

**TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES WITH TASK-BASED LEARNING ON
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL.
A CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE LUBOMBO REGION;
SWAZILAND**

NOMVUYO PHANGISILE NHLENGETHWA

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to document teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level in the Lubombo region in Swaziland. The following were research questions: what are the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level; what factors influencing the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level; and what are the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level? The study was qualitative in design. The sample was drawn from secondary schools in the Lubombo region. Questionnaires were filled by teachers of English. Focus group discussions for teachers were held as part of the data collecting technique as well as document analysis in the form of the teachers' daily preparation books. The findings were that teachers have distinguishable experiences, varying from favourable to not so pleasant encounters and impartial ones with the use of TBLT; lack of libraries, books, and not being able to access the internet were some of contributing factors to the learners' negative attitude towards TBLT; and the fact that there are other strategies which the teachers of English are not fully utilizing, yet learners enjoy them, these being in-school and class debates, watching videos, or listening to educational radio programs. There is need for in-service programs to encourage and equip teachers with different approaches to TBLT. The introduction of an English language budget in schools is highly recommended so as to buy visual aids like educational videos and other materials and to even construct well-resourced libraries in schools with part of the money.

DECLARATION

“I hereby declare that the Thesis submitted for Master of Education (English and Media Studies), at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is my original work and has not been previously submitted to any other tertiary institution. I further declare that all sources cited and quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.”

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Signed: _____

NOMVUYO PHANGISILE NHLENGETHWA (Author)

DATE: MARCH 2016

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my family and friends, who have been supportive during my time of study more especially my beautiful but no-so-quiet daughter, Nontobeko Thusi. I love you my Angel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Revered gratitude to the Almighty God for according me the opportunity to execute such an endeavour, His continued sustenance and understanding He bestowed on the people who matter in my life as this project took almost all my time and theirs too.

Special expression of gratitude goes to Prof. G. H. Kamwendo for his support, valued insight and contribution towards the successful completion of this project. Once again, thank you Sir.

I also wish to thank headteachers of the three schools who accorded me an opportunity to carry out the research in their schools; and special thanks go to the three teachers of English from each of these three schools who contributed immensely to the research.

Acknowledgements would be incomplete without recognizing the University of KwaZulu-Natal and her partners who financially supported the researcher, the academic staff and others who contributed in one way or the other towards the success of this project.

To Sphiwe ‘K wami’ Dlamini-Dludlu, Thank-you very much Nkhosi, Dlamini for being there for me! I knew I could ask anything from you. Thank you very much! Be blessed!

To this I put my name, Nomvuyo Phangisile Nhlengethwa.

ABBREVIATIONS

BA: Bachelor of Arts

B. Ed: Bachelor of Education

BICS: Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

GCE: General Certificate of Education

HOD: Head of Department

JC: Junior Certificate

IGCSE: International General Certificate of Secondary Education

L1: one's first language

L2: one's second language

LPP: Language planning policy

MA: Master of Arts

PGCE: Post Graduate Certificate in Education

SADC: Southern African Development Community

SGCSE: Swaziland General Certificate of Secondary Education

STD: Secondary Teachers' Diploma

TBLL: Task-based Language Learning

TBLT: Task-based Language Teaching

TPR: Total Physical Response

TITLE PAGE

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	iii
DECLARATION.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	viii
APPENDICES.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
CHAPTER 1.....	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 What is task-based language teaching?	3
1.3 Education system in Swaziland – A brief overview.....	5
1.4 Socio-linguistic context of English language in Swaziland.....	6
1.5 Task-based language teaching at secondary school level in Swaziland.....	7
1.6 Problem statement.....	8
1.7 Study objectives.....	9

1.8 Research questions.....9

1.9 Rationale of the study.....10

1.10 Delimitations of the study.....10

1.11 Definition of operational terms.....11

1.12 Structure of the thesis.....12

CHAPTER 2.....13

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....13

2.0 Introduction.....13

2.1 The Conceptual framework of the study.....13

2.2 The teachers’ experiences of teaching English language through task-based methods.....16

2.3 Factors influencing the teachers’ experiences.....18

2.3.1 External factors influencing the teachers' experiences with the use of TBLT.....22

2.3.2 Internal factors influencing the teachers' experiences with the use of TBLT.....29

2.4 Teaching methods that have influenced the teachers’ experiences of task-based learning.....30

2.5 Conclusion.....32

CHAPTER 3.....33

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....33

3.0 Introduction.....33

3.1The research approach.....33

3.2 Research paradigm.....34

3.3 Research design.....35

3.4 Population.....35

3.5 Sample population.....35

3.6 Sampling procedure.....36

3.7 Teachers’ biographical data.....36

3.8 Data collection process.....38

3.8.1Questionnaire.....39

3.8.2 How data from questionnaires were analyzed.....40

3.9 Focus group discussions.....41

3.9.1 How data from focus group discussions were analyzed.....42

3.10 Document analysis.....42

3.10.1 How data from documents were analyzed.....44

3.7.1 Triangulation in this study.....44

3.8 Ethical considerations.....46

3.9 Conclusion.....47

CHAPTER 4.....48

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....48

4.0 Introduction.....48

4.1 Presentation, analysis and discussion of findings that address the first objective:
to find out the teachers’ experiences of teaching English language
through task-based learning at secondary school leve.....48

4.1.1 Frequency of TBLT being used as an English language teaching strategy.....48

4.1.2 Role played by teachers during TBLT.....52

4.1.3 Sources of the tasks that the teachers assign the learners.....56

4.1.4 Learners' reactions towards TBLT58

4.1.5 Advantages of TBLT from the teachers' perspective.....60

4.1.6 Challenges encountered by teachers as they use TBLT.....62

4.1.7 How these teachers overcome the challenges they face during TBLT.....64

4.1.8 Teachers' views with regards to TBLT.....66

4.1.9 Teachers recommending TBLT to others.....68

4.2 Presentation, analysis and discussion of data that address objective two:
To find out factors influencing the teachers’ experiences of teaching English Language through task-based
learning at secondary school.....71

4.2.1 External factors influencing TBLT.....72

4.2.2 In-service training.....76

4.2.3 Internal factors influencing TBLT.....77

4.5 Presentation, analysis and discussion of data that addresses objective 3:
To find the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers’ experiences of task-based teaching of English

Language.79

4.6 Summary and conclusion.....82

CHAPTER84

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDA.....84

5.0 Introduction.....84

5.1 Summary of the research objectives.....84

5.2 Summary of the finding.....84

5.3 Conclusions from the study.....85

5.4 Recommendations.....87

5.5 Future research.....88

REFERENCES.....89

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter to gatekeepers (head teachers).....95

Appendix B: Gatekeepers’ letters.....96

Appendix C: Letter of data collection schedule to gatekeepers.....99

Appendix D: Questionnaire for teachers.....100

Appendix E: Informed consent form.....105

Appendix F: Focus group discussion guide.....108

Appendix G: Document analysis check list.....109

Appendix H: Ethical clearance certificate.....111

Appendix I: Editor’s letter.....112

Appendix J: Turn-it-in Report.....113

Appendix K: Transcripts of focus group discussions (School A).....114

TABLE PAGE

4.1 Characteristics of schools.....37

4.2 Qualification of teachers.....37

4.3 Age of teachers.....38

4.4 Teaching methods used by teachers during TBLT.....81

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the background of the study, what task-based teaching is, the education system in Swaziland, The socio linguistic context of English language in Swaziland, task-based language teaching at secondary school level in Swaziland, the problem statement, study objectives, research questions, rationale of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of operational terms and the structure of the thesis.

This thesis is about the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level in the Lubombo region in Swaziland. When documenting these teachers' experiences the researcher used three questions for the research which were: what are the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level; what factors influence the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level? The last one being; what are the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level? The study has got five chapters. Chapter one being the introduction to the study, chapter two has the review of related literature, chapter three deals with the methodology. In chapter four the researcher presents, analyses then discusses the findings. Lastly, chapter five has the summary, conclusion and recommendations. In this chapter, I present background to the study, what task-based language teaching is, the education system in Swaziland. That is followed by the socio-linguistic context of English language in Swaziland, task-based language teaching at secondary school level in Swaziland, statement of the research problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, definition of operational terms and structure of the thesis.

1.1 Background to the study

In 1963, Swaziland started offering the University of Cambridge public examinations for the secondary school education, thus her examinations were set and marked in Cambridge in the United Kingdom. In 2009 Swaziland began to offer a localized curriculum; eventually established her local control of the

examinations. The localization of the curriculum has brought in a local flavour in that some reading and listening comprehension passages have local topics, making the subject relevant to the needs of the learners. This new curriculum has brought modification in the manner English language is taught. The transformation has moved towards skill-based teaching and learning. Nerlicki (2011) advocates for methods where learners use their intellectual capacity to learn through group discussion and pairs (through the guidance of a teacher). This is to encourage learners to express what they think, and to explain why they think as they do. Such teaching approaches are there to help develop a number of skills in the learners like problem solving, inquiry, evaluative, interpretive, effective communication, ability to evaluate own personal strengths and weaknesses, so as to choose appropriate careers (Ministry of Education, 2005).

The Swaziland General Certificate of Secondary Education (SGCSE) syllabus aims at improving the value of education. The cost of teaching and learning materials has been reduced in that books can be attained from local publishers. Even though the number of examination papers learners write has been increased to four as compared to the two in the GCE O' Level syllabus, the cost of running the examination is lower compared to GCE O' Level syllabus as everything is produced and marked locally (Examination Council of Swaziland, 2014). English language as one of the subjects taught at secondary school in Swaziland and has a part to play in maintaining the quality of education. According to SGCSE English language syllabus (2014), the role played by English Language is that, at completion of secondary education, the learners will be prepared to meet the changing needs of the nation; and have reached internationally conventional standards. As much as the examinations are now locally set, the GCE standard of achievement is still maintained, which is that of stressing the attainment of skills such as the communication and language skills, critical thinking skills, independent learning, working with others and more. These skills as outlined in the SGCSE English language syllabus (2014), are communication and language skills, numeracy, problem solving, critical thinking and study skills. As a way of fulfilling these, an alternative approach to teaching English language was adopted in Swaziland in 2009 at secondary school level. This methodology is a way of moving away from routine learning, which had characterised the traditional General Certificate of Education (GCE) O' Level curriculum to a skill-based SGCSE syllabus.

The SGCSE just like the IGCSE syllabus which was used in Swaziland before the SGCSE, is meant to convert the learner from being a passive receiver of information into an active creator of the process in which he or she learns. This means that lessons are no longer to be teacher-centred but learner-centred, where learners completely get involved in finding information on their own under the guidance of their teacher. This implies that the teachers' roles differ from those of teachers who used and believed in teacher-centred strategies. In using tasks, a teacher is expected to adopt two functions. The first function for teachers is to expedite the communication process amongst the learners in the classroom as they

engage in the various activities and texts. The second function of the teacher is to act as an impartial participant during the learning and teaching, (Ellis and Shintani, 2013).

1.2 What is task-based language teaching?

As highlighted by Nishida (2012), task-based Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) comprises the following lineament: highlighting the importance of learning through communication in the target language; the primer of realistic texts into education process; availing opportunities to the learners that will help them to focus on the learning process as a whole not only on English language; an enhancement of the learners' individual experiences as important underwriting features to teaching and learning; an effort to link the language learnt in the classroom with language stimulation in other forums.

Skehan (2012) emphasizes that tasks are activities which focus on something that is done and said. Then it is worth noting that if task-based language learning is marked by interaction in the target language, there is no way there can be no form of talking when performing that task. That is why task types will include among others, exchanging and using different information possessed by different participants; problem solving which is focused towards one resolution outcome; decision making tasks whereby participants' activities include selecting one out of a number of available outcomes; opinion exchange tasks which require participants to engage in discussion of ideas.

The SGCSE English language syllabus (2015-2016) highlights that, one of the main characteristics of the course in English language study is that the subject is skilled based. Focus is on the development of the basic language skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking with prominence on improving the communicative proficiency of learners in other life situations. These four language skills are then taught in a cohesive manner. As the learners discuss (which is practicing the speaking skill) in the pairs or groups, there will be some listening to one another, reading of some information to substantiate whatever claim they will come up with and will be tasked to write at the end of the discussion. This is in line with what Nishida (2012) advocates for that of making language learning communicative through interaction. Proponents of task-based CLT took it upon themselves to ascertain how possible it is to teach English language communicatively. Park (2010) for instance, investigated one-way tasks versus collaborative tasks whereby all the learners in a group discussion have information to contribute, encouraged considerably transformed thoughts in which one member of the group contributed the relevant information.

Other scholars like Benson's (2015) study highlighted the exchange of information versus tasks in which the interchange of information was voluntary. They discovered that the former produced meaningfully

improved interaction than the latter tasks. This underlines the importance of all the learners contributing since they should all learn not for one learner to be responsible for all the information that is discussed in the pair or group. As TBLT is known as a division of Communicative Language Teaching whereby teaching is centred around communication rather than emphasizing on the linguistic knowledge and utilizing the structural patterns of language, it goes without saying that CLT too aims to develop communicative competence, stressing the importance of providing learners with abundant chance to use the target language for communicative resolves and to learn the language through practice thus teaching is learner-centred (Li, 2011). All these proponents of TBLT emphasize the importance of teaching English language communicatively, as opposed to having the teacher lecture to the learners about parts of speech, the simple past tense or whatever topic that the yester years teachers would teach. This is not to suggest though that there is no mention of grammatical elements during TBLT. Grammar is actually taught not in isolation but as an integrated component of the subject. A while ago, English language teachers would just teach the noun or verb in isolation. For example, have the learners give a list of nouns or whatever part of speech that is being taught that day such that the learners would find it difficult to pick a different noun in a sentence or among other words if it is one that was not mentioned in class. One would wonder then whether the important element is in knowing the language or its grammatical elements.

Hadi (2013) investigated the diverse forms of language encouraged by transactional tasks, in which communication occurs mainly to bring about the exchange of goods and services, and interpersonal tasks in which communication occurs largely for social purposes. Hadi (2013) established that the altered functional purposes encouraged diverse understanding of grammatical classes. Skehan (2012) establishes that group or pair work encourages learners to use a better variety of language functions than teacher-dominated tasks. If research has proven that teacher-centred strategies are not as effective as child centred ones, why do teachers of English want to stick to those teacher centred methods? In focussing on the skills that promote language competence, the teachers should not lose sight of the need for the learners' enjoyment of language activities. That is why everybody still remembers those rhymes and songs they were taught at early primary school because they would even act out what the line being recited or sung was about. It is no doubt that everybody remembers the fun that characterised those lessons since they involved the learners. All the grammatical elements would be embedded in those songs and rhymes but the focus was not on them but having the learners sing and recite rhymes and songs in the English language. Surprisingly, people will remember what was learnt in Grade 1 English class than what was learnt in the upper grades. The reason is simple the emphasis in the earlier grades was in achieving the communicative competence which gradually shifted as the learners progressed in terms of classes. Language learning then focussed on achieving the linguistic competence which the learners did not fit in any context since everything was taught in isolation. Nishida (2012) examined the various interactional forms motivated by open tasks, in which there is no one correct response or a limited number of accurate

answers. He learned that closed tasks encouraged more modified interactions with learners with different learning abilities. These outcomes suggest that some task types might be more appropriate for particular learners than others, so it is important for the teachers of English to vary these activities so as to cater for the different learners in their classes. In almost every class there are learners who use English in their social environment and those who only have contact with the English language at school. It is the teacher's duty to find tasks that will suite both these types of learners that he or she has been entrusted with. If the SGCSE English language syllabus (2015-2016) highlights that English language teaching should cater for an extensive array of skill to provide equal prospect for all, so that learners are able to appreciate and accomplish their potential and this conforms to what Nishida (2012) came up with as findings to his study. This basically implies TBLT reaches out to all the learners, more especially if the teacher will know and understand the learners at his disposal. This will lead the teacher into preparing tasks that will suite each learner, regardless of how big the class is, since the teacher will have understood that language activities should meet the needs of the learners and promote their language development effectively. This then makes TBLT an ideal teaching strategy since all the learners will be catered for none will feel left out, bored or made to feel inferior during the lessons. It gives even adults a good feeling and a sense of belonging if they are valued wherever they are, how much more school going children? Making learners feel they belong in the class, will make them realise that they belong in the school and that will help in developing desirable attitudes and behaviour towards other people since they will have realised that for anyone to be heard and succeed they need other people. So TBLT inculcates values and attitudes as well as knowledge and understanding.

