradigm as:

[a] way of looking at or researching phenomena, a world view, a view of what counts as accepted or correct scientific knowledge or way of working, an accepted model or pattern.

According to Kuhn, the term paradigm refers to a research culture with a set of beliefs, values and assumptions that researchers have regarding the nature and conduct of research. Likewise,

Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.22) define a research paradigm as “representing a worldview that defines, for the researchers who hold this view, what is acceptable to research and how this should be done.” These authors further expand that a paradigm determines: what kind of questions to be asked, what can be observed and investigated, how to collect data and how to interpret findings. A paradigm implies a pattern, structure and framework or system of scientific ideas, values and assumptions (Creswell, 2012).

3.3.2 The interpretive paradigm

The study is located within the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive researchers believe that reality consists of people’s external world (Krauss, 2005). Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.26) maintain that “interpretivists aim to understand the social world.” They recognise the existence of multiple realities. Correspondingly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.17) are of the view that “the central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience.” Interpretivists focus on behaviour and actions of individuals and try to give meaning to them. Similarly, McKenzie, Powell and Usher (1997, p.213) maintain that:

actions can therefore be understood only by interpreting the meanings that individuals reveal. The interpretive researcher therefore attempts to understand the phenomena of interest through assessing the meaning that participants assign to them.

Interpretivists believe that there is no single correct route or method to knowledge. Meyer (2009) argues that the premise of interpretive researchers is that access to reality is through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. The interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation. The interest of the interpretivists is not to generate a new theory, but to judge or evaluate, and refine interpretive theories (Creswell, 2012). The strengths of this approach are that the researcher engages in the situation from the viewpoint of the participant (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The focus is on how the individuals interprets the reality around them and can yield insight and understanding of human behaviour (Cohen et al, 2011). On the contrary, the interpretive paradigm has drawbacks. Human behaviour is a complex phenomenon to understand because of the subjective element underlying it. In the same vein, Krauss (2005, p. 763) concurs that “what has a common meaning to a group of people may have a unique meaning to an individual member of the group.” This places a challenge to interpretivists who should understand the reality from a participant’s point of view. McKenzie, Powell and Usher (1997) point out that participants may

provide a distorted account of their behaviour and may seek to deliberately mislead the researcher or may not talk to the researcher about certain issues and activities because they may feel that discussing these might be impolite or insensitive. The study is located within the interpretive paradigm to afford the researcher an opportunity to interpret findings in the viewpoints of the participants.

Given the nature of my study, the qualitative methodological approach is suitable. Creswell (2012) describe qualitative research as:

[a] type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants, asks broad questions, collects data consisting largely of words or texts from participants, describes and analyses these words for themes, and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner (p.122).

My study is educational in nature and seeks to understand the role of a Language HOD in facilitating the professional development of language teachers. To answer my research questions, the data collection methods to be employed are semi-structured interviews, participant observation, collages, poetry and document analysis. These methods rely on the views of the purposively selected participants to gather data that will be interpreted and analysed thematically.

3.4 Research design

Research is based on some underlying philosophical assumptions about what constitutes reality. Appropriate methods are used to develop knowledge in any given study. To evaluate and conduct research, it is imperative to know the underlying assumptions of the study. This study assumed and used the qualitative approach.

A research design can be described as a master plan that indicates how the study is to be conducted. It shows how all the major parts of the research study; the samples or groups, measures, treatment or programs work together to address the research questions (Creswell, 2012; Cohen et al, 2011; Maree, 2016). Yin (2003, p.6) further adds that a “research design is an action plan for getting from here to there.” The research design that is adopted for this study is the case study, a descriptive case study of a single school’s department that was analysed through qualitative methods. Yin (2003, p.18) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the

boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined.” Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) further point out that a case study strives to portray “what it is like to be in a situation, to catch the close-up reality and ‘thick description’ of participants’ lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for a situation.” In a similar vein, Rule and John (2011, p.4) describe the case study as “a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context to generate knowledge.” Therefore, it is a study of a bounded system. The case may be a program, an event, or activity bounded in time and place. My case study is the language department of a school. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), a case study examines a bounded system or case over time in detail, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting. The aim is to answer the research questions.

A case study is one way of doing research whether it is social science related or even socially related because its aim is to understand human beings in a social context and give an interpretation. A case study allows for a rich, detailed study of educational phenomena and can lead to both descriptive and analytical accounts for such phenomena. Cohen et al. 2011, posit that the purpose of a case study is to probe deeply and analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit. The aim is to explain why things happen as they do and to generalise or predict from a single example by observing the emerging patterns. Case studies can be used to generate claims for further verification studies (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Case studies do not claim to be representative but emphasise what can be learnt from a single case. Yin (2003; p.13) holds that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clear.

Case studies are studies of a single instance or unit. On a positive level, case studies are used to generate theoretical insights and understanding of instances. They explore general problems or issues within a limited and focused setting. On the other hand, case study research has been subjected to criticism claiming single cases offer a poor basis for generalisation. Investigators using case study methods are prone to make inferences and investigators using case studies are also prone to bias if that investigator has preconceived ideas about the case study (Yin, 2003). It has a limited number of participants and the findings cannot be generalised but can provide valuable information for further studies.

3.5 Research context

The study was conducted in a secondary school in Elandskop, Umgungundlovu District, a non-fee-paying school. The school is classified as Quintile 3. Quintile means that schools are categorised into groups (quintiles) based on the relative wealth of their surrounding communities. Schools in poorest communities are classified as quintiles 1-3 and schools serving the wealthiest communities are classified as quintile 5. Schools in quintiles 1-3 receive more funding per learner from the government than schools in quintiles 4 and 5. The latter are fee paying schools, on the assumption that parents can afford to pay fees and require less government support than schools in lower quintiles (Department of Basic Education: Norms & Standards for school funding, 2004).

Therefore, background of the learners is poor and most of them are brought up by grandparents who depend on social grants for their upbringing. The sample consisted of one HOD, three teachers offering Isizulu Home Language and three teachers offering English First Additional Language totalling to seven participants.

3.6 Research sampling

Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study (Maree, 2007, p.79). The research literature places an emphasis on two types of sampling; probability sampling and the non-probability sampling (Cohen, Manion and Morrison. 2011). For the purposes of this study, the non-probability method was employed. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) maintain that in a non-probability sample, the researcher targets a group knowing that it does not represent the wider population but simply represents itself. From the types of non-probability sampling methods such as convenience sampling, quota sampling, dimensional sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling, I have used the purposive sampling. Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.60) maintain that “purposive sampling means that the researcher makes specific choices about which people, groups or objects to include in the sample.” The sample is chosen purposefully. Cohen et al. (2011, p.156) are of the view that “researchers hand-pick the cases to be included in the sample based on their judgement of their typically or possession of the characteristics being sought.” In my study, the language HOD and the language teachers were purposely selected as the researcher is studying the role of a language HOD in developing language teachers professionally.

The sample consisted of six language teachers and an HOD, three of which teach English First Additional Language (ENGFAL) and another three teach Isizulu Home Language (ZULM). They are all supervised by one Language HOD. They were selected on basis of belonging to the language department and they were the target group. The aim is not to generalise the findings of the study. All participants teach either ENGFAL or ZULM in the General Education Training Phase (grades 8-9) and Further Education and Training Phase (grades 10-12). These teachers do not represent the wider community or population; therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalised.

3.7 Data collection methods

Data collection methods included interviews, document analysis, observation and poetry.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interviews are methods of gathering information through oral questioning using a pre-planned set of questions. Bertram & Christiansen (2014, p.80) maintain that “an interview is a conversation between the researcher and the respondent. However, it is different from an everyday conversation in that the researcher is the person who sets the agenda and asks the questions. It is a structured and focused conversation where the researcher has in mind particular information that he wants from the respondent.” Unstructured interviews allow the interviewer to pose some open-ended questions and the interviewee to express his or her own opinion freely. Both the interviewer and the interviewee must be at ease and the direction of the interview is determined by both the interviewer and the interviewee. It is not predetermined. For the purposes of this study, semi-structured interviews were used. I prepared an interview protocol to guide me in asking questions from one HOD and six teachers (see Appendix A). It helped me to probe further for clarity through follow-up questions.

A major advantage of interviews is that they provide useful information when you cannot directly observe the participants. Interviews also permit the participants to share personal information. Face-face interviews enable the interviewer to observe visual clues relating to the environment. Body language can be observed, indicating levels of comfort or discomfort (Creswell, 2012, p.218).

Bertram and Chistiansen (2014, p.81) argue that one of the disadvantages of the interview is that the power relations can influence the process of the interview. I have addressed that by

making my position clear to the participants and indicated that it has got nothing to do with research project. Interviews can be self-reported data. To minimize that, I have scheduled visits for observation on what activities do language teachers engage in.

In order not to place the unnecessary time demands on participants, the interview schedule was planned in such a way that the interviews should not take more than thirty (30) minutes. Furthermore, the appointments were arranged so that it would not interfere with their professional duties. The interviews were recorded, and transcripts of the interviews were sent to the participants to give them an opportunity to add to the answers given in the interview. This also allowed for member checking to be done.

3.7.2 Document analysis

Researchers can also use the available resources through a process known as document analysis to establish themes and patterns that exist from the source documents. These may include, for example, question papers, school reports, newspaper articles, journals, textbooks and many more. I received documents such as records of lesson plans, minutes of minutes, class visits and workbook control and subject improvement plans that are used to control the progress of teaching and learning. I analysed documents by using the content analysis method (see Appendix C). This method enabled me to explore recurring themes and patterns generated by the data.

3.7.3 Observation

Niewenhuis (2007, p.84) states that “Observation is an essential data gathering technique as it holds the possibility of providing us with an insider perspective of the group dynamics and behaviours in different settings.” Observation means that the researcher goes to the site of the study, which may be a school, classroom, a staff room or a community meeting space and observe what is taking place there. The researcher obtains first hand data. (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). This allows the researcher to observe the site, see what is taking place and interpret it for the study. For the purposes of this study, I have attended two departmental meetings organised by the language HOD and observed them in action (see Appendix B). Bertram and Christiansen (2014) posit that data analysis using qualitative methods consist of textual or visual data such as field notes recording observations, ideas and thoughts about the school visits, audio-recorded interviews, notes on unstructured classrooms, video-footage of

the classroom, photographs taken, policy documents and minutes. Attending the meetings enabled me to get first-hand experience of the activities of the language department.

3.7.4 Poetry

Written text may include travel journal, letters, emails, books, articles and other text. The text that become important in the research process may be created by participants, the researchers or the other authors (Keats, 2009, p.186).