Notwithstanding the many definitions provided by scholars such as Skehan (2012), Park (2010), Nunan (2004) and others, (Garc 2007) believe however, that no agreement has been achieved on the nature of "task" so far. Moreover, "no complete program ... has been implemented and evaluated which has fully adopted even the basic characteristics of TBLT ... much less the detailed principles for making materials design and methodological decisions (Skehan, 2012)." So there is good reason to challenge the product based on unclear definition and inadequacy of empirical proof.

1.3 Education system in Swaziland – A brief overview

Formal education in Swaziland covers a period of twelve years. Primary school education takes seven years and has been free since 2009. After primary school a child is free to enrol into a secondary school of his or her choice. Secondary school education in Swaziland is subsidized through the provision of infrastructure and student support grant for orphaned and vulnerable children. It takes five years. At post-secondary school level, there are private and government owned institutions. Learners who enrol into

government-owned institutions are fully sponsored, giving first preference to the fields of Agriculture, Education, Health and the Technical (Ministry of Education and Training Sector Policy, 2011).

In Swaziland, both siSwati and English are official languages and the Education policy pronounces that the mother tongue, siSwati shall be the medium of instruction in the first four grades of school, after which English shall be the medium of instruction (Ministry of Education and Training Sector Policy, 2011). This does not mean translation of teaching materials that are in English into siSwati. However, it means that teachers in the first four grades of school have the freedom to use siSwati as a medium of instruction where learners have difficulties in understanding taught material. SiSwati, English, Mathematics and Science are core-subjects in all schools in Swaziland (Examination Council of Swaziland, 2014).

1.4 Socio-linguistic context of English language in Swaziland

The Swaziland national education policy stipulates that learners from Grade one to Form five should be exposed to four compulsory subjects being SiSwati, English Language, Mathematics and Science (The Swaziland Education and Training Policy, 2011). Since in Swaziland, English is one of the official languages, the other being siSwati, the use of both languages is of equal importance. English an international language serves as the principal medium of communication for official, commercial, diplomatic, technical and cultural exchanges with other countries. It is for that reason that English has to be mastered and its place in the Swaziland's school curriculum is undisputed.

From Grade five, English is the official medium of instruction and every effort should be made to ensure that this policy is adopted (The Swaziland Education and Training Policy, 2011). At secondary school level, English continues to be a compulsory subject which when a learner fails, he or she cannot proceed to the next class. If a learner does not get a credit in English language in the SGCSE final examination, they cannot enrol into an institution of higher education.

In parliament debates are conducted in siSwati since all the legislators are siSwati speaking, not that there is a constitutional clause stipulating that. It remains a fact though that the motions and laws they pass are documented in English. The judiciary uses English, only in the national courts where cases are tried in siSwati in accordance with the Swazi law where the court president relies on his or her knowledge of the Swazi law and custom and there is no legal representation in such courts. It is only at the magistrate's court and high court and the court of appeal where business is conducted in English since the country follows the Roman Dutch law with some influence of the English law (The Constitution of Swaziland, 2005). In the commercial sector, most of the advertisements are in English with a few in siSwati aired

over the national radio. Even the press conducts its business in English with only two radio stations that broadcast in siSwati one of the two is a religious radio station.

1.5 Task-based language teaching at secondary school level in Swaziland

In 2009, Swaziland introduced a localized syllabus known as the Swaziland General Certificate of Secondary Education (SGCSE). Among other things that the new syllabus brought were teaching strategies that were not used in the previous one. These new teaching approaches encourage a communicative approach to language learning and teaching. It also recognises that language learning is a complex process, usually involving the interplay of listening, speaking, reading and writing underpinned by the structure of the language (SGCSE English language syllabus, 2015-2016). The syllabus also highlights that the learners' needs and the strategies available to teachers may vary greatly from area to area and within any class; but in all cases the English language syllabus encourages awareness of the usefulness of the language, making learners appreciate its importance for their personal, social and intellectual development.

What the SGCSE syllabus advocates for is universal in that the different approaches to teaching English language realize that students are heterogeneous cognitively. As such, teachers are expected to use teaching methods that meet the needs of those various learners. Therefore, teachers have no choice but to use different teaching styles. These teaching styles are to be learner-centred instead of teacher-centred, (Ministry of Education, 2005). The same syllabus aims at producing learners who are critical thinkers. As Skehan (2012) notes that a classroom activity should involve learners in working, realizing, producing and interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning. The purpose is to deliver meaning as opposed to manipulating form. What this means, is that English language students should not only get knowledge about parts of speech but they must acquire skills which will be used to make everyday decisions. This can come about if they are taught how to critically examine and evaluate complex information within this ever-changing field Plattiz (2012). Muller-Hartmann (2011) speaks of teaching approaches that could develop such skills in learners. This process helps to develop skills that can be used in solving everyday problems. One example of a teaching method a teacher can use in developing the above skills is by engaging his or her learners in small group discussions and giving them a task to do. As the learners interact there will be a lot that takes place which will work to the advantage of the learner which would not have happened if the teacher had used a teacher centred teaching method. Just to give the learners a break from having to make sense from what the teacher is saying but engaging with their peers reaches out to all the learners even those who would not have said anything had the teacher taught the whole time. Other approaches that

Muller-Hartmann (2011) advocates for discovery and inquiry approaches where learners use their mental processes to discover some concepts as well as find reasons why something happened the way it did. Task-based learning is thus one strategy the teacher can use to advance these skills in learners. Such skills will help the learner become competent in English. Competence in English undoubtedly enables learners to perform better in all the other subjects. One of Swaziland's national education policy directives says that the curriculum that the learners are exposed to should provide an awareness and acceptance of global issues which influence the quality of life in Swaziland and elsewhere. These issues will include the HIV/AIDS pandemic, global warming, misdistribution of wealth, technological advances and more (Ministry of Education, 2011). These are some of the topics the learners engage in debates whether in class or with other classes or schools, lately there are also debates between countries. These start in the English language class and some of the teachers of English's duties even though not documented anywhere, include developing critical thinking skills, work and study skills, independent learning and working with others. It is through TBLT that these will be nurtured and refined. This is a very good recipe advocated for by the SGCSE English language syllabus that English language has to provide a foundation for continuing education and tertiary education within Swaziland, SADC and internationally. As English language is the medium of instruction in schools in Swaziland at secondary school level and most texts are written in English, competence in English is of utmost importance. A sound knowledge of English will undoubtedly enable the learners to perform better in all the other subjects. That is why the English language syllabus (2015-2016) highlights that the teaching of English language should help the learners to form a sound base for its effective for purposes of further study and employment.

1.6 Problem statement

The implementation of the SGCSE syllabus in 2009 was meant to improve the teaching and learning of all subjects, including English language. For English, the curriculum was to develop high level receptive skills of reading and listening and the productive skills of writing and speaking in learners (Ministry of Education, 2005). Just like the coming of anything new, challenges are bound to be there at inception, which might hinder the implementation of TBLT. Before the implementation of this new English language syllabus, teachers had to undergo some training on appropriate teaching methods that relate to TBLT including what TBLT is, its purpose and how tasks are carried out in an English language class. The reason for the training of the teachers was the belief that the strategies required to teach the O' Level syllabus were different from those required for teaching the IGCSE which had been used before the SGCSE syllabus. The challenge then is, after having been trained, have the teachers acquired and used

teaching methods that are learner-centred needed for teaching the SGCSE syllabus? If they are using these learner-centred teaching methods, what then are their experiences and in what way(s) are they influencing their use of TBLT? It is a fact that English language is a challenge to quite a number of learners more especially in rural Swaziland. The teaching of the subject has not been researched extensively, so this study seeks to unearth the teachers' experiences, uncover factors influencing these teachers' experiences and the teaching strategies that have impelled these teachers' experiences at secondary school level in Swaziland.

1.7 Study objectives

The study was based on three objectives as follows:

1. To find out the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level.
2. To learn of the factors influencing the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level.
3. To discover the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based teaching of English language.

1.8 Research questions

The following three research questions guided the study:

1. What are the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level?
2. What factors influence the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level?
3. What are the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level?

1.9 Rationale of the study

The study is important because according to the researcher's knowledge, in Swaziland not much extensive study has been done which documents the teachers' experiences of using TBLT in teaching English language. This study then will provide knowledge on the teachers' experiences, the factors influencing the teachers' experiences and the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching methods. This knowledge will then give rise to discussions in the field of teaching English language through task-based methods since these have not been raised before. So this study will add to the information that is already there as it is a fact that there is not much information to that effect. These teachers' experiences are important because they will inform other stakeholders who may not be aware of what is happening in the classroom which is the core-business in teaching and learning. The immediate supervisors will be aware of what the teachers and learners are going through during TBLT. These will then inform the policy makers about the issues touching upon teachers and learners during task-based teaching of English language.

1.10 Delimitations of the study

The study focussed on teachers and not the other stakeholders like learners, parents, or even inspectors. Not all the teachers in Swaziland were involved in the study but those who teach English language. Nine of these teachers provided data for this research and these were from three schools in the Lubombo region of Swaziland and not from the other three regions. This data they provided through questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis of their daily preparation books. The study focussed on three issues these being the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based methods; the factors that have influenced these teachers' experiences and the teaching methods that have influenced these teacher' experiences.

The use of three schools in the Lubombo region of Swaziland, in a country with four regions might not be a good sample representation of secondary schools in Swaziland; even the nine teachers who were data sources might not be reliable sources enough since even in these three schools there are more than three teachers of English, so these nine will just provide their details about the behaviour of their own learners during task-based learning, their emotions if and when task-based activities are employed in the teaching of English language. The lesser number of data sources is to help reduce the time spent on data collection as too many schools will imply more time when it comes to data collection and analysis.

The study concentrated only on three schools in the Lubombo region where three teachers of English in each school were data sources, nine teachers in all. Nonetheless, with this sample the researcher understands and appreciates the teachers' experiences with the use of task-based teaching of English language at secondary school level as questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis gave detailed data. In the short time that the researcher had to collect the data, to some of the data sources it appeared short a notice saying that they would have wanted to be given two weeks with the questionnaires but considering the time factor, the researcher pleaded with them to just go through the questionnaire as there was nothing much to and they successfully did. This was a sign that they were not so keen to provide the data as they just looked at the questionnaire and not its contents. During the group discussions some teachers did not say much which appeared to mean they were not willing to say anything even though they had read and signed the consent form. Quite a lot could be attributed to their behaviour but when they did say something their contributions were substantial.

1.11 Definition of operational terms

Core-subject: is a compulsory subject that must be passed in order to meet the requirements of a course.

Credit pass: is grade A (80% and above), B (70-79%) and C (60-69%).

First language: is a language a person has learnt from birth

Form-based approaches: is a technique that language should be introduced and presented to learners item by item.

Fully-sponsorship: the funding that covers tuition, stationery, accommodation and personal allowance.

High school: Forms 4 and 5 which are the last two grades of school.

High achiever: is a learner who performs optimally at his or her level of expected academic performance.

Home language: is the language that a learner is exposed to and use continuously at home; often conflated with the first language.

Linguistic abilities: refers to the ability to use and understand languages.

Low achiever: is a person who seems to have the capacity of being successful in academic education but is nevertheless struggling.

Meaning based-approaches: are means that learners develop a language system through their attempts to use language.

Native speaker: is someone who has learnt a language that he speaks best from birth or during the critical period of development.

Second language: a language learnt by a person after the native language especially as a resident of an area where it is in general use.

Skill-based approach: the approach to teaching which emphasizes on the acquisition of skills.

Secondary school: Forms 1 to 5

Task-based learning: an approach to teaching a second language which engages learners in interactive authentic language use by them performing a series of tasks.

Temporary teacher: school leaver or a university graduate with no qualification to teach.

1.12 Structure of the thesis

This research has five more chapters whereby chapter 2 reviews the literature related to the study. The following one, Chapter 3 looks at the methodology that the study has been organized under. The next one, chapter 4 presents, analyses and discusses the data. Then the last one, chapter 5, has the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Chapter two discusses the literature related to the study. The chapter has been organized into some sub-topics which are: the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based strategies; factors that have affected the teachers' experiences of task-based learning of English Language (external and internal factors); strategies that influence the teachers' experiences of task-based learning of English Language at secondary school level and task-based teaching as a learner motivating strategy.

2.1 The conceptual framework of the study

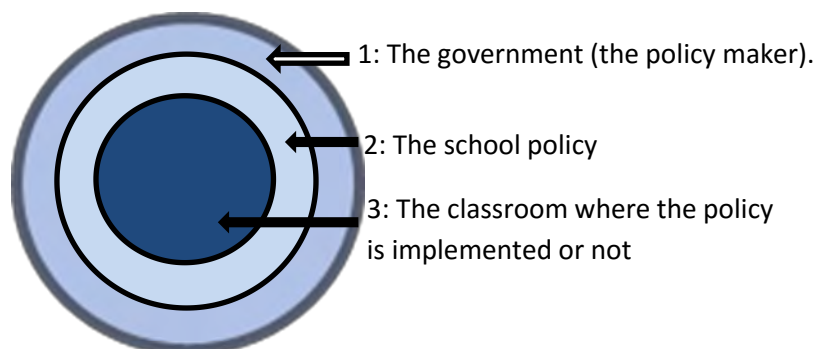
The study focused on the experiences of teachers of English when using task-based language teaching, factors influencing these experiences and the teaching methods that have influenced their experiences. Since these teachers of English are involved in what happens in the classroom on a daily basis, they are the main stakeholders who decide if the policy and the syllabus are implemented. These teachers have direct contact with the learners not the administration or the ministry of education. This study therefore uses the layers of metaphorical language planning and policy (LPP) 'onion' Ricento and Hornberger (1996) and (Hornberger and Johnson, 2007) to analyse the situation in the three high schools in the Lubombo region, Swaziland. Ricento and Hornberger (1996) and Hornberger and Johnson (2007) emphasize that neither the neoclassical nor the critical approaches to LLP research as characterised by Ricento and Hornberger (1996), have satisfactorily accounted for language policy process across national, institutional and interpersonal layers which they characterise as the metaphorical LLP onion. Batsalelwang and Kamwendo (2013) in their paper take the school to be a site where national language policy is implemented, and even challenged or modified. This points out that the classroom is the innermost section of the teaching and learning process.

The fact that this research focuses on teachers' experiences, I can safely say it follows a multiple-layered onion framework. The teachers work in the classrooms which are innermost part of the education hierarchy and in the metaphorical LLP onion framework. So teachers can be placed in the underlying part as they are the implementers of the policy which stipulates that English language should be taught communicatively. The school administration either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher or even the

head of department then supervise if the policy is implemented. They do this by going through the teachers' daily preparation books, scheme books or even visiting the teachers in class. It is a fact that the supervisors cannot go through the teachers' daily preparation books on a daily basis, neither can they visit them in their classes or go through their scheme books so whether task-based language teaching is used rests upon the individual teachers of English. These supervisors or the administration are the middle people in the teaching and learning process therefore they are the inner part of the metaphorical LLP onion framework. The Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy (2011) and the Examination Council of Swaziland English language syllabus (2014) outlines that English is the medium of instruction in schools in Swaziland at secondary school level as most texts in Swaziland are written in English. It then cannot be overlooked that competence in English undoubtedly will enable the learners to perform better in all the other subjects. The policy then the syllabus becomes the outer layer in the metaphorical LLP onion framework. The three schools in the Lubombo region where data were collected from become the inner layer as that is where the headteachers, their deputies and HODs make sure that teachers adhere to the laid down policy by government. These are also the people who report any challenges that the teachers of English face to government. Then the nine teachers of English in the three schools who are the implementers of the policy become the innermost part of the onion. They may decide to implement or not to implement the dictates of the syllabus which stipulates that the material detailed under the curriculum content should be taught communicatively. It states that emphasis should be on achieving communicative rather than purely linguistic competence. If task-based learning is one teaching strategy that helps to achieve such, and if some teachers decide against using it, there has to a good reason for that in as much as there is an explanation from those who follow the syllabus to the letter.

Diagram 1

An illustration of the conceptual framework of the teachers' experiences with TBLT.



1. **The government (the policy maker)**—The Ministry of Education and Training sector policy (2011) states that English should be offered as a compulsory subject at schools in all the levels. Also, the Examination Council of Swaziland English language syllabus (2014) stipulates that English language should be offered as one of the four compulsory subjects. When offering the subject, teachers should give the learners opportunities to develop skills like communication and language, critical thinking, work and study skills, independent learning and working with others. In developing such skills there is no way these could be achieved without giving the learners tasks to perform in pairs or in groups so that they learn from others. In this case the policy and the syllabus becomes the outer layer in the metaphorical LLP onion framework. The government also provides the resources that are needed to implement the syllabus and the policy. Government also runs in-service workshop on teaching methods that a new, like task-based language teaching.

2. **The school policy**—The three schools in the Lubombo region where the data was collected from become the inner layer since that is where headteachers, their deputies and HODs make sure that teachers adhere to laid down policy by government. They supervise the teachers in different ways, either by going through the teachers' daily preparing books or scheme books or by visiting the teacher in class while teaching. With all the administrative duties that these administrators have to perform, they hardly check the teachers' official books or visit them in class more frequently. Using task-based teaching methods then rest upon the individual teacher of English. That is why then different schools formulate their own policies on how they will go about doing their business in making sure that the learners are equipped with skills that the syllabus states they should have at the end of their secondary school life. Some, to develop the communication and language skills, revealed that they make the learners debate such that it has become policy in the schools that they hold class debates which the extend to in-school debates.

3. **The classroom where the policy is implemented or not** – This is where the teachers work and have liberty to do as they please, they may decide to implement or not implement the dictates of the syllabus which stipulates that the English language should be taught communicatively. As the classroom is the innermost layer in the metaphorical LLP onion framework, where the teachers do their work, and if some decide against using strategies that will help learners achieve communicative linguistic competence for example, there has to be good reason for that. There is also an explanation from those who follow the syllabus to the letter

2.2 The teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based methods.

Wang (2013) argues that as most tasks would require working as a group it would be preferred to assign a task for a large group. Chinese teachers who preferred TBLL concur on the level of noise as being lower when using TBLL. This is one reason why teachers of English should not be intimidated to use this strategy thinking that their classes would be labelled as noisy since those who use it frequently have realised that it is how the learners learn. What Wang (2013) highlights is embedded in the study's conceptual framework. The Chinese teachers who favoured TBLT agreed that their classes would be noisy at times. This suggests that there are Chinese teachers who do believe in the dictates of TBLT even though they are expected to use teaching methods that are task-based centred. Even the Chinese government does not have control over what is happening in the classroom. It is through the teachers of English that the Chinese government can get first-hand information about what happens in the classroom during task-based English language teaching and learning.

The researcher is of the view that if only these Chinese teachers could find a way of alerting their colleagues of what happens during lessons when using TBLT, which maybe they are not used to. They also need to explain the importance of group and pair work, how it improves the learners' written and spoken English. At the same time the researcher is hopeful that the research will do just that. Teachers in Swaziland have always complained about the issue of big class sizes that they handle each day and the language teachers are the most affected ones since they believe the learners need to practise writing everyday so they assign the learners some piece of work on a daily bases. As if that is not enough, they also have to do their daily preparation in the official book designated for that. Going over each learner's assignment will be a tedious task for the teacher. Had the teacher grouped or paired those learners he or she would have a lesser task to attend to. The one task kind that Chinese teachers have found mainly well-matched for their teaching is the information gap task. The researcher is of the opinion that this would be the kind of task that teachers should revert to if they are serious about helping learners compete and/or participate worldwide economically, commercially, technologically, politically, culturally and socially as English is the main language for entertainment and sport in the world. These two being something they are enthusiastic about, English will help them to cherish what is happening in the sport and entertainment world. Several features characterize the information gap task: the consideration of one answer being possible, appropriate, or correct, and attained only through verbal deliberation among task participants (Ellis, 2003). The accuracy and understanding of information as deliberated by participants is necessary to enable attainment of intended outcomes that information gap tasks demand. It therefore becomes imperative for participants to indicate their difficulty when information is not presented succinctly, hence allowing the proponent to reformat in various ways including adding content, perhaps to the satisfaction of the receiver or recipient. This process of communicating the information allows appreciation of

meaning and encoding format, (Shekan, 2011). Teachers at St. Ann's COFE Primary School; South Tottenham, opine that learners are always willing and excited to work together; thus exploiting their inherent skills for learning independently. The researcher may conclude that as a consequence teachers become participative facilitators, motivating the learners to be positive minded and oriented towards participatory learning. If technicians on the ground who use task-based teaching are full of praises for the teaching strategy it would be surprising to have other teachers not use or rarely use such a strategy citing those disadvantages as if the other strategies do not come with their own challenges. The other stakeholders as outlined in the conceptual framework of the study, the school's administration and the government, rely on the teachers when it comes to the question of whether TBLT is workable or not. There is no amount of pressure that these other two stakeholders can exact on the teachers to use any task-based teaching method more especially if the teacher will categorically state that TBLT disturbs other classes since some of the discussions get quite exciting or even heated. If it is an approach that is favoured, the least schools and government can do is to find means to make the teachers of English understand and appreciate that learners learn better when they discover things on their own and they seem not to easily forget what they have learnt when the atmosphere was relaxed. This should not be pushed down on the teachers' throats as there could be some form of resentment when it comes to using TBLT. It is a fact that when a teacher is not in front of the learners that is soothing in itself as learners have openly showed emotions that they enjoy it when they are left alone. This is not to suggest that teachers should leave the learners to work alone all the time. The teacher will have to decide depending on the readiness of his or learners for such an experience but there has to be start. The more the learners are encouraged to work on their own the more they gain more confidence which will help them to face the world without fear.

According to Wang's (2013) research, the inherent activities in TBLT, as observed by teachers will at best encourage teachers to optimally stimulate learners' personal development. As these were Cornish, exposure of year 1 learners to a tin mine scenario, yielded a more profound appreciation of working in a very challenging environment, particularly in the dark, thus accepting deriving more knowledge on the Cornish natural wealth. It was apparent, according to the teachers, that learners benefitted more by working together as a group as they are able to assist each other. The teachers explained that the pupils worked well together in groups helping each other with their learning. From the submission of these teachers there is proof that TBLT discourages teachers from explaining things or telling pupils something that he or she could have challenged the pupils find out about themselves. From what these teachers said, it has become clear that TBLT develops essential skills which will overlap across the entire range of subjects studied like independent learning and working with others.

Willis and Willis (2009) argue that TBLT offers learners a greater chance to communicate effectively in class thus expanding their ability to communicate more proficiently; resulting in linguistic competency at albeit at par with conventional form-focused approaches. This is a conclusion they have made from the

huge experience they have in their teaching and research in the teaching of English through TBLT. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, they accept as fact that the classroom setting per se does not offer adequately an environment preferable for social construct and enhancement of linguistic proficiency and exposure, but perhaps offering fluency and relevant skilling in communicative and linguistic discipline. The SGCSE English language syllabus (2015-2016) highlights that teachers should keep it in mind that communicative competence should be the main aim. This is so because a sound understanding of how language works will help the learners to appreciate the principles underlying their own speech, reading, listening and writing, and to cope with the demands of language across the curriculum and outside the classroom.

The methodological discourse as prescribed in the SGCSE syllabus envisages pronounced efficacy in the use of Standard English, bearing in mind the presumption of English not being the first language of the majority of the learners in Swaziland. Therefore it means that the four language skills should be an elementary part of all aspects of English teaching; that is: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It goes without saying then that language activities must meet the needs of learners and promote their language development impressively. By focusing on the skills that promote language competence, the teacher must not lose sight of the need for the learners' enjoyment of language activities since language is basically creative and can only grow from this point. Useful activities will be those that involve the learners in pairs or groups. Thus, as stated in Wang (2013), teachers at Medeley High School concurred that there's greater achievement in collaborative and participatory learning, learners derive so much pleasure in deliberating collectively on assigned tasks thus developing confidence and high level of competency.

On the contrary, Ellis (2003) contends that TBLT enhances networking and exchange of content enabling achievement of communicative fluency and proficiency.

2.3 Factors influencing the teachers' experiences.

It is without doubt that teachers play a pivotal and significant role in the application of teaching strategies in English language and the success or failure to execute these strategies will depend on a number of factors. Littlewood (2014) holds that in an interview he conducted in five schools in Ho Chi Minh City, it was observed that among the factors influencing experience of teachers in TBLT some were rather external factors; and these included time allocation; testing students' motivation and English proficiency; and textbooks. While the internal factors included teachers' experiences; knowledge about TBLT; English proficiency; and the ability to use technology. Lawton and Gershner (2012) opinion that these factors are an inherent part of teaching and learning environment; and as part of the teachers' professional toolbox

influence TBLT. The advancement in technology in our era cannot be over-emphasised. So the increasing range and accessibility to technology has expanded the toolbox allowing limitless exposure for teachers to experiment with technology. Teachers of English then, have to appreciate and use technology at their disposal even during TBLT. They just have to embrace and appreciate the fact that technology is here to stay and the only thing they can do is to learn how to use the different types more especially the computer. Technology is presented in varied gadgets packaged in different sizes to allow users freedom of choice, applicability and performance; such as can be availed for teachers as well as learners. The internet allows connectivity to devices of the learners in the classroom, in the school and all over the world. It is precisely this advancement in technology and cyber fluidity that has opened up the learning space, the virtual classroom. In Australia, Digital Education Revolution was introduced as a progressive technological investment in all schools at state or territory level and at the national level, (Lawton and Gersher, 2012). The success on application of technology in the TBLT is primarily dependant on the teachers' acceptance of the necessity and access to technology (Lawton and Gershner, 2012). It is worth noting that teachers who are less inclined towards technology are often motivated by a positive attitude to advance their skills in the use of technology so as to implement activities as demanded in TBLT. Chang and Goswami (2011) discovered that those disinclined to the need technology use had less appreciable computer skills, and thus reluctant to advance in the technological domain as compared to those with a positive attitudes. Agreeing on the imperative that change in a negative personal deportment can enhance skill in the use of computers. It stands to reason that, a positive attitude is a necessity if teachers want to succeed in the use of technology in their classes. Such attitude is nurtured when teaches are comfortable with technology and have adequate knowledge in its use. At the elementary stage of computer use, it is the sounds and colourful screens that attract and motivate attention from learners. However that is rather short lived as they become more exposed. So teachers need to find a way to catch the learners' attention throughout the lesson time. With TBLT, the teacher just has to make sure that he or she finds tasks that will interest the learners.

From Van Le's (2014) assertion, one may gather that effective language teaching is dependent on various components concerning teachers, learners, the environment and tools for learning and others. A fundamental element of innovative processes for deliberating on the context of language teaching is language proficiency. Language bankruptcy may inadvertently lead to failure to employ intended language as medium of instruction. In addition, VanPatten and Benati (2010) point that non-native language teachers may express themselves variously depending on their confidence levels in the target language. Moreover, Bailey (2006) stressed the necessity for time and professional commitment, also engaging pre and post service training programme. There are other allied factors, besides those affecting teachers' ability to successfully implement innovation. Levy and Stockwell (2013) observe that among

reasons advanced for not adopting TBLT are over-enrolled classes, less interaction, lack of participatory engagement of students, exam oriented learning and such others.

Erlam (2015) does not just consider these internal and external factors but also points out that the task-based syllabus itself makes teaching so demanding as a job. He suggests that task-based syllabus is an impediment to the efficacy of teachers, which might be a problem in the EFL situation. Also the specific data and design of specific tasks might become an impediment to the implementation of the syllabus.

2.3.1 External factors influencing the teachers' experiences with the use of TBLT

Teachers also bring along individual attributes to TBLT classes that may impact performance and subsequent final results of learners. Individual and personality attributes of teachers as with learners, may impact their implementation of and behaviour in TBLT, hence their effect on the learners' results. For example, teachers of different gender may exude may certain values and impress attitudes that may affect the learners' academic progress and subsequent results.

The teachers' age may also be a significant element in influencing the teachers' experiences of TBLT. Age is commensurate with experience in the subject of choice, hence providing insight into the teachers' proficiency in the TBLT and learning; classroom activities; the way he or she handles him or herself as she teaches; readiness to accept changes and newly introduced methodological approaches; passion and the magnitude of hopefulness, which may lessen with age; willingness to endeavour and enhance teaching and learning environment and more, according to Shabani and Ghasem (2014), these have an effect on the teachers' experiences of TBLT. The inherent behaviour and performance of teacher's may be a derivative of their social construct and exposure, which can further be exhibited in class thus influencing positive development and attitude in the learners. Sometimes the teachers' contextual discourse may relate to their efforts to perform and deliver as optimally as desired on the specifics. For example, teachers who associate with a differing school of thought are apt to exhibit tendencies of same just like task-based language teaching. Other teachers exhibit more conventional behaviour opting for different positions in this discourse (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). This therefore means the teachers' experiences, during their training, teaching practice are likely to influence their future teaching performance.