Poetry is a good form of assessing the feelings and emotions of the poet. A poem can be described as a piece of writing using beautiful or unusual language, which is arranged in fixed lines that have a beat and often rhyme. Poetry can be written to emphasize humour, storytelling or political message (<https://literaryterms.net>) Through poetic devices one can express thoughts, ideas and expressions that cannot be said under normal conversation but can only suffice in poetic licence. I have used this method for the participants to express their feelings regarding participation in the language departmental activities. (see Appendix D).

3.8 Data collection and generation plan

3.8.1 Table 2

Research Question	Data Generation Method/Instrument	Data Source	Anticipated Analysis	Time Line
In what ways does the HOD facilitate professional development for teachers in the language department?	Interviews Document analysis Observation schedule	Language HOD	Wong' explanation of shared vision and mission/Hodkinson and Hodkinson concept of community of practice.	January to June 2018
How do language teachers participate in the PD activities organised by the HOD?	Observation schedules and document analysis	Language educator and the HOD.	Wong's explanation of de-privatization of practice and collaboration activities.	January 2018 to June 2018
What are language teacher's perceptions of how their participation in departmental activities that contributes to their professional development?	Poetry Interviews	Language teachers and HOD	Hodkinson and Hodkinson concept of community of practice	January 2018 to June 2018

3.9 Data analysis

According to Cohen et al. (2007), in qualitative research, data analysis refers to making sense of data from the perspectives of the participants, while considering the context, pattern, themes, categories and regularities.

The two broad approaches to data analysis in qualitative methods are inductive and deductive reasoning, the former referring to working from specific to general while the latter referring to working from general to specific. Both approaches were used when analysing lesson plans,

minutes of meetings, class visits and control books, period registers and educators' subject improvement plans.

Data collected was coded and recordings transcribed for in-depth analysis using Wong's conceptual framework of PLCs on a school site. The conceptual framework of Hodkinson and Hodkinson was used with an emphasis of what the teachers learn in a working department. The emerging themes were categorised according those conceptual and theoretical frameworks. For the purposes of this study, I used thematic analysis in accordance with themes that emerged from various existing documents as sources of data. I used the policy documents, minutes of meetings, teachers' files and the HOD's management file and analysed them during document analysis.

3.10 Trustworthiness

Cohen et al (2011) maintain that trustworthiness can be thought of ways in which qualitative researchers ensure transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability as evident in their research.

The deliberate strategy to extract data relating to the experiencing of participants within their own contexts was followed in order to improve the trustworthiness of the results. Respondent checking (Bush, 2007, p.83) and member checking (Creswell, 2012, p.259) were utilised as a strategy to check the accuracy of the accounts given by the research participants. This required me to return interview transcripts to the participants for confirmation and amendment. Furthermore, participants were asked to provide feedback on the accuracy of the report by asking them to comment on the completeness of the report, the accuracy of the themes and whether the interpretations were fair and representative.

3.10.1 Credibility of the study

Credibility refers to the correspondence between what the researcher provides as findings and what the participants have said. Jacobs et al. (2006:504) view credibility as "internal validity in qualitative research. It refers to the extent of how truthful the enquiry is. I ensured credibility by doing the following as explained by Creswell (2012); peer-debriefing (for the purposes of this study members were briefed about the whole study) and member-checking which refers to a process where the researcher asks the participants to review what they said for accuracy. For the purposes of this study, I asked the participants to check whether the description of their account was accurate. The next process that I engaged in was triangulation which refers to the use of multiple methods. For this purpose, I interviewed the HOD and the teachers, observed the participants and analysed documents.

3.10.2 Dependability

In qualitative research, dependability refers to disparities that can be corrected for the research to be authentic. In quantitative research, it is known as reliability. I preserved all the transcripts, audio-recordings and notes for future reference when necessary. I did my best to present all perspectives equally and to enable readers to arrive at neutral decisions. I guarded against power relations as suggested by Cohen et al. (2007), by treating participants as partners. I acknowledged my position, past experiences and biases that might influence my interpretation of the findings as the researcher. I avoided asking leading questions. Lastly, I ensured alignment between the interview questions and the research questions.

3.11 Ethical issues

In order to gain access to the school to collect data, I first applied to the KZN Department of Education. I also applied to the UKZN ethics committee for ethical clearance. After the permission was granted, I wrote letters to the principal, the HOD and teachers requesting permission to conduct research in the school and invited the participants to take part in the study.

Data collection in a qualitative study requires a researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This may call for the participants to talk about their private experiences. Creswell (2012) suggested the following ethical considerations to be followed: informed consent, voluntary participation, right to privacy, respecting the participants, confidentiality and protection from harm. Before I could start with my research, I explained the purpose of the study, the role the participants will play and declared my positionality at the onset so that it did not interfere with the study. Participants were informed and requested to sign the consent letters as Cohen, et al. (2011) state that the researcher should obtain informed consent from the participants. Homan and Bulmer (1982), cited in Curtis et al. (2014), describe the principle of informed consent as meaning that in all circumstances, participants should be completely aware of factors that affect them, and based on this information they choose freely to take part (or not) in the research. The informed consent document contained basic information about the research. It informed the participants about the aims and focus of the study and the methods of data collection. Participants were made aware of voluntary participation and their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Anonymity is important for participants in research. I assured the participants that I will not disclose their identity so that they will feel confident to provide their perspective or experience.

Pseudonyms were used and the names of locations of the research were changed. This was done to protect them from being identified. Curtis et al (2014, p.186) argue that “maintaining the confidentiality of your research participants implies that you do not disclose information that was given to you during the data analysis.” I communicated with my participants that information generated was to be kept confidential and was to be known by myself and my supervisor.

3.12 Limitations of the study

The following limitations of the study were envisaged:

My position as a principal of a neighbouring school, I was well known to the participants, which might present a conflict of interest. To alleviate this, I explained to the participants that my position as a principal was not related to the study in anyway except to obtain an in-depth knowledge of teacher professional development for research purposes.

The findings and recommendations of the research study cannot be generalised, but lessons can be learnt from the study and possibly be applied to other contexts.

3.13 Conclusion

The methodological chapter has outlined the research design, research setting, research sample, data sources, and the interpretive paradigm in which the study is located. It also presented the instruments and procedures for data collection, a data generation plan and analysis. It further provided a motivation for the way the research was done and ended with the possible limitations of the study. The chapter that follows pertains to the data analysis and interpretation of the findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The study explored the role of the Language HOD in facilitating professional development of the Language teachers. This was done by answering the following research questions:

- In what ways do the Language HOD facilitate the professional development of the language teachers in the Language Department?
- How do language teachers participate in the professional development activities organized by the Language HOD and what do they learn?
- What are the Language teachers' perceptions of their participation in the departmental activities towards their professional development?

The study adopted a qualitative methodological approach and an interpretive paradigm. It is a case study of a language department as a Professional Learning Community (PLC). This chapter presents the data generated through interviews, observations, document analysis and poetry. Data were presented using subheadings that addresses the above three research questions. The purposive sampling strategy of participants was adopted, and teachers were chosen for being language teachers in the Language Department. Pseudonyms were used for the seven participants interviewed, one HOD, and six language teachers (3 for Isizulu and 3 for English First Additional Language). The HOD was named Lindelwa and the teachers are addressed in their titles and surnames (not real surnames).

4.2 Profile of participants (see appendix I)

4.2.1 Lindelwa-Head of Department

Lindelwa is a Language HOD of a secondary school that enrolls learners from grade 8 to 12. She has 22 years' experience as a teacher and has taught in this school only. She became a Language HOD in 2017 and when the study was conducted, she had one year of experience in this position. She is responsible for both Isizulu and English FAL and has six teachers under her supervision. She teaches Isizulu in Grade 12. She has three new teachers under her supervision. She is in her early fifties, single and a mother of two children. She holds a

Secondary Teacher's Diploma, Higher Diploma in Education and Honours degree in Education.

The school has 820 learners and all learners take both languages from grades 8 to 12. The school is classified as quintile 3 (which is a national poverty ranking of public schools based on the relative wealth of the surrounding area and the community it serves), having section 21 without function C status. The school receives funding from the Provincial Education Department. It cannot purchase other resources such as stationery and books directly from the suppliers but must make requisitions from the Department of Education. Learners come from a wide range of different backgrounds and the school was accorded a 'no fee school' status by the Department of Education.

4.2.2 Mr Mjwara

Mr Mjwara is a male teacher and at the time of the study, he was in his mid-forties. He teaches English FAL in the school. He is also a local teacher having completed both his primary and secondary education in local schools. He became a teacher because of his passion for working with the youth between the ages of 13 and 18 years.

Mr Mjwara's educational qualifications include a Diploma in Public Management, B-Tech in Public Management and M-Tech in Public Management. At the time of the study, he did not have any professional qualification relevant to the field of teaching. He teaches English FAL in Grade 11. He has been with the school for five years.

4.2.3 Mrs Nhlalukana

Mrs Nhlalukana is in her late forties, married and a mother of four. She has been with the school for 12 years and teaches English FAL in Grade 12. She has produced good results in Grade 12 for 5 years in succession. She became a teacher because she loves children. Her educational qualifications include a diploma (STD), a B.A degree and a B.A Hons degree. At the time of the study, she had enrolled for her master's degree.

4.2.4 Mrs Mbelu

Mrs Mbelu is in her mid-thirties. She is married and a mother of two children. She has been with this school for 5 years. She teaches isiZulu in Grade 11. She holds a Bachelor of Education (B Ed) in Further Education and Training (FET), with a specialisation in IsiZulu and History.

4.2.5 Mrs Zikode

Mrs Zikode is in her late twenties. She is married with one child. She has been with the school for two years but her teaching career spans over a period of 6 years. She holds a BEd (GET) degree with specialisations in isiZulu and Life Orientation. She teaches isiZulu in grades 8 and 9.

4.2.6 Mr Langa

Mr Langa is in his mid-thirties, single and is a father of two children. He has been teaching for seven years. Mr Langa holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), with specialisations in isiZulu and Social Sciences. He teaches isiZulu in grade 10.

4.2.7 Mrs Nhlangulela

Mrs Nhlangulela is in her early thirties and is a mother of three. She has been teaching for 4 years. She holds a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree and teaches English FAL in grades 8 and 9.

4.3 Summary of participants' profile

The participants consisted of five females and two males. Their average ages ranged from 26-52. All the participants met the requirements of being language educators, specializing in either Isizulu or English First Additional Language in their qualifications, with Mr Mjwara as an exception.

4.4 Data presentation

The section below presents the findings that emanated from the one-on-one interviews that the researcher conducted with the participants, observations and from the document analysis. I have presented the findings according to the research questions of my study.

4.4.1 In what ways does the Language HOD facilitate professional development for Language teachers in the Language Department and how do Language teachers participate and learn from the professional developmental activities?