According to Burstall (2009), various research studies have provided evidence that the learners' personal attributes can provide basis for their individual outcomes, subsequently influencing the teachers' experiences of task-based teaching and learning of English language. The roles assumed by male and female students, the social setting, religion and experiences, age, disposition and cognitive attributes, their affective conditions and individual attributes presents a better opportunity to contextualise their processes of learning and resultant outcomes. He states that gender has biological implications and it is often

referred to the roles adopted and carried out by male and female students, inclination and conduct they exhibit in the English class. Based on sociolinguistic research conducted by Sagoe (2012), we may accept the hypothesis that reflects a better aptitude by female students on the holistic comprehension of L2 than their male counterparts and keen on the uptake of new linguistic forms (Ellis, 2008). Other studies have given credence to this fact. In Burstall's (2009) longitudinal research, female students performed better than male students (she based her conclusions on 6000 children beginning L2 French at 8 in English primary schools). She reports the girls' scores were significantly higher than boys' in all tests. Similar results were derived from other studies Carless (2012), Nyikos (2009). It should be noted that other research has not necessarily derived the same conclusion. Hence it would be intriguing that each teacher finds out what happens in his or her L2 class during task-based teaching and learning. Burstall (2009) also observed that females were more open-minded towards learning English Language through task-based activities than males. She discovered that boys achieving less than desirable outcomes opted out of the L2 class; though the girls on the lower scale did not opt out. Gonzalez-Lloret (2014) concluded on the affirmative on the levels of motivation wherein female students were more motivated for the learning of English Language through task-based activities and exhibited positive attitudes than male students. Similar results were obtained by Bei (2010). If girls outnumber boys in positive attitudes, motivation for them will not be a problem since their innermost effect in group work assignments may be more valued than teachers think. In many cases, girls' leadership and coordination in group work, project work, and cooperative learning activities may be essential just to empower them. This does not suggest in any way that the boy child has to neglected so to speak and pay attention to girls who according to research seem to be favoured or favour task-based English language teaching but both children have to be nurtured in such a way that they are equally empowered with the necessary skills needed for language learning. The very same skills that will help them as they attempt the four English language papers that they are examined in in Form 3 and 5 external examinations.

Social context plays an important part in determining the learners' social context through a defined social discourse derived through inherent social construct, cultural status, first language, environmental language, ethnicity and religion and many more. Some research has provided evidence of the inextricable relationship between social class and the development of English language as a second language Long (2015) or social class and learning English language as a second language (Preston, 2012), (Burstall, 2009). If we are to consider the impact of the student's social class on English language development and the linguistic interdependence hypothesis (Cummins 2003), that establishes a close relationship between the first and the second language, social class. That is why teachers of English need to find a strategy that will harmonize the relationship between these two languages. According to Cummins' (2003) hypothesis, the competency a child attains in the second language learnt in a school context depends on the competencies developed in the first language. This emphasizes the importance of having a child master

his or her first language so as to form a good base for second language acquisition. This highlights the difference between CALP associated with academic skills such as reading, writing, listening and BICS. This therefore means that all children have the potential to communicate in informal contexts and natural settings.

The conclusions on social class and learning English as a second language pre-empt assertion that middle class children exhibit a better development and progress of the second language than working class children in a formal classroom setting (Ellis, 2006). Notwithstanding the aforesaid, in a more conducive environment not encumbered with academic excellence, rather on communicative skills, the learner's social class was not an apparent factor. As Ellis (2008) opines, the social class of a student is not the predominant factor rather the how it impacts on the student's previous experiences, stimuli, attitudes and motivation. The fact that these authors do not share the same sentiments in so far as learning of English language is concerned, is important to find out how then does task-based language help to harmonize these situations.

There are some studies that prove that there is considerable impact of ethnicity, religious and cultural factors on second language learning. For example, those who study the linkages between cultural distance and English language learning through task-based activities achievement between social distance and psychological distance (Schumann, 2008). This therefore suggests that learners whose ethnic origins have a cultural link to the language used in the immediate society show significant achievement than those who seem more detached. The wish to be an important member of the second language spoken in the community and mingle with its members also maximizes motivation for task-based English language learning and good results (Zareian and Jodaei, 2015). The performance and progress of the students' learning process may also be a consequence of the language commonly used at home and immediate community. The second language teaching to learners coming from the following backgrounds and the outcomes derived may as well vary significantly. In learners living in bilingual families; they are encouraged and motivated by an enabling environment, which is a natural setting to task-based teaching and learning of English where the second language is preferred for communication purposes as an official language or as everyday language. This emphasizes the importance of the first language being mastered by the child at an early stage so that when the second language is introduced to the learner he or she already has knowledge of the first language.

Educational setting in task-based teaching and learning of English language is used as a medium for teaching and learning in the classroom. The social context of the community is highlighted in the school and in its social background. But in addition to this, other "cultures" exist alongside the formal school culture like administration, the students' informal culture, albeit not in congruence with the formal culture

and the teacher's informal culture (Li, 2011). Obviously, the informal culture of the students, bearing intrinsic family values, affects part of the school social setting and has a strong influence on academic beliefs, general opinions towards L2, academic habits and more. Therefore different types and levels of the second language learning proficiency are linked with different school contexts as students based their experience as English language learners, on progress and subsequent results of the subject giving birth to extreme beliefs on L2 learning that ultimately affects behaviour in class and aptitude for certain academic tasks. There is empirical evidence that the teenage generation of students harbour specific beliefs regard various aspects of English language learning (Hakim, 2015). Therefore, their reaction to certain classroom tasks may differ a lot according to the relevance and usefulness given to them. That is why it is important to vary these tasks, according to the subjects they cover and their level of difficulty so as to accommodate all the learners.

Other factors that influence the teachers' attitude and aptitude in the task-based language teaching and learning class are the teachers' personality, mannerisms and their behaviour in class. In his research, Shabani and Ghasen (2014) asked learners what aspects of their English language teachers they liked best. Their responses captured lots of points relating to sentimental and personal factors; shows interest in the learners; appreciable interpersonal skills; charismatic and friendly towards learners; have a good sense of humour; treat learners well; exercise patience; teach in a pleasant and graceful way; be caring; have a good command of L2; explain succinctly; be responsible; be fair and tolerant; being a good friend for the students; having a rapport with the students. Learners were enthused by these sentiments, allowing for motivation on the part of teachers to engage more effort to gain preferred performance standards from the students.

Wang (2013) argues that one external factor that has impacted most on the teachers' experiences and use of TBLT has to be the class size. Big numbers in the classrooms of up to forty may not be appropriate for TBLT since presentations at the last stage have to be done but it becomes a problem to give each learner such an opportunity yet it has also been a challenge to check that each learner did take part in the discussion or not as each group would have five to six numbers. On the other hand, TBLT becomes useful when it comes to the interaction of the learners. They do communicate in the group and that is a fact which helps those learners who are reserved to at least contribute something as they hardly do if the discussion involves the whole class.

Van Le (2014) maintains that all the interviewees in a study he conducted in Ho Chi Minh City, showed that achievement tests have a bias on their implementation of TBLT as their inclination was to conduct lessons as a prescriptive of the tests which are designed by heads of departments. This becomes a challenge since these heads of departments are not on the ground as in every classroom such that the

instruments they design may not work well for other classes. The text books that they use too, they say, seem not to cover a variety of tasks to practice and improve the learners' language knowledge and skills even though some cover uninteresting topics and monotonous writing tasks which may be too long and difficult for the learners since not all the kinds of learners are catered for in these texts books.

Wang (2013) contends that time allocation may be a challenge as it may be insufficient to implement a successful lesson with learning skills as it may not allow learners to write freely for long. If time is limited the learners cannot fulfil the task in an effective way which will then have an effect on task-based learning itself. He continues that students' English proficiency level will also in a way impact on the teachers' experiences of TBLT more especially if the learners have reasonably high exposure and proficiency of language, they would be more keen to perform tasks in a participatory manner resulting in more interesting lessons. The other truth though may not be overlooked that weaker learners may be challenged in completing hard tasks and more able students will inadvertently stray their attention. So the issue of the learners' range of English abilities has to be considered greatly while anticipating TBLT as they perform tasks in groups. The learners who are ahead would obviously with significantly no or less contribution from weaker learners complete given tasks. This therefore exposes the weakness of the weaker learners thus rendering them incapable to progress in the communicative pursuits. When they work individually, the more advance learners finish their tasks first. Chan (2012) advanced reasoning that the learners with progressive ability execute given tasks expediently; there is a tendency they may become idle. As these learners will have basically nothing productive to do, as they will have finished what they have been assigned to do, there is a chance for boredom to seep in thus sooner or later causing a lot of disturbance in the classroom which might include becoming noisy, moving around, stealing time with their mobile phones which they sneak into class and many more. This form of diversion may be destructive to the other learners' concentration and execution of the task at hand, thus reining in confusion for the rest of the class more especially those who will still be trying to finish what they have been assigned to do.

Since TBLT is a relatively new strategy of teaching English language, the teachers therefore need in-service training more especially those teachers who have been in the profession for the past ten years so that they are equipped with what is expected of them as classroom technicians during TBLT; and what is expected of the learners and maybe other stakeholders like the parents, the community at large and the rest of the teachers in the school. Willis (2011) highlights what one teacher of English had to say about TBLT:

When I taught 7th grade in the past, teaching English was not much fun. We used different series of text books too, and everything was very structured. As a teacher, I asked questions, explained

key words, talked about the passage with detailed explanation of grammar rules. Students wrote down the key points, rules, new vocabulary on their note books. And then we did lots of dictations, examinations, and required students to recite a lot. Very different from today students can just learn from playing and experiences. We do so many activities in class and students are active.

Even teachers who are new in the profession do need to attend in-service training workshops so as to keep up with the time not to mention teachers who when they started working TBLT or child-centred teaching strategies were not even mentioned. Just like the cooking methods, we cannot be using the old methods to prepare dishes in these modern times; we time and again want to find out how the next person prepares their meal no matter how traditional it is. Even with cars, we always want to know the features of the latest model; then why would the teachers not realize the importance of moving with the times even with the teaching strategies they use in their daily teaching of English language? It is a fact that if the teacher is not sure about what he or she is doing, the learners notice that and they somehow lose confidence in that teacher and eventually in the subject. It would be very unfortunate for such to happen to a teacher of English language. Hu Ran (2013) asserts that a good number of teachers stated that partaking in quite a number of workshops, seminars, symposiums and other professional forums furnished them with innovative strategies about how to handle a recommended teaching method. These teachers highlighted that there could be diverse means that could be used to incapacitate teachers of English and they believed that there are three major methods. Enrolling into a tertiary institution is one way they raised; self-study, or take part in what other people term ‘The English Corner’. This according to the teachers has greatly assisted in making them better teachers of English. They are of the idea that going to tertiary just once was not good enough; they just had to sharpen their English language teaching skills which luckily incorporated TBLT.

The truth of the matter is that teachers do not necessarily need to enrol into a tertiary institution but they can even study by themselves, refer to the internet, read educational journals, consult recently published books in the subject (more especially on TBLT), and can even consult their colleagues for help. Willis (2011) reveals that one teacher in his study acknowledged that she had a bit of challenge when it comes to handling the teaching of English through task-based methods. After interacting with colleagues she started reading materials on TBLT that she found in books and journal articles, which she says really helped her with understanding well what TBLT is all about and how it can be applied in different learning environments.

I learnt from the internet that as a teacher you should really think about the goal you want your students to achieve, and then design a series of activities or tasks helping students to achieve the goal. The biggest difference between TBLT and using different activities maybe is just that TBLT uses a task to achieve a learning objective.

From what the different teachers of English have attested to have been of great help they familiarize themselves with TBLT, it has become apparent that for any kind of in-service training, teachers do not necessarily need to be invited to a workshop so to speak but they can be pro-active themselves, do their own research on TBLT frequently or enrol for short course or even a university degree if the resources and time allows. The bottom line is; in-service training for teachers of English is of paramount importance since there are so many dynamics involved in the teaching of the subject so teachers need to be ahead all the time.

Equally important, is the issue of fluency in English Language as its teacher. Learners get motivated by what they perceive of their teacher of English. He or she does not have to use big words but the manner in which he or she expresses himself goes a long way in motivating the learners who then want to emulate the teacher. These are some of the things that are emphasized in organized meetings for teachers of English, which in their own way becomes an in-service program. Willis (2011) adds that a different teacher raised another important element in the teaching of English language, that of fluency. This teacher testified to have been participating in her local university weekly. This is what she had to say:

If I require my students to be fluent in speaking, I think I should first set up an example for them. However, at the time that I received education, I did not have much opportunity to practice my oral English. So I do it now. I go to the English corner at Ren Da (the name of a local university) every Saturday to practice my oral English.

There some scholars though who exhibit their concern about a latent inclination bred by task-based syllabus, the tendency being that, some students forget about the form of the language. Skehan (2008) recommends that disproportionate attention on meaning during task execution will restrict learners to the premeditated answers thus they pay little or no attention to fundamental rules of the language or even accuracy. Van den (2009) contends that extensive use of task-based learning strategies when teaching English will benefit the learner and help him or her thrive when dealing with meaning of the language in the given task while having the result avoiding form at times. This then may lead to the argument that it may not be probable thing to depend on a task-based approach to spontaneously take inter-language to another level. This then necessitate the strong need to devise methods of paying attention to form but being mindful not to lose the beliefs of tasks as accurate communication instigators, and as prospects to initiate inquisitional developments in English language teaching (Skehan, 2012).

2.3.2 Internal factors influencing the teachers' experiences of with the use of TBLT

If there are external factors affecting the teachers' experiences of TBLT, there are bound to be internal factors which touch upon the teachers, the learners, the environment that they learn in or even come from, teaching materials and numerous other internal factors associated with the teachers' experiences of TBLT.

Students' motivation according to Wang et al (2013) is one of the internal factors influencing the teachers' experiences of TBLT. It is a fact that motivated learners have an advantage over demotivated learners, actually motivated learners learn even better. The opposite too cannot be overlooked though, if they lack enthusiasm to learn, they will obviously not care no matter what kind of task they are given. It is apparent then that teachers of English need to trouble themselves in coming up with means and ways of making sure that the learners are always motivated. It is a fact that learners in the Lubombo region of Swaziland are not exposed to a number of things as compared to those from the other three regions. This lack of exposure will obviously put them at a disadvantage when it comes to handling some of the topics as stipulated by the SGCSE syllabus. The lack of exposure will lead to lack of interest since even reading ahead will be a useless exercise if what the learners will be reading will not make sense. Teachers of English in Swaziland then are left with a task of bringing the learners to the level of those from the other three regions in a very motivating way.

The teachers' English proficiency is another important factor that has affected TBLT, and I want to believe that I would not be crucified to label it as being the most important attribute to consider when it comes to a teacher of English language. Chan (2012) maintains that the teacher's English adeptness can be of great importance when it comes to fulfilling the educational requirements of TBLT as it helps the teachers to accommodate and satisfy learners with different learning abilities and levels when it comes to English language learning. The teacher who is proficient enough can employ different structures and explanations to achieve the goal that he intends to achieve for using TBLT. An eloquent teacher of English motivates the learners. It is a fact that learners enjoy listening to a teacher who speaks to them in English and does not struggle. They want to listen to a teacher who has the command of English and they will want to emulate the teacher and even want to show him or her that they are learning too. Such a teacher creates the motivation.

In Van Le's (2014) study, all the teachers who were data sources shared the same sentiments that teachers of English should have updated knowledge about TBLT and that according to them is key. This cannot be overemphasized since having a clear understanding about TBLT becomes very helpful when it comes to how to design tasks which are relevant. Even with those teachers whose tasks are designed by the curriculum designers, if they have clear knowledge about TBLT, it would be very easy for them to adjust tasks such that they suit his or her learners' different stages of English. Also, it helps teachers to shape their lessons to cover both the important elements in English language teaching, those being the acquisition of the language and its pedagogy. So a sound knowledge about TBLT will be of great help to

teachers as they design varied and appropriate tasks for their learners to meet the lesson's objectives. If that happens, the learners too will realise that there is learning going on thus they will be encouraged to work diligently. This coupled with the teachers' teaching experience becomes such a formidable combination. Shehadeh (2010) holds that a teacher who has been in the teaching field for a while does not face any challenges when it comes to selecting suitable activities to suit the learners' different levels of English. If these veteran teachers can select and assign the learners suitable tasks as asserted by Shehadeh (2010), then it cannot be ruled out that they can encourage, motivate and monitor the learners during lesson time as it has become clear to them that learners have different learning abilities and interests. That then helps them to change their ways of teaching to suit their learners as they are experienced in dealing with learners who are different thus inspiring them.

Chan (2012) argues that if teachers are taught TBLT at tertiary level, it becomes easy to carry out TBLT. I share the same sentiments with him since such teachers will have internalized the approach through the theory and practice during micro-teaching. If these teachers are always in-serviced to bring up to date their awareness of TBLT and expertise of teaching and have a chance to talk about their experiences and discuss challenges that they come across, TBLT will not be a challenge to them thus they will always practice teaching using it (TBLT) and with motivated learners it becomes interesting as form-based teaching does not dominate the teaching.

So teacher training is another important factor which when coupled with teachers' ability to use technology as contended by Shehadeh (2010) that computer-enhanced teaching helps teachers as they apply TBLT since they simply request their students to bring in their assignments via e-mail. With assignments the learners will have all the time at home to prepare the language activity for the following lessons as they also access the internet where there is a lot of information on tasks that could be performed in an English language class. The teachers may also design lessons on transparencies. In that way the lessons become appropriate for the learners to follow making that particular task more exciting and interesting in the process attracting the learners. This therefore emphasizes the importance of motivation on the learners' part. Research has proven that computer know-how is very useful and effective when it comes to broadening learning prospects. It is true again, unfortunately that a good number of the teachers neither employ computer as teaching-aids at the same time, they will not assimilate technology into their teaching. Therefore, continuous professional growth has to be availed for teachers to perfect the fresh pedagogies as well as implements for teaching and learning solely to make the teaching-learning process even a much better one. In the recent past, the fast evolution in information and communication technology (ICT) has greatly impacted in life in general in societies not leaving out the education system. It is a fact that the internet in particular, when it comes to communication, it has become a very essential and useful tool for communication. Present improvements in ICT have not left language teachers roles unchanged since learners have been encouraged and are anticipated to be actively

involved in the teaching and learning process instead of being passive recipients of information. In the technology-enriched teaching and learning setting, there is no way they can be passive (Nerlicki, 2011). It is apparent then that the teachers are confronted by new hassles of those learners who are combining technologies with the teaching and learning of English language. Considering an assertion by Kissau (2014) that the use of computers during communicative English language teaching cancels the old-fashioned belief that a student will wait for the teacher to teach and accept what the teacher says paints a beautiful picture of child centred learning methods. In the technology-rich setting, it is possible for learners to handle their learning by collecting material and working out the meaning themselves and make their own decisions and be responsible learners when it comes to their work. Such learners make the teacher to assume other responsibilities as opposed to what traditional teaching have resulted in him or her becoming. The teacher then becomes a resource person, a facilitator and counsellor instead of being the decision-maker and authority in the teaching and learning process. It is for that reason too that East (2012) also believes that the part played by teachers in this new era where technology cannot be overlooked, is not just to pass on fresh information but to equip learners with tools that will help them to gain the knowledge themselves and know the significance of the material that they come across on the internet and software as well as in books.

Ellis (2003) submits learners who are taught English language through task-based methods gain quite a number of benefits; listing motivation as top in the list. Any teacher will attest that a motivated learner achieves more. So working with motivated learners will help not just help the teacher as he or she executes his or her duties but it will also be of greater advantage to other stakeholders in the teaching and learning when it comes to accomplishing the anticipated objectives. Some scholars who did a research on motivation, Zareian and Jodaei (2015), came up with what they termed instrumental motivation. This kind of motivation they described as one that gives the learner a strong wish to learn a language because of an interest in a certain job opportunity, purposes of an examination or even prospects of travelling. Another type of motivation that they came up with is integrative motivation. In this kind of motivation, English language learning talks to the need to learn English in order to fit in well into the community. This renders motivation as important in two ways. Other scholars like Deci and Ryan (2005) have come up with another classification of motivation. They have two types, these being intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Lajoice (2013) has highlighted the importance of intrinsic motivation which plays a very crucial role in the teaching and learning of English language more especially through task-based learning where the learners interact with each other. They believe that it is through intrinsic motivation that the learners encounter that element of self-determination, which is what drives them to be responsible for their learning (Deci and Ryan, 2005). So if there is determination on the learners' part, there are lesser chances of having a learner complain about a certain task being difficult and not even attempting it.

On the other hand, Richards and Rodgers (2014) highlight that determining whether a task is difficult or not is not a challenging exercise to do if you know your learners well as a teacher. What may be a problem could be what is recommended by Widdowson (2003) that the teacher has to identify whether a task is valid, whether it will be friendly to his or her learners and have a sequence of how it will be handled in the teaching and learning. Chan (2012) further highlights that other factors are to be considered when considering the difficulty level of a task. A teacher might want to consider the linguistic items, but also consider the knowledge of the English of the learner, his or her cognitive ability. What may also not be overlooked is the objective of having the learners perform that task.

2.4 Teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based learning

Since task-based learning puts emphasis on learners' learning rather than on teachers' teaching, this therefore implies that teachers who use TBLT always have to plan what learners are going to do. Ellis (2005) contends that there are some teaching methods that have facilitated and in one way or the other still influence the teaching of English language through task-based strategies. For example, the Total Physical Response which according to Hakim (2015) was developed by James Asher. With TPR Asher advanced a teaching method whereby speech and action were combined and apparently this kind of a teaching method is still being used with some innovations though as compared to the original one. Hakim (2015) elaborates that some teachers promote and use TPR as a technique to introduce some vocabulary or grammar structures. In TBLT teachers are just facilitators, motivators, a figure of authority since there has to be order even during TBLT. Both the teachers and learners are equally involved in different activities though during the teaching and learning process, even though the teacher is basically a coach whose activity is to facilitate the learning process and the overall conception of the targeted material. The comprehension of the subject matter is then measured using quite a number of methods of assessments which may include student portfolios, class participation or even group projects and many more (Hu, 2013). So whatever the teacher could have asked the learners to do during TPR, could be repeated in a form of assessment in group work, whether as a project or as a group discussion item to present on in class. The TPR exercise which could have then been extended into a task for group work, could then be assigned to the learners to work on as their portfolios. This raises other methods of teaching then such as group work and class participation as methods that have influenced task-based English language teaching. So the methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based learning will focus mainly on listening, speaking, reading and writing as these are the skills that are aimed at in an English language curriculum in Swaziland. The SGCSE English language syllabus (2015-2016) states that teachers should

focus on the development of the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) which are all assessed at both the end of the junior level (Form 3) and senior level (Form 5).

Samunda (2009) concurs with Ellis (2005) when it comes to these teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences even though he uses different words to categorize them as he lists them thus:

- (a) cognitive learning methods which will include classification or authentication; predicting; repetition; memorization; observing.
- (b) methods which will include organization; arranging; setting objectives; self- supervision which will fall under the metacognitive methods of learning.
- (c) Communication methods which encompass experimental or communicative methods.
- (d) Social methods being activities which learners employ so that they may practice the knowledge that they will have gained through the exposure during TBLT.

Then, if listening methods can be explained as active processes through which learners obtain, come up with sense from, and be made to react to oral or non- spoken messages, then the listening form portion of the process of communication had better not be detached from the other aspects of the language. This touches upon all the methods that have been listed by Samunda (2009) and Ellis (2005) since they both mention cognitive learning methods, same as metacognitive, communicative and social methods.

If speaking tasks underpin all learning since when learners speak learners acquire ideas, improve vocabulary and recognize the English language structures as important elements of their learning; then these teaching methods involving the speaking of English need to be strengthened. TBLT involves quite a lot of these teaching methods mentioned in Samunda (2009) classification of the language teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based learning. This is so because the learners discuss among themselves. The more you speak a language it is the more you develop your competency in it which the SGCSE English language syllabus emphasizes on, the mastering of the communicative aspect of English instead of the linguistic competence.

With writing tasks, the learners require to practice on a daily bases their thoughts in writing. If writing is a process which is developmental then it goes back to Oxford's classification since when you write during the learning process you cannot leave out deductive reasoning, memorization, planning which in fact is practicing the knowledge that a learner will have learnt during task-based learning instruction. So in one way or the other, these teaching methods have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based learning of English language at secondary school level. The fact that teachers have been using them, then whether positively or negatively, these strategies have had an impact on the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based instruction.

On the contrary, Thahn (2012) highlights that quite a number of these teaching procedures never become extensively adapted into the teaching and learning thus they lasted for a short while after being tried out. This is so because some teachers tend to think that their authority is compromised during TBLT so they somehow overlook teaching methods that will put the learners at the centre of learning.

2.5 Conclusion

It transpired in this chapter that there are various teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level since different teachers have divergent approaches towards the same teaching strategy. The factors influencing the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning are also varying. The chapter has also brought up the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based teaching; emphasizing that task-based is a learner motivating strategy.

The next chapter will focus on the research design and methodology that the study has followed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed literature related to the study.

Chapter 3 is organized under the following sub-topics: design of the study, sample population, sampling procedure, data collection methods, triangulation, ethical issues and it ends with the conclusion.

3.1 The research approach

The research adopted a qualitative approach. Wilcox (2012) notes that qualitative research is discovery that leads to new insights as it involves a comprehensive methodology to the significant facts it looks at critically in order to appreciate it more systematically. As it takes a comprehensive approach to issues being looked into, it therefore allows for a more comprehensive inquiry of issues in the process addressing quite a number of questions related to meaning which may include: who is influenced by the issue whether negatively or positively, give an explanation why are those affected, what could be the dynamics involved, do those affected respond or react differently to each other.

It is a fact that research papers employing qualitative methods deal with fewer participants as compared to quantitative ones. In this research, the researcher engaged nine participants (teachers of English) since the study is qualitative and addressing the teachers' experiences of using TBLT when teaching English, the factors and teaching method that have influenced these teachers' experiences. This also suggests different approaches will be used when analysing the data collected as opposed to those that may be utilised in quantitative studies. Gifford (2006) highlights in her study on qualitative research that the important factor in this type of a research is none other than interpreting the qualitative data gathered. The type of data gathered for this research touches upon the teachers experiences of using TBLT when teaching English language. These experiences are obviously human experiences which qualitative research mostly deals with then validating those findings. Through the different data collection methods (questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis) that the researcher employed, they allowed the teachers to be heard and imaged as there was probing, generating and testing the hypothesis. Nicholls (2011) attests that a qualitative research offers facts relating to the behaviour of humans, their emotions and personality, something that quantitative studies cannot bring out. Through the three data collection

methods that the researcher employed in this research, she was able to gather information with regards to how teachers of English in the Lubombo region of Swaziland feel about TBLT, how and why they behave that way during TBLT. It is true that the fewer the participants, the lesser the cost of carrying out the research, besides the time factor that is involved if there are more participants. The qualitative research that the study adopted assisted in the attainment of the researcher's aims and increasing the teachers' understanding and appreciation of task-based language teaching and learning. Also, teachers spoke for themselves during the focus group discussions thus the study was qualitative. This method was ideal for this research as the population responded to questionnaires, had focus group discussions with them and then the researcher analysed documents (teachers' daily preparation books), so it was largely objective. Teachers as they were the participants in the study spoke for themselves, since a qualitative study wants those who are studied to speak for themselves (Nicholls, 2011). As a result, the researcher was able to get rich and detailed data for the study from the filled questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis.

All these data collection methods that the researcher used allowed her more interaction with her participants; therefore this research work was modelled around the interpretive paradigm with the prospect of adhering to quality standards of objectivity, validity and reliability; which will put into practice triangulation. At the same time, it incorporated the constructivist paradigm as it addressed issues pertaining to task-based teaching of English language.

3.2 Research paradigm

Since the study is on task-based English language teaching which is a branch of communicative language teaching, it was based on the constructivist learning theory. This teaching methodology was a result of the precincts of the traditional PPP approach which was represented by the method of presentation, practice and performance (Ellis, 2003; Long and Crookes, 1991). This then implies that language learning is a developmental process which encourages communication (practice and performance). The emphasis in task-language teaching is not on grasping the language items but on learning the target language by being exposed to various task-based activities. It is for this reason that the SGCSE (2015-2016) emphasizes on teaching language communicatively. Prabu (1987) was one of the scholars who advanced a comprehensive practical framework for the communicative classroom in which learners perform task-based activities through phases of pre-task preparation, task performance and post-task feedback. Ellis 2003, points that TBLT has been re-enacted from different perspectives including oral, writing performance and performance assessment. It is no wonder then that the SGCSE syllabus (2015-2016) emphasizes that teachers should make sure that learners develop reading, speaking, listening and writing

skills which they are all examined in. It is through task-based English language teaching that the learners can manage the four English language papers that they write under the SGCSE syllabus.

3.3 Research design

The study employed the case study methodology since the main aim of the research was to develop an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences with task-based learning on English language teaching. It was a case study because it was an in depth study of a group of individuals. The researcher concentrated on that specific entity that has been chosen for purposes of that study, gathering as much data as possible and further analyzing it without generalizing the findings due to the fact that the social reality that exists in contexts will never be the same.

3.4 Population

Yeasim and Rahman (2012) contend that the population in a study would be all the participants who share certain features that the researcher would be interested in. Considering this assertion then, in this research the population are all the teachers of English in secondary schools in the Lubombo region of Swaziland.

3.5 Sample population

The sample population comprised nine participants. These participants may look few but they were representative enough of the population and are in line with what Nicholls (2011) highlights that a qualitative research may use six to twelve participants and in this case, the researcher used nine. Of the nine participants that the researcher randomly chose from the three participating schools, three teachers were picked from each school; one who teaches at the junior level, one who teaches at senior level and one who teaches at both levels. This was done in order to find out if their experiences, factors and teaching methods that have influenced their teaching experiences were the same or not as these teachers teach at different levels at high school. This sampling allowed the investigator to categorize sub-groups in the population and created a sample which reflects these sub-groups. As the participants in the three groups were randomly chosen, this sampling the researcher felt would be more representative of the population. This is in line with inferential statistics that sample population is all about since the researcher worked with a smaller group of participants to infer to the group of all possible participants. Wilson (2010) holds that choosing the participants for a study should be in such a way that the individuals chosen

embody a larger set from which they were carefully chosen; and he calls this symbolic portion of population a sample. The sample in this research are nine teachers of English whose qualification ranges from Secondary Teachers' Diplomas to Master's degree in Education; that is why three of them teach at junior level. Others (three) teach at senior level only and another three teach in all the levels. When selecting the sample, their gender was not an issue at all such that the researcher ended up with seven female teachers and two male teachers. These teachers do not just teach English Language but other subjects like Religious Studies, History, SiSwati and Geography as well.