I need to point out at this stage, the two questions were put together having the first part directed to Lindelwa (HOD) while the second to the teachers. On one hand, I wanted to find out what is it that the HOD does and on the other hand, to confirm what she says she is doing from the teachers themselves and how the teachers participate and learn from what the HOD is doing. The reason for doing this is that the questions and sub-questions are more or less the same.

According to Lindelwa she employed various ways of engaging with educators in her department. In analysing her responses as well as the teachers' responses, eight key themes emerged. These were:

- Departmental meetings
- Curriculum management, implementation and assessment
- Co-operation, planning and networking
- Instructional strategies, coaching and mentoring
- Discipline and time-tabling
- Supervision and monitoring of teaching and learning
- Class visits
- Management of resources

In each theme I will start by presenting findings on what Lindelwa (HOD) said and move on to what teachers presented.

4.4.1.1 Theme 1: Departmental meetings

The first key theme that emerged from the interview with Lindelwa as a leader, was that she organised departmental meetings. She said:

I normally organise departmental meetings. There are four scheduled departmental meetings in a year. There is one meeting per term unless otherwise there is an urgent need to meet with the language department, then I would call for a special meeting.

In the findings, it emerged that when organising such meetings, a notice of a meeting with an agenda was sent to the teachers and she would make them sign to acknowledge receipt. She emphasized the purposes of these language departmental meetings and responded this way:

A notice of the meeting with an agenda is sent to teachers a day before the meeting. Two item spaces are left open in the agenda for teachers to include items to be discussed in the meeting before the agenda is officially adopted. Basically, my role has a dual function, the first one being that of teaching and the second one of supervising, guiding teachers in teaching their own subjects. I ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place. I would embark on assisting my departmental members to excel in their field and be subject specialists and managers in the scope of their practice i.e. the classroom.

This was witnessed when I visited the participant's work site on the 10th of May 2018 to observe them in practice. The issue under discussion was the mid-year examination preparations. All the participants were present. They all signed the attendance register.

Lindelwa said she allowed the departmental members to take turns in chairing the departmental meetings. She emphasises this in her interview:

The reason I allow the departmental members to take turns in chairing the departmental meetings is to build confidence among themselves and inculcate the communication skills.

On the day of observation, the meeting was chaired by Mr Langa.

Lindelwa would offer opportunities for communications among the staff and shared information on engagement with learners as she said:

We would communicate with teachers both formally and informally about the performance of the learners in the department, since all learners in the school are doing both languages to get the idea to where the department is leading to. I encourage teachers who have attended workshops or courses to give feedback to other teachers.

On several occasions during the interview, Lindelwa raised the point that her departmental members learnt from each other:

Members are often given opportunities to speak, share ideas and express opinions. Through this engagement, their views and opinions are expressed and shared. In short, we learn from each other.

On the observation day, the action under observation was how they participated and engaged in the discussions. It was observed that they came up with positive ideas regarding invigilation,

time tabling, how to deal with cheaters in the examinations and any other irregularities. The reflection was on the past examination sessions that the participants invigilated before and they didn't want to repeat their mistakes but learn from them.

Lindelwa pointed out that during such language department meetings she had an opportunity to organise workshops for educators and she pointed out during the interview:

I organise school-based workshops where I encourage teachers to conduct debates, speech days and spelling Bees. I teach them how to be judge such events accurately.

Lindelwa ended by saying that her organisation of departmental meetings was not only limited to a group, but she also met teachers individually as she said below:

I also organise meetings on one-on-one with the teachers for accountability purposes. I sometimes conduct separate meetings for both languages. Isizulu teachers alone and English First Additional teachers alone but having the same agenda since the Language Standardization Policy is the same.

I gathered that teachers participated in the meetings organised by Lindelwa. The study revealed that participation was on two levels, namely formal and informal. During the interview Mr Mjwara expressed his views and said:

Our departmental meetings are informative and are held monthly. When one has missed the meeting one feels that he or she have missed a lot but luckily our colleagues do update you on what was covered during the meeting. It is in these meetings where we discuss ways of improving our teaching and learning and how to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

I further discovered that teachers regarded the departmental meetings as an opportunity to grow as this sentiment was shared by Mrs Mbelu:

One grows in these meetings as a teacher because we are given the agenda in advance and allowed an opportunity to add on items to be discussed. What fascinates me is to be given an opportunity to chair the meeting or co-chair with our leader, Lindelwa. I feel this chance prepares me for future because I might be an HOD one day, who knows.

I also found that much emphasis was placed on meeting attendance as Mr Langa puts it:

Meeting attendance is mandatory and controlled by the signing of the register. This gives our leader the idea of who was not available in the meeting and apologies are

tendered in the form of a written letter. A member that was absent would be updated on the issues discussed and binding decisions taken.

I discovered that this language department and its members put communication at the centre of what they are doing. Mrs Zikode commented by saying, “*we place an emphasis on open communication. We are like a family in the Language Department caring and sharing anything from joyfulness to misery.*” Mrs Nhlangulela further elaborated by saying:

Our leader employs an open-door policy and has a sympathetic ear and listens to our joys and sorrows. She is approachable indeed, and it is in these platforms as well, that we discuss our learner performance and strategies to improve performance. You know what? Ideas just flow when you are relaxed and not under stressful conditions.

While attending the meeting, I observed what they were saying. I discovered that members of this language department treated one another with respect and dignity. In these meetings, they discussed issues pertaining to language teaching and learning like curriculum coverage, setting formal and informal tasks, tests and examinations, how to improve the performance of the learners, how to instil the love of language practice, especially English First Additional Language as it is a medium of instruction for the school. They also discussed the general behaviour of the learners and cases of children needing help regarding social ills. I discovered that items like curriculum coverage, learner performance, improvement plans and period honouring were the standing items on the agenda. They were discussed in all the meetings they held.

The second observation was on the 9th of October 2018. The situation under observation was the third quarter results analysis of the department. All the participants were present. The results analysis enabled the participants to learn certain trends from them, so that they could predict the results for the end of year.

4.4.1.2 Theme 2: Curriculum management, implementation and assessment

It became evident during the interview that Lindelwa managed the curriculum in the language department and when necessary, had one-on-one meetings to unpack the contents of the curriculum. The curriculum refers to all teaching and learning activities that take place in learning institutions. It is a course of study, or plan of what must be taught and learnt

(Department of Education, 2000). In this case, a curriculum is seen as a document or blue print for teaching. Lindelwa described it as:

I would ensure that all teachers have the CAPS documents relevant to the grades that they teach. I would also organise special one-on-one meeting to unpack the contents of the document and clarify any misconceptions that may arise when the teacher is engaging with the document. My priority is curriculum coverage as its specified by the department of education. We also do improvement plans and investigate challenges and factors affecting our pass rate. We do diagnostic and statistical analyses and set subject targets every year. I check the teacher's files on a fort-night basis and do class visits on regular basis.

Lindelwa mentioned that there were various activities that she and the language teachers engaged in to implement the curriculum. She further explained that she checked and monitored curriculum coverage according to the departmental prescripts by using the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) as a pacesetter and checked the corresponding dates on the teachers' lesson plan records. She also checked whether teachers have a planned programme of action for the whole year and had this to say:

I check the curriculum coverage by using the ATPs and ascertain whether teachers do comply with the DOE regulations. I check the teachers' records whether they correspond to what they ought to have taught in that time. If there are discrepancies, I advise the teachers to engage in extra class teaching to recover the time lost. I give praise where the job has been done well.

The Educators Employment Act 76 of 1998 emphasizes the role of an HOD as that of monitoring of the teacher's work. When Lindelwa spoke of managing the curriculum, it became evident that this was done for compliance purposes as stipulated in the HODs job description. The department of education prescribes that it is the duty of the HOD to monitor the curriculum and therefore Lindelwa had a monitoring and control responsibility to ensure that the teachers' curriculum pace was line with the ATP. In controlling the work, Lindelwa ensured that work performance was in accordance with predetermined and set plans of her language department stating:

I establish performance standards by designing a checking tool which the teachers will fill in and respond to yes or no questions to measure their actual performance. Where the teachers fall short when assessing the form, I intervene and assist to reach our set goals and standards.

Lindelwa emphasized the point that she was the policy interpreter and implementer and stated:

We come together and interpret the departmental policy on HomeWorks, volume of work to be given to learners, Annual teaching plans, Jika-iMfundo prescripts and trackers, assessment and pass requirements. We therefore implement what the policy prescribes.

When I interviewed teachers about curriculum issues, I discovered that they not only place emphasis on curriculum delivery but relied on the HOD for almost everything as Mr Langa said, “*we give our undivided attention to the curriculum delivery.*” Mrs Mbelu further stated that:

Lindelwa provides us with the CAPs documents in which all our engagements with the learners revolves. She would then unpack the CAPs document with us so that we are all in the same page. We as a team, further develop activities to engage in for our School-Based Assessment and this gives uniformity in what we are doing. Lindelwa wants us to be productive, good administrators, competent and knowledgeable. We also aspire to be good teachers and leaders under her supervision. We as teachers, can feel that she has a positive influence on us and hence, we feel motivated, committed to work harder.

I found that in her activities, Lindelwa implemented and complied with the Department of Education policy when it comes to the teaching and learning of languages in the school, supervising the work of the teachers and workshopping the teachers on what should be done. Mr Mjwara said:

The departmental policies changes time and again. It calls for a well-versed leader to guide us, monitor us and support us in implementing the policy. Lindelwa does that by workshopping on us on the general aims of the language curriculum and policy, time allocation of our subject and time-tabling.

It was evident during the interview that most of the activities undertaken were geared towards policy implementation as Mr Langa stated:

She checks our files, monitors the activities we give to the learners by using a monitoring tool. She just doesn't monitor for a sake of appending a signature but first workshop you on her expectations. She workshopped us on the cognitive levels that we must meet when setting our

test or task items so that our questioning moves beyond literal to include amongst others, application, synthesis and evaluation.

Mrs Mbelu supported Mr Langa when mentioning the instrument used by Lindelwa when monitoring the work done by the teachers by saying:

Coming back to the monitoring tool, it works effectively during the reflection sessions of the lessons delivered to the learners where she would let you reflect on questions such as, was your lesson adequately prepared and did you achieve the main purpose of the lesson?

The rest of the participants also pointed out that weekly reflection sessions with Lindelwa were valuable and helped them to grow as teachers. A further discussion ensued on the prescripts of the policy and the participants highlighted that they participated by meeting them such as the volume of work to be given to learners, subject time allocation, learning outcomes, assessment, content and teaching plans for the language.

On the issue of assessment of the curriculum delivery to learners, I found that there were several contacts and working together that took place between Lindelwa and the teachers as Mrs Nhlangulela discussed:

We develop test and examination items as a language department. Lindelwa together with the subject heads, moderate the test and examination items for validity and reliability. As we engage in these activities we learn and grow in our profession, but I must say, they take a lot of our time ...not that I'm complaining.