3.6 Sampling procedure

The importance of having the sample providing a representative across the section of the population it represents cannot be overemphasized. This selected population becomes the model of the bigger population it was chosen from. This means that the researcher had to randomly select population members in such a way that all the members of the population have an equal opportunity of being selected as Wilson, (2010) puts it that by indiscriminately choosing participants from a population you are increasing the probability of equalizing all the variables concurrently.

As already alluded to, the researcher focused her study in three schools in the Lubombo region as she could not make direct observation of every individual in the population that teaches English language in the region. The Lubombo region is situated in the eastern part of Swaziland, and has sixty secondary/high schools. These are spread out in the urban, semi-urban and rural areas. From these schools a sample of three was chosen in each school. The target population were three teachers of English; one who specializes at junior level; one at senior level and one who teaches at both levels so as to understand and appreciate the different experiences that the teachers go through as they execute their duties using task-based learning. So this explains how the researcher determined the size of the sample and how she eventually selected the sample.

3.7 Teachers' biographical data

Only six items will be presented under this sub-heading. These items cover basically background information for all the nine teachers and is not specifically responding to any of the three objectives.

Table 3.1 shows three sampled schools in the Lubombo region; one semi-urban and two rural. One of these schools was a government aided and two were community owned. The reason why the sample included schools from different locations was to find out the teachers' experiences of teaching English

language through TBLT and whether these teachers' experiences were similar in the semi-urban and rural schools in the region. Their gender is also shown in the same table. This is to show that the researcher was not looking for any specific gender from the teachers who were involved in the research but worked with those she found in those three schools. Nine teachers responded to the questionnaire, three from each of the three participating schools. Out of the three, one teacher specializes at junior level, one at the senior level, the other teaches at both junior and senior level. This the researcher did to ascertain whether teaching at any of the levels does have an effect on the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based language teaching. The same table reveals that one school where the data came from was a semi-urban government school and two of those were rural community owned schools. It also shows that seven of these teachers were female and two were male.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of schools

School	Location	Description	No. of teachers	
			F	M
A	Semi-urban	Government	3	-
B	Rural	Community	2	1
C	Rural	Community	2	1
Total			7	2

Table 3.2 illustrates the teachers' qualification. Three participants were STD holders; two were B. Ed holders. Two of those teachers were B.A. plus PGCE holders and one held a Master of Arts.

Table 3.2 Qualification of teachers

Qualification	Dip. Education	B.Ed	B.A. + PGCE	M.Ed.	M.A.	Total
No. of teachers	3	2	3	0	1	9

Table 3.3 demonstrates that five of the teachers in the sample were relatively young as they ranged between the ages of thirty to thirty-nine (30-39). Four were between the ages of forty to forty-nine (40-49).

Table 3.3 Age range of teachers

Age	Number
60+	-
50-59	-
40-49	4
30-39	5
20-29	-
Total	9

Three data collection methods were used when gathering data for this research. These data collection methods were questionnaires; focus group discussions; and document analysis whereby the researcher analysed the daily preparation books of each of the nine teachers.

3.8 Data collection process

The researcher began collecting data in October 31, 2014 to the second week of November 2014 as the receipt of the ethical clearance certificate (Appendix H) had been eagerly anticipated. As the researcher taught four external examination writing classes she had all the time to collect data since there was no pressure from her duty station since the external examinations (Form 3 and 5) had already started. Around that time when the ethical clearance was obtained the examinations were in progress and teachers were not involved in any way in them so quite a number of them had a lot of free time thus data collection was not a hassle in any way. The appointments with the heads of departments were not disturbed in any of the three schools from the Lubombo region that were involved in the research. The same day the gatekeepers' letters were dispatched, HODs were met as permission was granted verbally which was followed by written permission (Appendix B). The researcher then left the informed consent letters and the questionnaires with the HODs who were to hand them over to the three teachers in the school. The following day the researcher sent letters of data collection schedule to the gatekeepers. November 2-3, 2014 the researcher received the questionnaires, conducted focus group discussions then went through the teachers' daily preparation books. The identity of the teachers as well as that of the school was not revealed as codes were assigned to both the teachers and the schools.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

Wilcox (2012) suggests that questionnaires are in print and pose the same questions to all the participants in the section. The respondents write their answers in the spaces provided. All the nine respondents responded to the same questions which the researcher had well-constructed taking into consideration the research objectives and the questions that the research had been formulated based on the objectives.

The researcher felt that the instrument (questionnaire) was appropriate to use because it saves time and is not expensive since it is easy to reach people who are spread across a wide geographic area once and for all, as you just leave them with one person identified by the school's administration to administer them on the researcher's behalf if the researcher cannot do that for some reason or the other. Even in remote locations, the researcher may travel there two times; the first time to leave them and if the researcher is lucky they could be filled in full on the same day, but if not they could be fetched on the following day like it happened in the case of this research, as respondents requested that they be allowed more time to familiarise themselves with the consent letter and form; and the questionnaire itself.

The researcher also opted for questionnaires because she would get a chance to explain the purpose of the study to those teachers before she gave them out or left them with the HOD. The researcher realised that she was likely to get better cooperation since personal contact would be established. This renders questionnaires as a practical instrument for data collection. According to Wilcox (2012) questionnaires are a cost-effective way of gathering information that can be kept for reference over a long period of time. The data collection process does not last long again as compared to other data collection methods. As the researcher has already alluded to it earlier that with questionnaires you just go to the data sources once or twice, is another reason why the researcher considered this instrument. Even the time spent by some of the participants was just too minimal as none of them took more than a teaching period. Another reason why questionnaires were administered is that they may not be administered per se if the respondents are busy, the head of department in a case of a big school, or even the headteacher where the teaching staff is small in number can administer them. In this research, the researcher gave them to the HOD and in another school she was asked to wait for them as the teachers filled them. The respondents had no difficulty in responding thus validity and reliability were less affected as compared to other instruments since the respondents take their time to respond to the questions and they are under no pressure. If need be they do seek clarification from the head of department who may call the researcher for clarification on an issue that he or she cannot respond to as raised by the respondent.

Questionnaires with 16 items (See Appendix D) were administered to the team of three teachers of English in each of the three schools and their identity was not to be revealed. The questionnaires were left with the head of the English department to administer them on behalf of the researcher. That was after a letter of permission to collect data (See Appendix A) to the headteachers of the three schools had been

sent to the three schools. After receiving the responses from the headteachers (See Appendix B), the researcher then sent another letter to the schools with a schedule for data collection (See Appendix C). That was when questionnaires were delivered together with an informed consent letter (See Appendix E) and a form for each teacher to read and understand what was expected of them during the data collection process and it also highlighted what the data collecting process entailed as the process included other collecting methods (focus group discussion and document analysis). The consent form also had an assurance for the respondents that the information they provided was confidential and that their names and their particulars would not be divulged to anyone, but would be used for the purposes of the research only. The consent letter also made the respondents conscious of the reason for carrying out the research and stated how the findings of the study will be made known to them. The researcher is optimistic that once the research has been approved by the relevant authorities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, a copy of the research document will be availed in each of the three schools. In all the three schools the questionnaires were left with the head of the English departments and they were collected the following day.

3.8.2 How data from questionnaires were analysed

The researcher started analysing data from the questionnaires the very same day they were filled by the respondents. Since these were open-ended questions, they were analysed using content analysis as they were rich in content and detail. This was done by transferring the responses manually into a spread sheet and assigning each one of them a code for different themes; in this case the researcher had a code: Teachers' experiences, factors influencing the teachers' experiences (internal and external), teaching methods that have influenced these teaching experiences. So the researcher would be checking for similarities and differences among the responses. For the sake of accuracy, the researcher went over the entries once again. After generating the codes, the researcher then assigned one category for each question on the spread sheet with responses in one column and categories in the next column so as to identify the pattern trends to easily interpret the data.

All the responses from the nine questionnaires were discussed in the subsequent chapters. It is also worth noting though that no matter how much ground the information from the questionnaire will have covered but all that information has to conform to the dictates of triangulation. It is for that reason that other collecting methods were engaged by the researcher. Those were focus group discussions with the nine respondents and document analysis whereby the researcher went through each teacher's daily preparation book even though the daily preparation book addressed mostly the last research question (What are the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based English language teaching at secondary school level?). The researcher had also hoped that the teachers comment about the lesson at

the end. Unfortunately that was not so as teachers commented about whether the lesson was successful or not and did not include much detail concerning their experiences in the class with regards to TBLT.

3.9 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions for teachers comprising the three teachers in each of the three participating schools; one teaching at junior level, one at senior level and one who teaches at both levels were also held to help clarify misconceptions that were not well-addressed by the questionnaire as some of the data from questionnaires raised some questions. So probing the teachers helped reach a consensus position that was derived from the discussion rather than individual view point. The setting for these focus group discussions was in one of the rooms in the school premises. Each discussion took 15 – 30 minutes. An eight-item questionnaire was formulated for teachers, touching upon all the research questions (Appendix F).

Since participants sit in a group and interact with each other, they get stimulated to discuss the topic at hand and that result in them thinking anew about the topic which will subsequently result in a much more detailed debate being generated. The researcher was able to even get the sentiments which the respondents could not put in writing more especially when they went through their experiences of using TBLT in rural settings like theirs.

Focus group discussions allow the participants to make use of non-verbal gestures. Sagoe (2012) holds that the capacity to utilize non-verbal behaviour as a research input is an advantage of using focus group discussions as a data collection method. He contends that the expression of feelings and attitude by an individual and the passion from the discussion can be observed by the researcher. This may lead to the researcher to modify his or her conclusion and can be considered in the research as an outcome. In this study, some participants gave just a one word response maybe a ‘Yes’ accompanied by a smile. That gave the researcher a clue that there was more to that issue that was probed at that particular time and that led to a further probing. The findings then from that reaction were that TBLT excites teachers on the basis that they are not worried about lesson development or what-so-ever that is concerned with the lesson since the pupils are always in control.

Kruger and Casey (2000) argue that by their nature, focus group discussions provide a broader range of information, which is not provided verbally, but it also comes in the form of other clues like the tone, emotions and other sentiments that the participants may use. It becomes easy for the researcher to tell if the participants are just avoiding the question because before the start of the focus group discussion the researcher would have mentioned who would be involved in the research and the purpose for conducting it. They will have also filled the questionnaires and had gone through the informed consent letter. Focus

group discussions can save time and money compared to other data collection methods like, individual interviews and observation. The researcher went to each of the participating schools where teachers experiences of using TBLT were discussed in length, factors and teaching methods influencing the teachers' experiences were also talked about in detail. Also, the money spent on producing the questionnaires was nothing compared to the one sheet of paper that the researcher referred to during the focus group discussion. Even the recorder used to record the session in an old one which had been used for other purposes by the research. The researcher only bought a compact disc where the recordings were transferred to and that did not cost much.

3.9.1 How data from focus group discussions were analysed

With the FGDs the researcher recorded the discussions with a tape recorder thereafter copied them into a CD. The researcher did not take notes during the discussion to allow the flow of the discussion. The data from the FGDs were analysed using content analysis. This was done by getting a consensus of the teachers' experiences when using TBLT and the factors and teaching methods that have influenced the use of TBLT using descriptive analysis to discuss them.

3.10 Document analysis

Rapley (2007) argues that document analysis is a method of gathering data by studying available official documents, which may be hard or soft copies. The documents that were analysed in this study were the teachers' daily preparation books. These state clearly the teaching methods that the teachers use which have influenced their experiences as opposed to observation which some teachers are not comfortable with. The researcher also hoped that the teachers would share some of their experiences at the end of each lesson but none of the teachers did, they only commented about whether the lesson went or not.

The researcher thought of a document where teachers indicate what goes in the classroom since some teachers are not very comfortable with being observed when they teach. There is also a scheme of work where the teachers indicate the topics they will cover but in that document they do not indicate the strategies that they use which influence their experiences of TBLT so the researcher decided on the teachers' daily preparation book as a data collection source. Document analysis became a better option, more especially in this research as a means of accommodating those teachers who were not comfortable with being probed in a group discussion since they were not even there when their daily preparation books were analysed.

This data collection method is relatively cheaper as compared with observation as another data collection method favoured by other researchers. As the teachers were busy familiarising themselves with the contents of the consent letters and the questionnaires, the researcher went through the teachers' daily preparation books. These are official documents which are not to be taken away from the school even by the teachers themselves. So that is one reason the researcher went through them in the school. To think of the fact that they were analysed on the same day the questionnaires were distributed, the justification that they are cheap as compared to observation or interviews cannot be over-emphasized.

The document analysis checklist which informed the researcher of what exactly to look for in the teachers' daily preparation books (See Appendix F), complemented data that dealt with the teaching methods used by the teachers which then influence their TBLT. Considering the last focus group discussion question: Which teaching methods does the teacher use during TBLT? Responses to that question complemented data that were collected through the focus group discussions (See Appendix F). It also complemented data collected through the questionnaire (Appendix D), question 13: Which teaching methods influence TBLT? These daily preparation books really provided the behind-the-scene which may not be directly observable since in the same document there is a slot for remarks at the end of each lesson. There the teachers reflect on the lesson and what they think would be done to solve any problem they noted during the teaching and learning process. That helped the researcher to understand better the teachers' experiences with TBLT. It is worth noting that under remarks the teachers wrote nothing that hindered or facilitated TBLT, but that information helped the researcher to compile and analyse the data gathered. It was unfortunate though that none of the teachers commented specifically about the use of TBLT. Most of them would mention that the lesson went on well and that they finished what they had prepared.

Also, document analysis was used by the researcher because it is a fact that some teachers did not want to be data sources because they were not sure of what exactly would happen to them after the research. When this option was mentioned to them, they were a bit relieved that at least their space, which is the classroom, would not be invaded. Through one of the HODs the researcher learnt that some teachers withdrew their services when they were told that the researcher wanted to know what exactly happened in their classes. They thought that she would observe them as they taught, but after an explanation from the HOD it was revealed that the teachers were comfortable and they changed their minds.

It is also true that through the analysis of the teachers' daily preparation books issues that were not noted by other means were revealed, like how exactly do teachers conduct TBLT.

The sheet that the researcher used for document analysis consisted of five items which address objective number 3: To find the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based teaching of English language. As teachers should indicate in their daily preparation books which teaching

methods they used, the researcher crafted the first question (Appendix G) with the hope to find out the actual teaching methods that were being used by the teachers as they teach English language through task-based activities.

3.10.1 How data from documents were analysed

The researcher formulated a document analysis check list, taking into consideration research questions 1 and 2. The data were read to determine similar and different responses. Similar ones were grouped and contrasting ones were analysed separately. The researcher then compared the data from focus group discussions and questionnaires which led to the interpretation and drawing of conclusions.

3.11 Triangulation in this study

As earlier alluded to, for any data collected, it has to be valid. Therefore, to strengthen the validity of the findings a researcher has to use more than one data collection method. It is for that reason that in this study questionnaires were administered, focus group discussions were held and document analysis was done. In this case the researcher used the teachers' daily preparation books so as to validate the data collected through the use of the other two data collection methods.