Mr Mjwara also pointed out:

We also embark as a language department in what is known as pre-moderation and post-moderation. In pre-moderation stage, we look at the test and examination layout, marks allocation and the distribution of test items from multiple-choice items to discussion items. It is at this stage, that we check whether we have covered all the taxonomies to be tested and the level of difficulty.

Mrs Nhlalukana did not want to be left out on this one and further elaborated this way:

We engage in post-moderation stage after we have marked our learner's answers to the test and examination items. The whole idea is to...is to maintain consistency,

accuracy, tolerance range and high level of accuracy. This is stage whereby one learns even from the answers provided by the learners because they might not come with the answers that we have brain-stormed and put them to our memoranda but correct answers when we take a closer look and investigation at them. Marking therefore becomes a whole learning exercise.

4.4.1.3 Theme 3: Co-operation, planning and networking

Lindelwa said that she encouraged a team spirit and co-operation among the departmental members and gave an opportunity for the teachers to plan lessons together:

I encourage isiZulu teachers and EFAL teachers to network and plan lessons together as a grade and as grade in succession. This enables the teacher on the lower grade to know what the teacher on higher grade expects the type of knowledge and level the learners need to achieve before progressing to the next grade.

Lindelwa further elaborated that planning formed an integral part of her engagement with the teachers under her supervision in her department. Cardinal (2015) maintains that planning is deciding in advance what is to be done, when it is to be done and how it is to be done.

Planning therefore concerns the selection of goals to be achieved and what actions need to be taken to achieve those goals. When planning, one needs to forecast, set targets, develop policies and programmes of action to reach for the desired goals. Thus, planning requires decisions to be made as to what should be done, how it should be done, who will do it, where it will be done and why it is to be done. Lindelwa said during her interview:

I usually plan such that novice educators are teamed up with more experienced educators to gain their feet in the ground. I also plan class visits after forming DSGs during IQMS implementation. If it happens that one member of my department is not present on that day, I must plan how the learners will be monitored, supervised and occupied. I plan the academic year, class visits and allow the teachers to come up with the suggestions of how the department should be run. I allocate this responsibility to more experienced teachers whom I appoint as subject heads.

Lindelwa further stated that she encouraged networking beyond the school and motivated teachers to attend developmental workshops arranged by the department and the advisory services of the Department of Education.

I encourage networking within the language department and even beyond the school, especially with those schools who perform well and often known as schools of excellence. I motivate teachers to attend departmental workshops and give feedback to other teachers in the department.

When the teachers were interviewed it became evident in this theme that Lindelwa organised lesson planning and preparation sessions for language teachers and opened avenues for networking.

Mr Mjwara said, “*lesson planning is very important that we do it together so that teachers will know exactly what the teacher in the next grade expects the learners to know.*” One feature that stood out during the interview was that lesson planning and preparation were done forty nightly for major themes and weekly for day to day lesson delivery. Likewise, Mrs Nhlalukana admitted that:

We put much emphasis in cooperativeness and we give it all our efforts so that we can keep the ball rolling should the unexpected happens like one colleague is sick, we can occupy his or her class because we know what is happening. We are not competing but complementing each other.

I discovered that networking was planned such that it occurred on different levels. They said the aim of networking was to have all teachers on the same par as Mrs Mbelu said:

Our first level of networking is between the grade teachers themselves. Language has different aspect to be taught and we are not good in all those aspects. I, for one I'm not that good in literature, especially poetry. I network with my co-workers to teach my learners that aspect for me. Others are good in language structures, drama or short stories. We have developed what we call learning teams where we strategize to assist teachers with similar needs, teaching and learning challenges.

Mrs Zikode elaborates on the second level of networking this way:

We also take part in the second level of networking which is across the grades. We actively participate in this networking because the teacher in the next grade knows exactly which language aspect that were treated in the previous grade and knows where

to start with the following grade this then follows the principle of moving from the known to the unknown.

Mr Langa moved on to the third level of networking and stated:

We further do inter-school networking especially we those high performing schools. Our leaders organise inter-school debates, talk shows, team-teaching and planning. This helps us to grow in the profession and know exactly what they are doing in school. B now that there are these ATPs and Jika iMfundo trackers which all calls for networking.

4.4.1.4 Theme 4: Instructional strategies, coaching and mentoring

Lindelwa pointed out that she assisted with the instructional strategies when it comes to meeting departmental deadlines. The teamwork definition of instructional leadership entails making suggestions, praising team members for effective teaching, soliciting opinions, modelling effective instructions, providing opportunities for professional development and supporting collaboration. Lindelwa described, *“I instruct the teachers under my supervision in a very carefully crafted way to meet up with the deadlines and keep the departmental work up to standard.”*

Lindelwa acknowledged that she worked with the personnel and emphasized that she was supporting teachers, coaching them and assigning roles according to their capabilities. Mentoring involves giving guidance and support to the less experienced individual while coaching entails a step- by-step accompaniment of the less experienced individual by a more experienced one (Fielden, 2005). Lindelwa discussed:

Teachers in my language department are very co-operative. More experienced teachers take initiative in guiding the novice teachers by coaching them how to plan, classroom management and learner assessment. I also assign duties to teachers according to their skills and capabilities.

Lindelwa mentioned that she had undertaken to do a certificate in coaching and mentoring which she said she needed it for her self-development for the department during the IQMS.

I do also coach and mentor the newly appointed educators in my department as we are having 3 new teachers in our department this year. I normally have one on one conversation to assist them and support them by giving them suitable resources.

Data revealed that teachers accepted that Lindelwa had to give them instructions. However, there were those who resented to always being reminded of what to do, what not to do and they tended to view the manager as keeping an eye on whatever they did.

Mr Langa pointed out that:

Lindelwa normally gives you instructions in a very kind and polite way. You feel like you let her down if you don't adhere to what she says and meet the deadline. There are times where she becomes harsh as if she has lost her cool.

This sentiment was shared by other participants during the interview and Mrs Nhlangulela explicitly stated that:

This way, I myself just feel angry at those who will miss the deadline when our leader has such a good manner of approach when giving one an instruction. On certain occasions is like she always on your case wanting this and that and run like headless chickens being adults!

Data showed that the giving of instructions required that the giver had to know what to instruct and the instruction must not be confusing. Mrs Mbelu said, “*Our department gives clear instructions, instructions that are free from ambiguity, we usually know what to do as compared to other departments.*” I also discovered that instructions are very important when new things come up as Mr Mjwara stated, “*Lindelwa knows how to deal with resistance to change by giving instructions politely and deals with change process itself and not with the individual.*”

4.4.1.5 Theme 5: Discipline and time-tabling

Lindelwa indicated that she also dealt with organisational issues pertaining to student discipline, budgeting and time-tabling. Students who were ill-disciplined were referred to her first when they misbehaved during a language class.

I handle learners who misbehave and do not submit school-based assessment to the teachers before they are handed over to the deputy principal. I make them sign the non-submission form after explaining what impact it would have on their SBA and performance results. I do budgeting for my department by submitting the wish-list of the department to the principal after the need analysis with the departmental members.

As an HOD, I allocate the duty load to the teachers after consultation with them from which we do time-tabling for the whole school.

Mr Mjwara highlighted that Lindelwa tried to support him by maintaining discipline in the classes he teaches. He confirmed that by saying, “*Lindelwa does not hesitate to call to order all those learners who are deviant.*” Mrs Nhlangulela pointed out that sometimes learners fight, and she needed to act against such unacceptable and untoward behaviour. She said, “*I immediately refer such cases to Lindelwa who uses the learner code of conduct as a corrective measure and apply the necessary sanction befitting the nature of the offence.*”

During the interview, Mrs Mbelu echoed her colleague’s sentiments by suggesting that Lindelwa was a disciplinarian. She said, “*She is very strict in supervising her block and doesn’t want learners loitering around during lesson times and doesn’t want classes that are left unattended to.*” Mrs Zikode further explored the disciplinary character of Lindelwa by saying, “*Her strictness doesn’t only apply to learners. She insists that we should not be late for classes and not leave the learners before the bell rings for period exchange.*”

It emerged from the findings that Lindelwa dealt with organisational issues that teachers brought to her attention, thus also having a role of disciplining learners at school. Similarly, Mrs Nhlalukana had this further to say:

My leader is very instrumental in disciplining learners that have behavioural problems when referred to her. Even amongst us teacher when we do not see eye to eye, she settles any matter without taking sides. One learns a lot from her interventions and engagements with discipline issues and other critical matters.

This was echoed by Mrs Zikode who commented by saying:

She even establishes incremental benchmarks of solving the problems, firstly by listening to the complainant and secondly by listening to the accused and thereafter pulls all the strings together so that her judgment would not be biased. We are so blessed to have such a leader in our department. We learn a lot from her.

It emerged from the data that Lindelwa allocated duties to the educators after consultation with the members of the department and other department heads of the school. She related the following:

It my responsibility to allocate subjects and grades to be taught by teachers. I first consult them to choose the grades they are comfortable to teach that particular year. I make sure I don't lose sight of having teachers of mixed abilities working together and having more experienced teachers in senior classes while grooming others. Once finalized, I do time-table for the school.

Data also confirmed that consultation on matters of duty allocation prevailed as narrated by Mr Langa, “Lindelwa approaches us before the school closes as to which grades does one, would like to teach the following year.” Likewise, Mrs Mbelu expressed a similar view by saying:

Lindelwa does not just allocate workload to you without sitting with you down and discuss it. I have learnt that anybody's opinion is valuable. I like her way of doing things having the newly appointed teachers sharing with the more experienced teachers.

Similar views were also shared by the rest of the participants on this theme.

4.4.1.6 Theme 6: Supervision and monitoring of teaching and learning

Supervision and monitoring of teaching and learning emerged from the data analysis as one of the roles Lindelwa performed. Apart from checking the learner's workbooks, controlling tests and examinations, Lindelwa had to see to it that teaching, and learning was taking place. Lindelwa responded by saying:

I also see to it that teachers are at school teaching. I supervisor grade 12 block. I make sure that teachers are in class timeously and have them signing the period registers after each lesson. I collect the period registers from the class representative at the end of the day.

Findings in this theme from the teachers yielded negative connotations as evident in what Mr Mjwara said, “I really don't like her always pushing us to go to class as if we don't know what we have come to do here.” A similar sentiment was shared by Mr Langa who said”

She has period registers to police us and keep on check whether you are in class or not. I wonder sometimes if there is any other valuable thing, she can do than keeping an eye on us.

Data analysis from the rest of the participants also showed that teachers view Lindelwa as someone who wanted things to be done with no negotiated compromises.