Ahmed (2007) holds that triangulation is a tactic of making sure that a study is valid. It does not aim at just making sure that a study is valid but it also deepens and widens one's understanding of the issue being studied. Hussein (2009) adds that triangulation talks to the use of two or more research methods to collect data under the same area. For any research that is carried out then, the researcher has to make sure that he or she does not stick to one data collection method but uses more than one which becomes a technique of guaranteeing validity by using a diversity of means to gather the facts on the same topic, involving the same data sources. Another purpose of triangulation is to get other dimensions of the same issue that is being studied. Basically, triangulation emphasizes whatever insights that one method will have unearthed, since they will be certified legitimate and genuine so they will be accepted and understood very well. So through triangulation, the researcher will confirm the findings through bringing together the information gathered from the three different data collection methods. To adhere to the dictates of triangulation the researcher collected data through questionnaires with semi-structured questions, through focus group discussions and through document analysis and in this case the teachers' daily preparation books were analysed.

In this study, the researcher used three data collection methods to strengthen the validity of the data. The first method to be employed were questionnaires, which had 16 items, all open-ended questions (See Appendix D). These were left with the respondents to fill out and they were fetched the following day. In each of the three schools, three teachers filled out the questionnaires. On the second day, when the researcher had come for the questionnaires, she requested to go through the three teachers' daily preparation books and recorded the findings on a document analysis checklist form (See Appendix C). In one school (School C) though the researcher was asked to wait for the questionnaires as the teachers filled them. As they filled the questionnaires the researcher went through the teachers' daily preparation books. Then five days later (as stipulated in the schedule for data collecting document), the researcher went back to the schools to conduct a focus group discussion which took different durations. For the first group it took 28 minutes, 21 seconds. For the second group it lasted for 20 minutes, 24 seconds and the last group discussion lasted for 23 minutes, 5 seconds. During the focus group discussion, the researcher based the talk on six questions (See Appendix F). These focus group discussions were audio-recorded. In using all these data collection methods, the researcher was verifying the findings of the first data collection method that was used. Luckily, findings from the second data method did not contradict the findings from the first data collection method, as well as the third. An illustration would be the first question in the focus group discussion: Are you using task-based teaching strategies in your daily teaching? In the questionnaire there was a question to that effect: How often do you use task-based language teaching (TBLT)? With the options: 'Always', 'rarely' and 'never'. For the second part of the question, they were asked to explain why they used TBLT that frequently. Respondents were quick enough to correct the researcher that they do not use TBLT on a daily basis because at times there are language elements that they want to explain to the learners, something they cannot do during TBLT. So they make sure that at least once a week they do and to them at least once a week is not very different from always, since they said English Language has two slots of 80 minutes a week in the time table. In the questionnaires 55.6% of the respondents indicated that they used TBLT always, and that is the majority of the teachers. So that finding of the first data collection method was validated by the second data collection method. Another example, in the document analysis check list, question 4: Does the teacher give the learners any tasks to perform? All the teachers' daily preparation books showed that teachers do give the learners task-based activities, even though the frequencies with which they do that is not the same but the bottom line is they do it.

Another illustration would be the first question in the document analysis checklist: Which teaching strategies does the teacher use? With all the nine teachers, child-centred teaching methods featured in the daily preparation books. Yet, like I mentioned before, the frequency was not the same and the main issue for this research is which teaching strategies do they use and child-centred teaching strategies featured prominently. The focus group discussion guide had question 6: From your experience, are teachers

frequently using task-based learning strategies? The frequency had already been alluded to in the questionnaire where teachers were asked to indicate how often they used TBLT and why. The majority of the teachers indicated that they always used TBLT which goes back to first the question in the document analysis checklist where it indicated that most teachers used child-centred teaching strategies which included TBLT. This confirms what most scholars in the social science sector have proposed about TBLT that validation of data in this faculty is accomplished by the gathering of supporting statements from those the very same participants and on the similar topic.

All the existing tools of a research method have advantages and disadvantages such that no one method can be trusted on its own. So to cover the flaws of the other methods it makes a lot of sense to have a rounded understanding of the truths that are involved so as to minimize the inadequacies of one data collection method.

In this research that is what has happened, considering what has just been explained with regards to the three data collection methods that have been used to collect data. The three data collection methods complemented each other and verified one another's findings, which reduced the impact of bias. It has also helped to rule out any contradiction, which could have been there with the teachers' experiences of task-based learning of participating teachers.

3.12 Ethical considerations

The researcher first sought permission from gate keepers to conduct the research in the three schools through writing and permission was granted. With the ethical clearance letter that the researcher received on the 28th of October, 2014, consent of the nine participants was sought. The researcher explained her expectations to the teachers including the purpose of the study, who would access it, why it was being conducted and that their participation in the study was voluntary. If they refused to participate or withdraw or for some reason felt they wanted to discontinue their participation in the study, they were free and would not be penalised. It was emphasized that their identity would not be revealed but the researcher would use pseudo names like Mr M, Ms Y which did not even suggest the initials of the teachers. Even for their schools the researcher used School A, B and C as their names. The researcher explained to the teachers that data would be collected through questionnaires, through focus group discussions and document analysis of an official document, each teacher's daily preparation book; and that the raw data would be kept by the University of KwaZulu-Natal for the next five years which they will destroy afterwards.

3.13 Conclusion

Chapter 3 discussed the research design and methodology. These included the research approach, research paradigm, research design, population, sample population, sample and sampling procedure. The chapter has also discussed data collection methods, questionnaires, justification of the use of questionnaires and how they were used. It further detailed the analysis of the items in the teachers' questionnaire, focus group discussion and justification of the use of focus group discussions and how they were carried out. The chapter then discussed document analysis, justification of the use of document analysis and how it was carried out, data analysis, analysis of questionnaire data, analysis of data from focus group discussions and analysis of data from documents. Finally, the chapter discussed triangulation, including what triangulation entails, and its use in this study. Chapter 4 presents the study's findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research design and the methodology of the study.

This chapter presents the findings from the data that were collected. First to be presented are the findings from the data that addresses the first objective: To find out teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level. The next findings would be on the factors influencing the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning. Lastly, the researcher will present findings from the objective: To find the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based teaching of English language at secondary school level in the Lubombo region of Swaziland.

4.1 Presentation, analysis and discussion of findings that address the first objective: To find out the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school level.

As three data collecting methods were used to gather data for the purposes of triangulation, only two provided information for this objective, these being questionnaires and focus group discussion which lasted 15 – 30 minutes.

4.1.1 Frequency of TBLT being used as an English language teaching strategy

To respond to the above theme the researcher asked the question: How often do you use task-based language teaching? Explain why? The results indicated that five teachers used task-based language teaching daily during their English language lessons and four rarely used TBLT. Five being the majority, shows that most of the teachers are prepared to follow the dictates of the Swaziland Education Policy (2011) and the SGCSE (2015-2016) syllabus which outlines that English language should be taught communicatively. Even the minority uses TBLT even though rarely. This is a sign that the teachers are quite aware of the teaching strategy it just remains with them as the implementers of the syllabus which is what the innermost part of the metaphorical language planning and policy (LPP) 'onion' states. This is highlighted by Ricento and Hornberger (1996) and Hornberger and Johnson (2007). These teachers have a reason for rarely using TBLT in as much as those who use it on a daily basis have grounds for doing so. The data also showed that none of the teachers have totally discarded task-based language learning as an English language teaching strategy. The same data were gathered from the focus group discussions

Reasons given for the above results were: Most teachers always use TBLT during English language lessons because pupils need to master and practice these concepts. This is what Willis (1996) highlights that TBLT is centred on the theory of present, practice and produce (PPP). These teachers who frequently use TBLT feel the learners will master English language better if they practice it. Another reason given by

the teachers is that TBLT gives the learners freedom to think independently and discover things on their own. From the practice that they have done either through drills exercises, dialogue practices or even role playing, the learners will be presenting their thoughts in a very free environment as they will be discussing among themselves, even correcting each other as opposed to what happens if the discussion is held as a class with the teacher facilitating that discussion. Even if there could be any form of laughing at each other during the pair and group discussions, it cannot be compared to what happens if the whole class laughs at a learner and even calling each other names from those mistakes committed. Therefore TBLT creates a very relaxed learning environment. The teachers also mentioned that TBLT allows the learners to look at things critically. Kissau (2014), has pointed out that communicative classroom brings about a shift from the traditional teacher-student roles as the learners manage their own learning process by gathering information and negotiating meaning themselves and making their decisions and become responsible for their work more independently. This then makes the environment very conducive to the learning of a second language. During TBLT therefore, the learners will not be subjected to any pressure of concentrating on what the teacher is saying, something which is a challenge to those learners who learn by doing.

These were the responses from the teachers during the focus group discussions:

School A

Mr Z: *Yes, it is useful as it creates critical thinkers, empowers and besides, students learn from their colleagues, so somehow it is a useful learning strategy.*

Ms Y: *I can add that it also helps them to master whatever concept we are doing faster, they remember it and apply it where necessary.*

Ms X: *On top of what my colleagues have said, it helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them.*

These teachers have come to realize that the teaching-learning situation is not about them but the learner and this is a sign that they are aware of what policy expects from them that under the curriculum content in the current SGCSE English language syllabus should be taught communicatively, with emphasis being on achieving communicative rather than purely linguistic competence. What the SGCSE syllabus highlights is the outer layer in Ricento and Hornberger (1996) and Hornberger and Johnson's (2007) metaphorical language planning and policy (LPP) 'onion'. This is proof enough that these teachers are well aware that teacher-centred methods of teaching are quickly losing their place in the classroom in the twenty-first century. According to Mr Z, TBLT is useful because it creates critical thinkers. Every teacher

enjoys having learners who are critical thinkers in his or her class because it makes the class lively and gets everybody to say something in the target language. Ms Y adds that: *It also helps them to master whatever concept we are doing faster, they remember it and apply it where necessary.* If this is said by a teacher who frequently uses TBLT when teaching language, it should be encouragement enough for other teachers who are using the strategy rarely and those who believe they should be the ones at the centre of the teaching and learning. If Mr X had this to say: *It helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them.* It is a fact that every teacher wants to know the strengths and weaknesses of each of their learners without having done much, why then would any teacher want to wait for almost the whole year trying to figure out the weakness of a learner who might be reserved? As the learners discuss in pairs and groups, the teacher moves around asking questions, engaging the learners and gets to know what their strengths and weaknesses are and those get addressed on the spot.

School B

In this school it emerged that TBLT was used but some of the teachers felt that it came with challenges. These challenges have led these teachers to somehow use TBLT not as frequently as they would have wanted to. The data sources responded as such:

Ms K: *Yes I use it, almost every week as it works very well for almost all the learners.*

Mr M: *With the challenges that accompany this teaching strategy, I rarely use it. I don't use it as often as one would expect. (Pause) The first challenge is time. To bring the kids together, trying to fuel them up to be ready for the discussion more especially the reserved ones. It's very difficult for them to be part of that discussion. The second one is: our kids here are not that much exposed, so you want to pump in more information at a given time then it becomes a more teacher-centered lesson as you want to give them this, you want to give them that.*

Ms T: *Yes, it is a challenge but you find that it helps the learners to open up but you find that the talkative ones dominate the reserved ones who then end up not benefiting anything from that exercise.*

From these responses, one can tell that only one teacher in this school uses TBLT often as it works very well for almost all the learners. This is not very different from what teachers in School A said. It is true that no teaching strategy comes with just the positives but it does not mean that it has to be discarded just because it poses some challenges. If one out of three teachers in a school uses TBLT frequently, it does say that a majority of the learners are subjected to teacher centered teaching methods which then contradicts policy, that English language has to focus on developing the communicative competence. If in

a class there are talkative learners, it is hoped that those will fuel the reserved ones and in pair work no matter how talkative or reserved a learner is, the other talks too because it is just the two of them. So it goes back to what Ms X said that: *It (TBLT) helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them.* If you know your learners there is no way you can shy away from TBLT even if you have talkative and not so active learners.

School C

With regards to the data the researcher collected in this school, the researcher gathered that it were not so different from what was revealed in the other two schools. The teachers in this school also used TBLT but not as frequent too.

Ms S: *We rarely use that teaching strategy because we have large numbers of students in the classes.*

Ms P: *Another thing, it is time consuming because you have to spend a lot of time grouping the students, giving them tasks and you find that at times they are not keen to do the work themselves, they want to be spoon-fed.*

Ms T: *They also get time to chat in the groups.*

From these responses, it became apparent to the researcher that teachers do use TBLT and the majority (five) was happy with the strategy. The minority face certain challenges as they use this strategy. These challenges have resulted in the teachers not being keen to use TBLT.

Even though these teachers did not share the same sentiments with regards to the use of TBLT, it is apparent though that they might have come to appreciate the advantage that task-based learning comes with. One reason could be that they are relatively young too and child-centred teaching methods could have been used by their teachers so they appreciate them. This emphasizes that they have come to realize that the teaching-learning situation is not about them but the learner. The other reason that they give also for using task-based learning is proof enough that these teachers have come to realize that teacher-centred teaching methods are quickly losing their place in the classroom in the twenty-first century. If in School B, Ms K said: *Yes I use it (TBLT), almost every week as it works very well for almost all the learners.* It is a fact though that some teachers rarely use TBLT during lessons because the learners seem to have a bad attitude towards TBLT. In School B, Mr M highlighted the issue of lack of interest, no matter how hard the teacher pushes them. Other teachers bring in the issue of exam-driven learning and students' non-activeness and other impediments, as justification for not engaging in TBLT. This is evidence therefore that teachers will always have a reason for not doing what the syllabus expect them to do. Some still have the notion that they are the ones who know better in the classroom. Ms Y from School A had this to say:

But as a teacher you will always make sure that there is order in the group, you are still in control. Teachers still want to feel that they have not been stripped off that authority. Ms Y from the same school shared the same sentiments that, *At times the learners come up with points which you may find that the teacher has not thought about, then the teacher will not be at ease.* Even when one wants to critically look at what Ms. S raised: *We rarely use that teaching strategy because we have large numbers of students in the classes,* as Ms. P interjected: *Another thing, it is time consuming because you have to spend a lot of time grouping the students, giving them tasks and you find that at times they are not keen to do the work themselves, they want to be spoon-fed.* Ms. T had this to say: *They also get time to chat in the groups;* one wonders if these are really concerns that could bring to an end or hinder the use of task-based English language teaching. One wonders then if these teachers are indeed sentient to what TBLT is. If you have a big class pairing or grouping the learners in one way or the other it reduces the number since you attend to a pair or group at a time and depending on the task and the numbers in the class, a teacher might attend to all the learners during a single lesson. I also want to believe that grouping the learners can never be an issue that can even lead one to decide not to use TBLT or even list it as a challenge. This is an indication that teachers need to be educated through workshops, seminars, symposiums or whichever forum about TBLT.