4.4.1.7 Theme 7: Class visits

It emerged from the data that Lindelwa visited teachers in classes in the language department. She did that as part of developing her teachers. Lindelwa stated:

I visit teachers in class while they are teaching. My visit is on two levels, announced and unannounced visit. I conduct such visits once a term. As we are having four terms, I therefore have two announced visits and two unannounced visits.

The findings revealed that Lindelwa carefully planned to give feedback on her findings of the visits. It emerged that she gave feedback on one-on-one conversations with the teachers after writing a report and planned a developmental workshop. She said:

While visiting a teacher in class, I use a template that was pre-discussed with the teacher. I note all the teacher's engagement with the learners, subject content, learner participation and feedback to learners and write a report. It is on basis of that report that I plan a one-on-one conversation.

The teachers supported this finding by agreeing that Lindelwa visited them in class. The findings revealed that Lindelwa supervised and appraised teachers during the class visits. Mr Langa stated that:

The class visits done by the Lindelwa are developmental in nature. She conducts them as a form of monitoring and evaluation. They are not only limited to formal class observation but also to informal regular class observation.

Mrs Nhlangulela pointed out during the interview that:

Lindelwa does class visit according to the teacher's needs. On one occasion she would come to observe a teacher teaching to enforce discipline and, on another occasion, she would come with a developmental plan for individual teacher.

It emerged from the study that Lindelwa's duty was to provide support and visibility whenever it was needed. This sentiment was shared by Mrs Mbelu when she stated, "*Lindelwa's support during the class visits and supervision will include amongst others mentoring, collaboration and staff motivation. This helps the teachers to perform at their optimum level.*" The remaining participants noted that as Lindelwa supervises and visit classes, she managed the curriculum and the subjects. When performing the tasks of managing the subjects, Lindelwa checked the quality of work given to the learners and checked whether the language exercises given to the

learners have been marked. The participants noted that Lindelwa made it a point that what they did was according to the work schedule, language policy and Jika-iMfundo trackers. The participants indicated that during the one-one-one sessions and the accountability sessions, they learnt a great deal from Lindelwa and that had a positive mindset when approaching the subjects, they taught.

4.4.1.8 Theme 8: Management of material resources

Lindelwa was very assertive in pointing out that she manages both the human, personnel and material resources under her department. She said she did that in consultation with members of her language department: stock-taking and inventory of the Learner -Teacher Support Material (LTSM), planning of LTSM, ordering of LTSM, storage of LTSM and distribution of LTSM. She pointed out that The Learner Teacher Support Material was vital in learner achievement. The resources in the language lesson entailed amongst other things the Learner's Book, Teacher's Guide, a dictionary, exercise book, newspapers, magazines and posters. These materials needed to be managed and she had this to say:

I distribute the textbooks, charts, maps, newspapers and magazines for my department at the beginning of the year. We need to manage the little that we have, therefore, for books, we have a retrieval policy and our retrieval system is working because we manage to retrieve 99% of books issued at the beginning of the year.

Data revealed that books for the Language department were issued, recorded and retained. Lindelwa worked hand in hand with the teachers to carry out the processes of stock-taking, inventory, distribution and retention.

Mrs Mbelu pointed out:

It starts with the procurement process where our Lindelwa engages us in making requisitions for the books that we would like to use. We normally keep what we value to be used in the next generations.

I discovered that this language department sets out procedures to be followed to manage the resources they have. Mrs Nhlangulela commented by saying:

At the beginning of the year we develop or update a resource material inventory as a department under guidance of Lindelwa. This helps to know what we have, and do we have any additions to our stock.

Mrs Nhlalukana, who is a long serving member of the department responded by saying:

We have developed a retrieval policy for the department for any material that is that is on loan to our learners. Such policy stipulates what steps to be followed when a resource material is lost and how it will be recovered. I have realised that we will be successful in our attempts if we manage our resources successfully.

Mrs Zikode who has been with the school for two years testified that:

I'm new in this school, but I have witnessed that we have been engaged in updating the retrieval policy on the language material and clear duties have been allocated as to who does what. We have LTSM committee to keep records of what is available, retrieve material at the right time and track the used material. There are clear roles and responsibilities and eventually the department works as a unit and we pay a high price for accountability.

Mr Langa wanted to make a valuable point and remarked by stating:

We understand that we are now in the technocratic era and our school policy forbids learners to carry cell phones to school, but we do encourage learners to their parents' smartphones and tablets at home to access and surf the internet for topical issues for debates, speech deliveries and oral presentations and moderations.

I also discovered that the implementation of the retrieval policy alleviated the shortages of material in the language department, Mr Mjwara thoughtfully said:

For the past three years now, we have been topping up in our LTSM requisition because we want to reach a situation whereby each learner has a book in his or her hand, but we are yet not there.

4.4.2 What do you understand by professional development?

When the question was posed to Lindelwa about what she understands by professional development, she responded by saying:

It's to continue learning and be a lifelong learner and to attend the developmental workshops leading to the improvement of subject knowledge of teachers. I believe that teachers should keep up with the latest development in his or her speciality.

The reason for asking this question was to find out what Lindelwa and the teachers know about professional development and to lay a background for the third research question below.

Lindelwa was asked whether she received any formal training in developing the teachers and responded by saying:

When appointed to this position, a workshop for all newly appointed HODs was organised by the district where we were equipped with the tools of managing the departments and assist teachers in becoming better.

The reason for asking this question based on training, was that the criteria for appointing an HOD for languages in the Department of Education was that the candidate must be qualified in one language and teaching it, yet the appointed HOD had to control both languages.

Teachers from the Language Department were asked the same question about professional development in a more refined way as what kind of support they received from the HOD where the participants had to mention the kinds of support, they received from Lindelwa and they agreed in responding as follows:

She conducts workshops for us, organises people from outside to come and workshop us, shares information that she has got with us, handle disciplinary cases where possible, familiarises us this teaching thing to the new teachers and interprets circulars for us.

Data revealed that the HOD was the key element in subject teaching. Lindelwa was promoted to that position through her subject and content knowledge. During the interview, it was evident that the Lindelwa's students produced distinctions in the language she teaches. Mr Langa said, "I am now confident to explore more things e.g. punctuation marks, tenses, voice, speech etc, with her on my side." Lindelwa taught isiZulu but controlled both Isizulu and English First Additional Language in the Language Department. Mrs Nhlalukana assisted with the Additional Language as a senior teacher and responded:

I extremely delighted when she appointed me as the subject head and said wow! What a confidence she has in me and won't let her down. I perform my duties diligently and with enthusiasms.

I asked the participants the above question and this is what they had to say. Mr Mjwara understands development as, "a way of assisting teachers to teach effectively and efficiently. As a department of languages, we do things together pertaining to planning, teaching and

assessing our learners.” Teachers need support from the seniors to be more productive in their teaching as Mr Mjwara puts, *“My HOD is of great support to me. She normally gives me all the resources that I need, and I also keeps records for all that I received.”* Mrs Nhlalukana understands professional development as, *“growing in your subject, know to deal with learners and parents. As a teacher you need to improve your skills, communicate appropriately with all the stakeholders.”* Mrs Nhlangulela, a grade 8 and 9 English teacher responded by saying, *“Development in a school set-up is having the skills of classroom management and teaching and learning taking place in a conducive environment.”* Mrs Mbelu, an isiZulu teacher asserts that, *“development accounts for having good communication skills, having a confidence of subject delivery through thorough preparation and planning.”* Mrs Zikode views development as, *“an improvement of subject knowledge and having an element of positive human relations among the colleagues, learners and parents.”* Mr Langa regards development as, *“keeping abreast of new developments in the language field having new methods of teaching and schools having language laboratories.”*

4.4.3 Understanding of language across the curriculum

I asked the participants what they understood about the language curriculum and how it helped them to grow professionally. The reason for asking this question was to find out what they knew and to have a general understanding of the value of language teaching as a medium of instruction, thus helping with the third research question below.

Mr Mjwara responded by saying:

Language curriculum is so important because it makes an integration of all subjects to be combined in order to have a culture of language diversity. We, as teachers, learn what is happening in other subjects.

Mrs Nhlalukana regarded language across the curriculum as:

Helping in infusing foreign languages. Learners can extend their knowledge of a second language beyond foreign language courses and apply those skills to course material. It also provides learners with the opportunity to use their skills in languages other than English.

Mrs Nhlangulela viewed language across the curriculum as, *“basically knowing what is happening in other subjects.”*

Mrs Mbelu said, “*language across the curriculum have assisted me to teach effectively and grow in my subject because I have to code switch here and there for my learners to understand.*”

Mrs Zikode regarded language across the curriculum as:

The teaching of language through the medium of that language across all subjects. Every subject must emphasize the teaching of the language, be it Life Sciences or History for the betterment us as language teachers. All accolades come to us if the learners are proficient in the language.

Mr Langa responded by saying, “*indeed language across the curriculum is so important for integration of different subjects and to develop the language.*”

4.4.4 Summary of findings

It became evident from the findings that Lindelwa organised several activities for the language department. Activities organised by her were sometimes related to compliance, using the prescribed departmental tools like the Annual Teaching Plan to monitor curriculum coverage. Findings further revealed that other activities were geared towards providing professional growth to the teachers. It was also evident from the data that the teachers gave their full participation underpinned by collaboration with the aim of learning from the activities organised by Lindelwa.

4.5 Research question 3

4.5.1 What are the Language teachers’ perception of their participation in the departmental activities towards professional development?

The above question was reworded and asked as follows, “How do you feel about being part of the Language department and the participants gave responses that express their feelings and emotions?” Mrs Mbelu responded by saying, “*I am a well dedicated teacher and very pleased to be in the language department. I also explore many things and willing to learn more.*” Mrs Nhlalukana expressed her feelings by saying:

I feel good, more especially when I must explain grammar concepts like comparison and tenses, teaching my learners to be competent in writing, reading, listening and speaking as well as explaining grammar skills clearly in the target language.

Mrs Zikode said:

It's like being in a second family, a home away from home. We can go to an extent of sharing our likes, seek solutions to our problems together such that they do not interfere with our daily work.

Findings revealed that Lindelwa engaged with the teachers under her supervision both at a personal and professional level and that allowed Mr Langa to express his feelings by saying, “*we are like brothers and sisters and we share everything from lessons, team teaching and even our trials and tribulations.*” The study further highlighted that Lindelwa organised team building exercises on quarterly basis to bring the department closer together. Mr Mjwara pointed out, “*The department occasionally organizes get-together parties where we meet informally away from work related issues and secret pals where we choose secret friends.*”

The second sub-question was, “Do you like to take part in the departmental activities?”

The participants responded with enthusiasm about how they felt when they participated in the departmental activities. Mr Mjwara said:

We have developed our own culture as a department on how we handle things in our own way with the support of our leader. Our culture involves motivating and encouraging each other to explore the full potential.

Mrs Zikode also shared the same sentiment:

Wow! We feel very happy to participate in our departmental activities because it is for our personal growth and development. Even during confrontation, we normally have a constructive and positive confrontation.

Mrs Nhlalukana raised an important point by saying:

The performance of our learners is a testimony to the fact that we are working together in a harmonious manner and we have improved our personal relationships thanks to our HOD.

The remaining participants mentioned that they liked participating in the departmental activities because they laid a good and conducive environment for their teaching and learning. They further elaborated that it was during these activities that they could solve problems and make important decisions. They liked to participate in the activities because the activities laid the foundation for effective assessment of their learners. The results could be interpreted even for the parents or any stakeholders with an interest in education.

They also pointed out that it was during these activities that they could reflect, recall, evaluate and consider their past experiences with the aim of having a positive purpose in life. They commented by saying they liked participating in the activities since they assisted them in working as a unit and getting policy directives from the HOD. It became clear to me that teachers work as equal partners in this department and showed positive sentiments for being members of the department.

4.6 Poetry

The participants were asked to write a few poetic lines about language teaching and the activities of the language department. This is what Mr Langa wrote:

When I wake up in the morning

The sun shines

The sky looks bright and shiny.

The chilly wind brings the thought of my learners

Who are so eager to absorb the lessons of the day

Like a sponge in the puddle of water.

The sentence begins with a capital letter

It ends with a full stop.

Parts of speech, noun, verb. Adverb, prepositions

What is in this thing called language

Oh! A form of communication

We speak, sing, praise dance through the language form

How art though beautiful?

Mrs Nhlahukana penned the following lines:

Poem

The sun is bright,

The star is shining

The water is flowing.

There to the mountains

There is mist, darkness,

Clouds, rain and rainbow.

The only one can

Make you to explore

All this is you my

Lovely teacher.

Your dedication, passion, humbleness can change

The world with your wisdom and your willingness.

I love you my teacher, my leader.

Mrs Mbelu first looked up and one could imagine that she was deep in thoughts and she came up with the following lines:

Language! Language! language

Where do I start

The subject and predicate

Let me break it down for you

Language! Language! language

What a clever thing

Who ever knew you can use simple words?

To explain different emotions

Language! Language! language

What a beautiful thing too

We read books

We have fun

Language is ours.

4.6.1 Poem analysis

It became evident in the poetic narrative that the language teachers had sentiments that they held for being members of this department. Teachers appreciated the language that they teach and engaged about with their learners. I found that they had grown in various domains namely; personal, practical and emotional.

In relation to the personal domain, teachers had acquired confidence in communications, skills and values as indicated in these lines:

Oh! A form of communication

We speak, sing, praise dance through the language form

How art though beautiful.

In relation to the practice of teaching, the language teachers had gradually developed confidence to deliver their subject matter to learners who unquestioningly absorb knowledge from them. This was evident in the following lines:

The chilly wind brings the thought of my learners

Who are so eager to absorb the lessons of the day

Like a sponge in the puddle of water.

Teachers had become the masters of their subjects as envisaged in the following lines:

The sentence begins with a capital letter

It ends with a full stop.

Parts of speech, noun, verb. Adverb, prepositions.

In relation to the emotional domain, teachers had attained a special attachment to the language that they teach and derived joy and fun in their engagement with the learners and their leader as suggested in these lines:

Who ever knew you can use simple words?

To explain different emotions

Language! Language! language

What a beautiful too

We read books

We have fun

Language is ours.

In short, this brief poetic analysis afforded the teachers the platform to voice out their emotions regarding the teaching of languages. The objective was to find out how much they had grown and how they benefited in the activities of the language department.

4.7 Document analysis

The data I collected through interviews and poetry was confirmed by data from document analysis. Lindelwa showed me the minute book, the register book, period registers, management file, book control, class visit instrument, pre-moderation and post moderation forms, teacher file monitoring tool and the learners' book control form. The documents were divided into two categories namely; school-based documents and district-based documents.

The departmental minute book recorded all the issues discussed in a meeting, and the recordings were in line with what the teachers and the HOD told me. The minute book also showed decisions taken, and recommendations made. It was clear that this book was used as a source of reference whenever misconceptions arose or when the advisor needed to be informed

that the district information was cascaded to the teachers. The register book recorded the member attendance per meeting and those who tendered their apologies. It had three columns, name and surname, signature and name of member absent. It was clear that the departmental meetings were taken seriously. The period register recorded the number of learners present in each period and recorded the names of learners absent in each period. It had a teacher's signature column, a class representative column as well as an HOD column as a controlling officer. It was clear that the language teaching and learning was emphasized and afforded the necessary weighting from both the teachers and the learners.

The management file for the HOD was divided into several sections, teacher information in the department, duty load for all teachers in the department, time tables for all teachers in the department, ATPs for all teachers, assessment plans for teachers, subject improvement plans for all teachers and a form to check whether the teachers adhered to departmental subject policy guidelines. The book control and the learners' book control form consisted of four sections which were the quality and quantity of learner's work, control and marking of work, assessment evidence and educators' comments.

The district-based documents included the class visit monitoring tool which was used mainly during the IQMS sessions and appraisal of teachers. The pre-moderation form was used with every assessment task that was given to the learners to check the quality of test items and whether the teachers were assessing according to the prescribed assessment standards. The post moderation form mainly checked the quality of marking and the level of difficulty of the test items as they differentiated learners during scoring. A prescribed form by the district was used to check and monitor the quality of activities given to learners, whether they were in line with the work schedule and the amount of homework given to learners. It became clear that the latter documents mentioned were used to comply with the prescripts of the Department of Education.

Document analysis was done to find out to what extent did the Language HOD control the work of the teachers and learners in order to have a positive impact on teaching and learning. Furthermore, documents are a way of determining the extent to which the Language teachers comply and conform to the authority.

4.8 Conclusion

There are **eight** themes that emerged from interviews, observation schedules, document analysis and poetry. The themes ran across all three-research questions, intertwine and sometimes overlap.

It became evident during data collection that one of the roles of Lindelwa was to manage the curriculum process, this was done through meeting with the educators, supplying them with the necessary documents such as CAPS, assessment tools, work schedules and ATPs. Lindelwa controlled and monitored educator files and learners' workbooks. Lindelwa was an instructional leader and gives instructions to the teachers to be followed to meet the set deadlines.

Lindelwa and the departmental teachers comprise the personnel of the department. Lindelwa supported, coached and mentored teachers. The new teachers in the department were inducted to perform at their optimum level. A positive approach was adopted in the department even when members had to be rebuked. Departmental members were motivated to perform their duties. Networking took place on different levels, between the grade teachers and between the schools. The language department had to carry out organisational issues like discipline, budgeting and time-tabling. This was carried out in the spirit of co-operation and development. Teachers in the language department grew on a personal level, every day practice and emotionally. Data collection indicated that the language department developed a culture of commitment and co-participation. The next chapter will present a deeper analysis and interpretation of data using Wong's (2010) lens and conceptual framework of a PLC.

CHAPTER 5

5. Discussion of findings and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This is a concluding chapter on the study entitled, "The role of the Language HOD in facilitating professional development of language teachers." Since the new dawn of democracy in South Africa, the curriculum has undergone numerous changes over the years with little or no training of school managers including the HOD on how to cope with these changes for the benefit of the learners. This necessitated schools to design and implement Professional

Learning Communities and for the HOD as a manager of department, to be at the helm of providing support to teachers.

A case study was a suitable design for this study aimed at understanding the role of the language HOD in providing support to the language teachers in a language department of a secondary school. The study is qualitative and located in the interpretive paradigm answering the following questions:

- In what ways does the Language HOD facilitate professional development of the language teachers in the Language Department?
- How do language teachers participate in the professional development activities organised by the Language HOD and what do they learn?
- What are the language teachers' perceptions of their participation in the departmental activities towards their professional development?

Data was generated through interviews with the language HOD, three Isizulu language teachers and three English First Additional Language teachers, poetry, observation and document analysis.

This chapter provides a discussion of the findings of the study. The chapter will provide a discussion of findings from the HOD's as well as from the teachers' perspectives. The findings will be discussed and analysed according to the conceptual frameworks of Wong's (2010) characteristics of a PLC emanating from Chapter 2 and my own views. A PLC is an interactive learning process in schools whereby teachers collaborate and learn from each other to improve their teaching strategies for the betterment of learner outcomes Stoll Louis, (as cited in Lee & Kim, 2016). Schools are now regarded as important sites for teachers' professional learning and development. The case in my study is the language department of a secondary school.

A thematic analysis will be followed and presented according Wong's five dimensions of an effective Professional Learning Community (PLC).

5.2 Discussion of findings

Data generated from interviews, poetry, observation and document analysis revealed that the Language HOD is performing and facilitating several activities.

I have observed that the Language HOD is a transformational leader through the support given to the teachers for the benefit of the learners in the classroom. This is in line with what Leithwood (2016) called the role of an HOD as that of an agent of change.

During the interviews, observation, document analysis and poetry analysis eight themes emerged namely; departmental meetings, curriculum management, implementation and assessment, cooperation, planning and networking, instructional strategies, coaching and mentoring, discipline and time-tabling, supervision and monitoring of teaching and learning, class visits and management of resources.

I used Wong (2010)'s dimensions of effective PLC to assess the extent to which the Language department in my study could be classified as a Professional Learning Community. Wong (2010) identifies five dimensions for the effectiveness of a PLC which I checked the Language department against. These are:

- Shared goals and values
- Collective inquiry
- Shared personal practice
- Collective focus on student learning
- Collective culture

The purpose of professional development should result in the acquisition or extension of the knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities that will enable individual teachers or collective teachers and the schools to develop and adapt their range of practice, contribute to the professional life of a school and as a practioners interact with the school community and external agencies.

5.3 Shared goals and values

Wong (2010) argues that a PLC is characterized by shared values where there is a shared consensus and commitment among members of a community. These goals and values are not static but are constantly reshaped by interaction among members. This further refers to a degree to which the teachers agree with the school's mission and its operational principles (Wong,2010).

The participants were interviewed about their participative roles (teachers) and initiative role (HOD) in departmental activities. One of the goals of this language department was skills development. The study revealed that the activities initiated by the HOD were aimed at developing individual skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics of the teacher. Role assignment and duty rotation during staff meetings were aimed at refining skills already possessed and developing the new ones.

Data revealed that the language department valued a positive working environment. This was demonstrated by teachers who showed enthusiasm and positive cooperation in participating in the activities organised by the HOD. Through positive engagement with the HOD, the teachers were empowered to make decisions regarding their teaching leading them to be more innovative, skilful and better practice. This is also in accordance with a co-operative culture as proposed by Wong (2010).

The study revealed that the HOD supports the teachers, coaches them and assign duties to them according to their abilities. The teachers participate in the workshops organised by the HOD.

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of the Language HOD in facilitating language teachers' professional development. The common goal of the department was to implement the curriculum. It became evident during the interviews that the HOD managed the curriculum in the department by unpacking its contents and using monitoring tools to manage it. The curriculum refers to all teaching and learning activities that take place in learning institutions. It is a course of study or plan of what must be taught and learnt (Department of Education, 2000). In this case, a curriculum is seen as a document or blue print for teaching. The HOD ensured that effective teaching and learning occurred by making the CAPS document available for utilisation by teachers.

Working towards shared goals seems to be the cornerstone of a Professional Learning Community. The study revealed that another goal that was shared in this department was the use of assessment of learners to improve learner achievement. Learner performance and assessment of learner's work presents an overall mirror of the teachers' performance and specific aspects of their teaching. Analysis of data on learners' performance may reveal common weaknesses across all learners (Mizwell, 2010). This department provided a context for the educators to collaboratively improve the quality of test and examination item development. This was achieved by having the HOD moderating tests and examination items.

The striving for academic excellence, however, cannot be an individual endeavour and responsibility. It calls for collaborative teamwork and collective responsibility.

Given this, the assessment function provided a magnet for teachers to stick together having shared goals and values for their teaching practice and is a collective focus on student learning with teachers ensuring common standards in student teaching, evaluation and progress reporting.

5.4 Collective inquiry

Wong (2010) argues that collective enquiry refers to members of a community having reflective dialogues which focus on ways to improve professional practices and consequently, to improve student learning. It further refers to the extent to which teachers engage in professional dialogue about specific educational issues.

Data revealed that this characteristic was not fully explored by this department. However, if the teachers can do some researches and investigations about their engagements with learners and the trends of results that they obtain in their engagements, that can lead to collective enquiry by reflecting on their activities through dialogue and strive to be better teachers.

5.5 Shared personal practice

Wong (2010) further argues that a PLC is characterised by shared personal practice which she refers to as a process of deprivatisation of individual practice. It is highly dependent on mutual trust which is the basis of collective inquiry and a collaborative culture among team members. It further means that teachers observe one another's classes with the aim of giving and receiving feedback.

The study revealed that teachers took part in the planned networking activities organised at different levels, between grades, across the grades and with the succeeding schools. During these activities, teachers learnt to share their ideas and skills of teaching. Teachers were motivated and afforded an opportunity to share ideas, knowledge, skills and values. This created a sense of belonging to the wider community who have common interests. They in turn, supported each other. Novice teachers were even invited to witness the more experienced teachers teaching and teachers held reflection sessions to review their practice. Given this

practice, teachers engaged in shared personal practice and have come to a stage of trusting one another for assistance in their teaching practice and careers.

The study also revealed how the organisational issues were handled under the leadership and support of the HOD. Leaders can influence followers and exercise authority to a certain extent. The HOD exerted power over her subordinates to influence behaviour to achieve the school's aims. An example was the learner discipline which the HOD dealt with for positive achievement in teaching and learning.

Another feature that was revealed was that of resource sharing. This included personnel and material resources through equitable load distribution among the departmental members and textbook sharing. Teachers did not practise as individuals but concentrated on sharing what they had.

An HOD as an (Education) instructional leader must perform her duties with emphasis on positive learner performance. This calls for an orderly atmosphere and a learning climate with clear instructional goals. Data revealed that the HOD instructed the teachers under her supervision in a very carefully scheduled way to keep within deadlines and maintain the lesson presentation. The teachers employed different strategies for lesson preparation and through coaching and mentoring, they became more innovative. The teachers felt supported and nurtured in their personal and professional growth.

The findings of the study suggested that teachers grew emotionally with the support of the HOD. They solved problems amicably, shared positive human relations with other colleagues, have a leader who listened and who can share in their grief and sorrows. It became evident through poetry that they had a special attachment to the language they teach. Teachers became aware of their multiple roles in supporting the learners in their care. Teachers perceived themselves as life long-learners in matters that revolve around their practice. They tended to work in collaborative manner and assisted one another in lesson preparation and teaching the language structures that others found them difficult to handle. They also engaged in curriculum planning, development and implementation. Teachers engaged in exchange of teaching materials with colleagues and sometimes jointly teach the learners.

5.6 Collective focus on student learning

This indicates the mutual commitment of teachers to student success. It emerged from the findings that the HOD monitors teaching and learning in the school by supervising the block allocated to her. To further execute this practice, period registers are signed at the end of the

period for supervision and monitoring purposes. The task of filling in the period registers is delegated to the class representatives and the registers are submitted to the office of the at the end of the day. Mampagne (2017) asserts that HODs as teacher leaders play a dual role function as leaders or supervisors of phases and subject areas in a school.

The role and responsibility of an HOD is to manage the curriculum delivery in compliance with the applicable legislation, regulation, Education Labour Relation Committee (ELRC) resolutions and Personnel Administrative Measures document in the case of a South African education system. Data showed that the HOD execute this role and responsibility by checking teacher's lesson plans, doing class visits checking learner's workbook and assessment tasks. Horng & Loeb (2010) as cited in Mampagne (2017) regard HODs as 'hands on leaders who engage with curriculum and instructional issues and not afraid to work directly with teachers and are involved in teaching themselves.' Contrary to the above Wong (2010) is silent on this role as a characteristic of a PLC.

5.7 Collaborative culture

This is a crucial element of constructing a professional learning community. Within a collaborative culture, tasks that need to be accomplished are perceived as a collective practice rather than individual work. Mutual understanding and a sense of belonging of community's members are essential components. It refers to a measure of extent to which teachers engage in cooperative practices.

The study revealed that the HOD conducts class visits and lesson observation in which she appraises the teachers. The teachers participate on the one-on-one and accountability sessions with the HOD and on certain occasions the HOD delegates this function to the more experienced teachers who have been appointed as subject heads to coach and mentor the novice teachers. The subject heads are expected to be supportive and accessible to other teachers to ensure positive learner achievement. This practice is collaborative culture in which mutual understanding and sense of belonging becomes the core. Teachers engage in co-operative practices for the sake of development (Wong,2010).

One of the core responsibilities of HOD that came to the fore, was budgeting. The study revealed that the HOD does not carry out this function alone but afford the teachers an opportunity to come up with wish list for resources to be purchased for the department. The teacher participants perceive the HOD as someone who aligns the budgeted resources with the achievement goals of the department. Participants are also enthusiastic for afforded opportunity to share ideas on retrieval policy for resources and they implement it to the latter.

The HOD together with the teachers have developed policies on book distribution, retrieval and retention. It was apparent from the study that teachers regard this function as a shared responsibility among themselves. Teachers consider the scarce availability of resources and

strive to collectively make use of what is available and leading to the sharing of resources. This practice is viewed as shared goals and values in Wong's (2010) characteristics of a PLC.

5.8 Emotional and professional growth

Another theme that emerged from the study is that of professional growth as perceived by the teacher participants. The study revealed that teacher participation in the activities organised by an HOD challenged individual belief through communication with other colleagues. Teachers grew on personal level by acquiring skills, values and knowledge of reflecting on their individual practice in teaching and learning. Teachers developed confidence and self-efficacy in lesson presentation. Teachers employ different strategy in lesson preparation and through coaching and mentoring they became more innovative. Teachers feel supported and nurtured in their personal and professional growth.

The findings of the study suggest that teachers grew emotionally with the support of the HOD. They solve problems amicably, share an element of positive human relations with other colleagues, having a leader who has a listening ear and who can share in their grief and sorrows. It became evident through poetic licence that they have a special attachment to the Language as the subject that they teach. Teachers became aware of their multiple roles in supporting the learners in their care. Teachers perceive themselves as life long-learners in matters that revolve around their practice. They tend to work in collaborative manner and assist one another in lesson preparation, assisting one another in teaching the language structures that others find it difficult to handle. They also engage in curriculum planning, development and implementation. Teachers are engaging in exchange of teaching materials with colleagues and sometimes jointly teach the learners. This brings together the sharing of goals and values, shared personal practice and collective inquiry (Wong,2010).

5.9 Departmental culture

The last theme that emerged was the promotion of a diverse departmental culture from that of BCM and Science and Humanities departments but having common characteristics in fulfilling the mission and the vision of the school.

I can arguably conclude that this department functioned more like a PLC. The study revealed that teachers who engaged in the activities organised by the HOD had been viewed in a positive way to the extent that a unique culture of the department has been established. The highlights for this department was that a positive culture of working together had been created due to the interactive and reflective nature of the departmental activities as well as a high level of commitment and participation and mutual trust and tolerance are practiced by all. It became evident that the department became a better teaching environment with shared values, goals and a clear focus on the learner achievement

. The HOD appraised the teachers, did class visits and observations for reflecting and engaging in dialogue to improve their teaching practice. Praises for good work were given in public but

rebuke for mediocre work was done in private. The teachers did not compete against each other in the department and the department functioned as close-knit unit, where workers shared knowledge, activities and a physical location. It had a collaborative culture and was effective.

5.10 Recommendations and implications

I recommend that the Department of Education, policy makers and teachers should enhance the involvement of teachers in a school-based PLC to assist teachers in becoming better practitioners. The sub-directorate of Teacher Development in Umgungundlovu district can save a lot of money in organising developmental workshops for the whole district instead of capacitating school-based Professional Learning Communities.

The implications of the study amongst others are that teachers need to be motivated to spend more time and energy in building their capacity through collaborative learning to become better teachers. The school cultures also need to change and value the school-based learning activities and these need to be budgeted for. Teachers need to view learning and development as participative in nature. In the course of the participatory activity, a certain culture is established and entrenched. This claim is validated by Lave and Wenger (1991) who argue that learning is centrally concerned with social relations and belonging. School-based professional development and learning can best be practised in a set up where teachers belong. Teachers can be encouraged to engage in new ways of thinking, interaction and collaboratively reasoning. This can be characterised by openness and trust, like in my study, data revealed that the teachers had trust and communicated openly with the HOD.

The study can contribute in developing change and growth among teachers. Teachers can evaluate their practice and have a deeper meaning and understanding of curriculum, assessment and engagement with learners entrusted in their care to develop better literate learners since NEEDU (2012) stated that South African learners battle with reading and writing. The PLC offers teachers an opportunity to change individual beliefs and thinking by working together through continuous engagement with other colleagues.

The findings of this study have significant implications for teacher learning and future research. Traditionally, teacher learning had been mainly provided by higher institutions of learning and through organised programmes and workshops. This study provides evidence that that ongoing professional development with other colleagues in the workplace is possible and leads to teacher growth. However, it must be pointed out that this was a single case study in a school context. Cross-case studies can be undertaken in different schools or departments to identify and compare different patterns for a better understanding of the functioning of a PLC. The research can also be on a wide scale using a variety of methods of data generation like focus groups, questionnaires, collages and semi-structured interviews.

On the other hand, it became evident from the data presented that most of the activities performed by the HOD are related to compliance and its applicable legislation, ELRC, regulations and the Personnel Administrative Measures document. The HOD was only orientated after being appointed to the position and no further development and support have been given to her so far to lead the department.

It is recommended that the language HOD further develops her leadership skills while giving support to the language teachers. The Language HOD must strike a balance between the function of being a teacher herself, being a manager of the Language Department and having subordinates to develop professionally. The envisaged change needs to start with the Language HOD herself before it can be initiated and passed on to the language teachers. The school culture must embrace departmental activities and initiatives and assist the Language Department financially to advance its support language teachers as it is a springboard to achieving the school's vision and mission

5.11 Conclusion

The study explored the role of the Language HOD in facilitating the professional development of language teachers in a secondary school. Based on the responses of the language HOD and language teachers, the study revealed that the language HOD engages language teachers in the professional development activities. Teachers in return, maximise their participation as members of the department who are appreciated, appraised and encouraged for further development through individual aspirations. The school language department offered a valuable environment as a case study for a PLC. It became evident that teachers can work collaboratively and collectively with the goal of advancing the learner achievement.

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APPENDIX A

Interview schedule

Biographical questions	Questions addressing research question 1 (HOD)	Questions addressing research question 2(language teachers and HOD)	Questions addressing research question 3 (language teachers)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What motivated you to become a teacher? 2. Please tell me about your educational background. 3. When did you become an HOD? 4. Which subjects are you controlling? 5. How many new teachers do you have in your department? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you understand by teacher professional development? 2. To what extent do you support your language teachers? 3. What kind of support do you give them? 4. Do you conduct any induction programmes? 5. How do you mentor your language teachers? 6. What kind of resources are available in your department? 7. How do you manage what you have? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How often do you hold language departmental meetings? 2. Is attendance to the meetings mandatory or voluntary? 3. How is attendance to a meeting controlled? 4. In what activities do you engage in, in the language departmental meeting? 5. Briefly explain how you maintain consistency in attending to language departmental issues. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you feel about being part of the language department? 2. What do you understand by language across the curriculum? 3. Tell me about your experiences of attending activities organized by the language HOD. 4. What have you learnt from these activities?

APPENDIX B

Observation schedule

Date and Time	Situation	Participant	Action Observed	Reflection

Notes on observation

1. Participants will be observed when engaging in professional developmental activities organized by the language HOD.
2. It will be observed how they participate, actively or passively?
3. One of the key areas to be observed is what do teachers learn.

APPENDIX C

Document Analysis

Source Document	Contents	How is developed and managed	Its importance

Notes on document analysis

1. Documents used by the language HOD will be analysed.
2. Documents used by language teachers will be analysed.
3. Documents used by the Language HOD and those used by language teachers will be compared.

APPENDIX D

Poetry and collage

1. Briefly express your views on your engagement in the professional developmental activities in the form of a poem.
2. What type of poem have you written?
3. In your own opinion, do the activities contribute to you becoming a better language teacher?
4. Design your own journey of progress through a collage that shows your self-development.

APPENDIX E

Information Sheet and Consent to the Post level teachers (Participants).

Date:

Dear Participant

The Title: exploration of the role of a languages head of department (HOD) in facilitating school-based language teacher's professional development in a secondary school.

My name is Mbuyiseni Jollies Sikhumbuzo Dlamini. I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and currently registered for a master's degree in Teacher Development Studies. One of the requirements in completing the degree is to conduct a study.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research exploring the role of a language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development. The aim and purpose of this research is to explore the nature of professional development taking place within the language department and the role of the language HOD in developing language teachers. I want to understand the extent in which teachers feel their participation in professional activities within the language department lead to professional learning. Furthermore, my aim is to explore the type of professional development activities the language HOD engages language teachers in within the language department. The study is expected to have 1 HOD, 4 teachers offering Isizulu Home language and 4 teachers offering English FAL. This includes you as a language teacher. It will involve the following procedures: Interviews, observations, document analysis, poetry and collages. The interviews will produce data on teachers' understanding of the nature of professional development taking place within the language department and the role of HOD in facilitating language teacher's professional development. The duration of your participation if you choose to enrol and remain in the study is expected to be approximately one hour and may be split, depending on your preference and it will be audio-recorded and noted in writing. The study is self-funded, and participation in this study is voluntary, no benefit will be awarded.

There will be no risk or harm involved. The findings of this study will help the policy makers in redefining the roles and responsibilities of HODs. The HODs themselves will have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities in school based professional learning. You have a choice to participate or not to participate and you are at liberty to withdraw from the

study at any stage. You will not be penalized for taking such an action. Please be advised that permission for the interview will also be sought from the principal. Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a population member opinion. Participants will be given pseudonyms; as a result, it will not be linked to your name.

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

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at skumjo@gmail.com, Cell Number :079 760 2694 or my supervisor Dr Mthiyane on 082 510 5573.

I _____ have been informed about the study entitled exploring the role the language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development in the FET phase by M.J.S Dlamini.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

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

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study. I understand that I may contact the researcher at 079 760 2694.

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:

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

INFORMED CONSENT

Information Sheet and Consent to the Language HOD

Dear Sir/Madam

The Title of the study: exploration of the role of a languages head of department (HOD) in facilitating school-based language teacher's professional development in a secondary school.

My name is Mbuyiseni Jollies Sikhumbuzo. I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and currently registered for a master's degree in Teacher Development Studies. One of the requirements in completing the degree is to conduct a study.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research in exploring the role of language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development in the FET phase. The aim and purpose of this research is to explore the nature of professional development taking place within the language department and the role of HOD in developing language teachers. I want to understand the extent in which teachers feel their participation in professional activities within the language department lead to professional learning. Furthermore, my aim is to explore the type of professional development activities the language HOD engages language teachers in within the language department. The study is expected to have 1 HOD, 4 teachers offering Isizulu Home language and 4 teachers offering English FAL. In this case the language HOD refers to you. It will involve the following procedures: Interviews, observations, document analysis, poetry and collages. The interviews will produce data on teachers' understanding of the nature of professional development taking place within the language department and the role of the language HOD in facilitating professional development of language teachers. The duration of your participation if you choose to enrol and remain in the study is expected to be approximately one hour and may be split, depending on your preference and it will be audio-recorded and noted in writing. The study is self-funded, and participation in this study is voluntary, no benefit will be awarded.

There will be no risk or harm involved. The findings of this study will help the policy makers in redefining the roles and responsibilities of HODs. The HODs themselves will have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities in school based professional learning. You have a choice to participate or not to participate and you are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any stage. You will not be penalized for taking such an action. Please be advised that

permission for the interview will also be sought from the principal. Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a population member opinion. Participants will be given pseudonyms; as a result, it will not be linked to your name.

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

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at skumjo@gmail.com , Cell Number :079 760 2694 or my supervisor Dr Mthiyane on 082 510 5573

I _____ have been informed about the study entitled to explore the role of a language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development in the FET phase by M.J.S Dlamini.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

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

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study. I understand that I may contact the researcher at 079 760 2604.

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

INFORMED CONSENT

Information Sheet and Consent to the Principal.

Date:

Dear Sir

The Title of the study: exploration of the role of a languages head of department (HOD) in facilitating school-based language teacher's professional development in a secondary school.

My name is Mbuyiseni Jollies Sikhumbuzo Dlamini. I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and currently registered for a master's degree in Teacher Development Studies. One of the requirements in completing the degree is to conduct a study.

I request the permission to interview 1 HOD (Languages), 4 PL1 teachers offering Isizulu Home language and 4 teachers offering English FAL from your school., for a study that involves research on exploring the role of the language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development in the FET phase. The aim and purpose of this research is to explore the nature of professional development taking place within the language s department and the role of the language HOD in facilitating language teacher's professional development. I want to understand the extent in which language teachers feel their participation in professional activities within the language department lead to professional learning. Furthermore, my aim is to explore the type of professional development activities the language HOD engages language teachers in within the language department.

The interview will take approximately one hour and may be split, depending on their preference and it will be audio-recorded and noted in writing. The information that will be collected will be pure for research purposes and the audio-recording will be safely stored for the purposes of security and be destroyed after 5 years. Their involvement would be purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved. The study is self-funded, and participation in this study is voluntary, no benefit will be awarded.

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

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at skumjo@gmail.com , Cell Number :079 760 2694 or my supervisor Dr Mthiyane on 082 510 5573

CONSENT (Edit as required)

I _____ have been informed about the study entitled to explore the role of the language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development in the FET phase by M.J.S Dlamini.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study

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

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study. I understand that I may contact the researcher at 079 760 2694

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX F

TURNITIN REPORT



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APPENDIX G



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma
Ref.:2/4/8/1405

Tel: 033 392 1041

Mr MJS Dlamini
PO Box 40046
Elanskop
3226

Dear Mr Dlamini

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **“THE ROLE OF A LANGUAGE HOD IN FACILITATING SCHOOL-BASED TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL”**, 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 27 November 2017 to 09 July 2020.
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.

KWAZULU -NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa

Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201

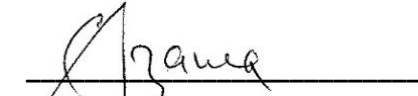
Tel.: +27 33 392 1004/ 41 • Fax.: +27 033 392 1203 • Email: Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za • Web: www.kzneducation.gov.za

Facebook: KZNDOE....Twitter: @DBE_KZN....Instagram: kzn_education....Youtube:kzndoe

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8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma 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.

Gobindlovu Comprehensive High School



Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 28 November 2017

APPENDIX H

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18 December 2017

Mr MJS Dlamini 217074150
School of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Dlamini

Protocol reference number: HSS/2278/017M

Project title: To explore the role of a language HOD in facilitating school-based language teacher professional development in the FET Phase

Full Approval — Expedited

Application In response to your application received 5 December 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the 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.

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

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: DR CC Mthiyane cc
Academic Leader Research: Dr
SB Khoza cc. School
Administrator: Ms Tyzer
Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

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mohunp@ukzn.ac.za Website:

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APPENDIX I

3.6.1 Table 1: Features of the participants

Teachers	Experience	Qualifications	Language Taught
----------	------------	----------------	-----------------

HOD	22 years	STD, HDE, Bed	IsiZulu
Teacher 1	5 years	Diploma (Pub. Man.), B-Tech, M-Tech	English 1 st Additional Language
Teacher 2	12 years	STD, B.A, B.A (Hons)	English 1 st Additional Language
Teacher 3	5 years	Bed	IsiZulu
Teacher 4	6 years	Bed	IsiZulu
Teacher 5	7 years	B.A, PGCE	IsiZulu
Teacher 6	4 years	Bed	English 1 st Additional Language