4.1.2 Role played by teachers during TBLT

The researcher had posed the question: What role do you play during TBLT? Data responding to this question were collected through the questionnaire and FGDs. From the questionnaire, the results showed that among the roles that teachers assume during TBLT, six of them attested that they were facilitators; two said they were instructors. Ellis and Shintani (2013) argue that, the first role of teachers during TBLT is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the teaching-learning group. This assertion by Ellis and Shintani (2013) is what the teachers believe teachers are during TBLT. The least assumed roles by teachers during TBLT were those of being a guide; a supporter of the learners. Being an observer; a monitor and resource person are also the least assumed roles by teachers according the data sources and these data were gathered from four of the teachers. Then if six teachers said they assume the role of facilitators during TBLT, it goes back to what was alluded to in the presentation of the first question that teachers are no longer the centre of attraction in the teaching and learning situation but the learners are. Teachers are just there to make sure that the learning is going on well. With FDGs the teachers responding to the question of the role they play during TBLT, was as follows:

In School A

Mr Z: *I would say instead of you standing in front of those sixty learners, not even sure if everybody is picking what you are saying, somehow this teaching strategy helps because you end up with fewer students which becomes a bit better because you can easily tell if someone is struggling or not.*

Ms Y: *When I use this method, all the students are actively involved unlike when you are talking to the whole class and you will find that the ones at the back are not concentrating but when using this method, most of the students will be participating because the group leader will make sure that everybody is participating.*

Since this was a discussion Ms. X did not say anything and the researcher did not force her to say anything with regards to the roles that teachers assume during TBLT. From the two who had something to say, the researcher can safely say that TBLT does not portray the teacher as someone who knows it all, the center of attraction but the focus shifts to the learners but at the same time the strategy eases the stressful situation the teachers are faced with. One stressful situation is that of having to stand in front of sixty learners or more as with TBLT the teacher talks to a few learners depending on how many they are in the different groups and if it is a pair it is another manageable number as compared to sixty.

In School B when the issue of the role played by the teachers during TBLT came up, one participant had raised the issue of numbers as a challenge, so the researcher had wanted to know the numbers they handle and how they do it. They had this to say:

Ms. K: *Roughly 48, 50 but it's not much of a challenge because the teacher has to strategize and come up with a plan on how to teach those students.* To this teacher the big numbers that they handled was not a challenge since they plan as teachers. The researcher made a follow up: *You are saying teaching 48 - 50 students is not a challenge?* and Ms. K responded: *Ya, it's not a challenge as you need to strategize as a teacher.* This response actually evoked another side of one of the teachers (Mr. M) who quickly added: *Maybe some teachers are good, you know, like her. For me, it is difficult because for this learner-centered strategy you need to have a smaller group so if it is a big class like what we have here, it becomes a problem to me, and therefore it will not help you achieve the objectives of this teaching method.* Something which Ms. K quickly responded to saying: *But Sir, as teachers we know how to group the students.* It was clear that these two teachers disagreed on the use of TBLT and even their roles. Ms. K strongly believed in the use of TBLT while Mr. M was of the view that the strategy was totally unworkable considering the number of learners at their disposal. The other teacher (Ms. T) did not commit herself with regards to this question but she said something when they were asked to say how the learners reacted towards TBLT as somebody who uses the strategy. In this case the teacher becomes an organizer. Having to teach 48-50 learners is a big task so if there is a teacher who has accepted such a challenge by incorporating TBLT it should be quite encouraging even to the rest of the teaching fraternity.

The situation is not stressful to Ms. K as she appreciates that she has liberty to as she pleases in the classroom to the benefit of the learners. Even with such big numbers she still follows the expectations of the syllabus, that of teaching English language communicatively.

Ms. T: *Yes, it is a challenge but you may find that it helps the learners to open but at times you find that the talkative dominate the reserve ones who then end not benefiting anything from that exercise. After a pause she added: They become extremely excited as it removes the stigma from some of them.*

Mr. M: *Sometimes it looks like a vacation as they sit there, you may think that they are not doing anything yet they are doing quite a lot. Sometimes their sitting there may be taken as they are not doing anything and that it opens some doors for them to be unruly as they make noise and stuff. You give them a task and you find them making noise and all sorts of mischief because you are not in their group at that particular time.* This data showed that even though some teachers do not use TBLT as often as possible but when they do the learners enjoy themselves and it comes with advantages to both the learners and the teacher. For the learners, they get to learn in a very relaxed atmosphere even though they may not be aware that they are learning. For the teacher there is no pressure of thinking what to say next since the learners work on their own, the teacher only comes around to check if the learners are doing what the task requires them to do. The kind of reaction from the learners that the teachers are talking about, to the researcher points towards motivation. It just says the learners get motivated when task-based language learning is used. Ruan et al. (2015) states that task-based learning brings a variety of benefits to learners; one of which is motivation. The strategy is motivation in its own right to the learners. This therefore implies that teachers have come to realize that task-based English language teaching and learning has taken their trouble away; that of motivating the learners since motivated learners can complete any given task. Not only does it motivates but it removes the stigma from some learners since they also open up, they are no longer labelled as introverts and maybe all other names that some teachers use to refer to learners.

In School C

With regards to the learners' reactions towards task-based learning activities, Ms. P responded, *I would say, there are mixed feelings because there are those who get excited when this strategy is going to be used. Also, there are those you can tell have a bad attitude.*

Ms. T: *There are those who think that the teacher is lazy to teach so she wants them to work.*

Ms. S: *More especially with the kind of students we have, who just sit and wait to be given information. But there are those who are keen to carry out those tasks; they just do that activity.*

So it emerged from School C that not all the learners are excited by TBLT. Some learners would be excited and some show an attitude which Ms. P described as *bad*. Some even think that the teacher is lazy to teach that is why they are made to work in a pair or a group. This is a challenge to the teachers who need to work towards making the learners understand that they do need to work with their classmates at times. At the same time, this is evidence that teachers will always have a reason for not doing what they were expected to do according to the syllabus they are supposed to implement. The teachers seem to forget that they also have beautiful ideas because of their interaction with other teachers and intellectuals wherever they go. It is true that pair and group work is what facilitates the thinking as one gets to appreciate how others think towards a certain topic and it may help them in the near future.

With questionnaires, the data was revealed that six teachers believe that during TBLT a teacher becomes a facilitator. This means that the teacher sees to it that the learning goes on smoothly and easily. Two teachers believed that during TBLT a teacher becomes an instructor who just gives an authoritative advice and instruction. One teacher shared that TBLT makes a teacher someone who guides the learners. When he or she moves around the learners' questions and concerns are addressed amicably. Another one responded by saying that during TBLT the teacher becomes just a supporter. Learners need to be supported all the time whether doing well or not as a form of encouragement or just making them to feel better even if they have not achieved what they had been asked to do. One participant said that a teacher becomes an observer during TBLT, a monitor and a resource person. All these do not suggest that a teacher does all the work but will be there to make sure that everything goes on as planned. It is for the teacher to create such harmony in the classroom so that the negative attitudes that are sometimes prevalent in the classrooms are minimized because they are unhealthy for the teaching and learning process. All these are teachers' experiences of using TBLT at secondary school level in the Lubombo region of Swaziland.

4.1.3 Sources of the tasks that the teachers assign the learners

To address this theme, the researcher asked the question: Where do you get the tasks that you assign your learners during TBLT? This was still in a bid to find the teachers' experiences of teaching English language using tasks. Also data on the question on sources was collected through questionnaires and FDGs. With the questionnaires some teachers revealed that they relied on other books for the tasks not the prescribed ones so as to cover almost all the spheres of life. This is important because topics for composition cover any subject under the sun. So if the learners have some background information about that particular subject or topic the examination becomes very friendly to those learners. Even reading and

listening comprehension passages cover subjects from all walks of life so exposing the learners to them through TBLT puts them at an advantage when it comes to the examinations. These learners will simply produce informed responses following what Willis (2011) has outlined in his PPP theory. Other teachers relayed that even the prescribed books become useful to them when they design the tasks. This is a sign that teachers cannot just say they do not have access to libraries or even the internet so they cannot come up with tasks to give to the learners as two teachers attested that the internet is a great source for them for these tasks. There are also teachers who believed in their own creation when it comes to the tasks to assign the learners during TBLT. According to Robinson (2005), task design should enhance balanced language development; students need to learn L2 accurately, paying attention to fluency as well as complexity of production because they will have been presented and practiced the pattern of the language during lesson time. The result then will be a relatively free language production. This cannot be successfully done if teachers are not going to be innovative more especially if they understand that language learning is a complex process. Another teacher cited the television as a source of the tasks that they assign the learners. Another pointed at contemporary issues as a source of the tasks that are assigned to the learners during TBLT as it is very common for examiners to set questions on current issues. Another teacher relied on teaching guides and another said that he sometimes asked the learners to come with the tasks as a sign of empowering them so they may feel responsible and carry out the task with a sense of responsibility. In doing all these, the teachers are trying to come with tasks that will excite the learners so that they may have the urge to carry them out or be even motivated by the task itself. Such an environment is really a friendly one as learners too will prepare tasks that they will want to perform once they are well-trained on TBLT.

Also FDGs were conducted to ascertain the sources of the tasks that the teachers assign the learners and these were the responses from the teachers:

School A

Ms. X: Sometimes we use the text books because there are prescribed books with these tasks.

Mr. Z: In as much as I use the recommended text books, I also source other material from other sources like the internet and television. So I can't really say I over rely on the text book. I pick what will fascinate my students, something that will generate interest. I also find a newspaper then design a task-based learning activity. I kind of expose them to a number of things.

In as much as the teachers rely on the prescribed books when designing the tasks to be assigned to the learners, some teachers go out of their way to find tasks that will be appealing to the learners so as to generate interest in the learners. The metaphorical language planning and policy 'onion' by Ricento and Hornberger (1996), points that teachers consider the learners at their disposal and then decide to

implement TBLT the way they feel it will suite them. This gives the teachers the authority in the classroom that a good number of them so much enjoy.

School B

This is how teachers from this school responded to the question on the sources of the tasks that they assign the learners:

Mr. M: *You rely on the text books and from your experience as a teacher, you sit down, in mind with the objectives on what you want to achieve as a teacher, come up with a lesson then use your experience to devise these discussions.*

Ms. K: *Ya, the books are always there but also googling the information works for me, it is also good.*

Ms. T: *Not always because most of the time the book will help you have tasks that are in line with the objectives of your lesson. So I don't think it is something that is difficult. So you always rely on it for what you are going to do on that particular day. So coming up with the tasks is not a difficult thing to do.*

It is worth noting that some teachers are well aware that technology cannot be overlooked. Ms. K from school B agreed that she would check from the goggle search engine what could be used in designing tasks to be assigned to the learners in an English class. Kissau (2014), who discusses the integration of new technologies into language learning, argues that computers bring about the shift from the traditional teacher student roles since in technology-enhanced environment; learners manage their own learning process by gathering information and negotiating meaning themselves and making their decisions and become responsible for their own work more independently. Even though this assertion supports the idea of learners assessing the knowledge themselves using computers but it highlights the importance of integrating new technology into language learning which is what the teachers who goggle are basically doing.

School C

Ms. S: *As English teachers you always want to broaden the scope of the learners, so some of the tasks will come from things that are happening around, in the country or the school. You ask them to discuss what is happening.*

Ms. T: *Sometimes from their textbooks.*

Ms. P: *Sometimes we design the tasks from their experiences. Sometimes we give them a topic to talk about what they were doing over the holidays or something like that.*

That was clear indication that there are teachers who want to expose the learners to a wide variety of issues by not just relying on the textbook. This is a sign that those teachers want to help the learners widen their scope thus making them better learners and future citizens of the global world by just following government policy of making English the medium of communication thus supporting the idea that competence in English undoubtedly enables learners to perform better in all the other subjects.

4.1.4 Learners' reactions towards TBLT

To address the above theme the researcher asked the participants the question: What are the learners' reactions towards TBLT? Through questionnaires this is how the teachers responded: Learners are excited by TBLT. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) state that learners are motivated to learn vocabulary through the use of task-based learning strategies by teachers. They therefore suggest that language teachers should make better use of this approach. This assertion puts emphasis to the fact that learners do show interest if TBLT is used during the teaching-learning process since the learners can feel that they are comfortable with the strategy that is being used. Some responded that some learners were not comfortable with TBLT. One teacher said some learners did not show interest in task-based learning activities. Another one also said that some learners were comfortable with the tasks given. Another one attested that other learners showed confidence during TBLT; yet others showed no interest; while others just hated the whole exercise. These findings put emphasis to the fact that learners do show interest if TBLT is used during the teaching-learning process since they are comfortable with the strategy that is being used. The excitement that they exhibit is proof enough that a good number of the learners are keen to work on their own. Even those who seem not to be at ease there has to be an explanation for their reaction which may be research for another study. Shabani and Ghasen (2014) attest that in a study they conducted, learners were asked what aspects of their English language teachers they liked best, their answers included a lot of statements relating to affective and personal factors. Examples included; shows interest in the learners, being friendly and funny, be in good terms with the learners, have a good command of L2, and many more. If a teacher lacks these qualities, it therefore means that the learners are bound to show no interest in their learning even when TBLT is used, since they will not be comfortable with the teacher who lacks so many qualities, which they expect from him or her.

With FDGs the teachers emphasized what they had supplied in the questionnaires.

School A

Mr. Z: *Let me just say the reactions are mixed, some of the students are comfortable with TBLT, they feel they are in control, they are comfortable with TBLT. I have alluded to the fact that some are being trained to be future leaders so they actually enjoy: while on the other hand some are not comfortable as some are used to the lecture method, especially those from the primary school level. They feel that the teacher should be the one coming up with the information. If they are to find things for themselves they feel they are not learning.* There was a pause then the respondent added that: *Let me just make this clear. I'm a product of this teaching strategy and even before coming here I started there, so it is not like that ended during our school days, it is still being used.* As the teacher explained this point the other two teachers nodded in agreement such that they did not add anything. Considering what this relatively young teacher has alluded to that of being taught English language communicatively himself, made him realize that even his own learners should be exposed to a teaching strategy that he enjoyed too. So the issue of how a teacher was taught also plays an important role in his teaching methods and strategies. Therefore the issue of in-service training for teachers who have not been exposed to communicative English language teaching, should not be taken lightly. They should be invited to workshops or seminars where they will also mingle with those teachers who were taught communicatively who are then using the strategy with their own learners. They will share experiences, encourage, support and mentor each other in as far as TBLT is concerned.

School B

Ms. T: *Well, they become very excited that they are going to do the work alone without the involvement of the teacher. (Pausing for a while) Yes. They become very excited as it removes the stigma from some of them.*

Mr. M: *Sometimes it looks like a vacation as they sit there, you may think that they are not doing anything yet they are doing quite a lot. Sometimes their sitting there for them thinking they are not doing anything opens some doors for them that of being unruly and making noise and stuff. You give them a task and you find them making noise and all sorts of mischief because you are not in their group at that particular time.*

School C

Ms. P: *I would say, there are mixed feelings because there are those who get excited when this strategy is going to be used. Also, there are those you can tell have a bad attitude.*

Ms. T: *There are those who think that the teacher is lazy to teach so she wants them to work.*

Ms. S: *More especially with the kind of students we have, who just sit and wait to be given information. But there are those who are keen to carry out those tasks; they just do that activity.*

From the responses of these teachers the findings indicate that there are mixed reactions from the learners. Some of them are excited by the prospect of working on their own not having to pay attention to the teacher and these form the majority. It is also true that there are those learners who do understand at the same time do not appreciate what TBLT is all about. Each time the strategy is used these learners think it is time for them to do all sorts of things which are not expected of them during the teaching and learning process. It is upon the teachers to find means of getting all the learners to accept TBLT as a way of teaching as learning has shifted towards learners discovering things themselves not to be spoon-fed.

4.1.5 Advantages of TBLT from the teachers' perspective

To address the above sub-topic the researcher posed the question: What are some of the advantages of TBLT that you have gathered over the years? The results indicated that students are actively involved in the learning as teachers attested to that. Some teachers said the learners' confidence is strengthened during TBLT. It also develops their critical thinking and fosters a relaxed classroom atmosphere according to two teachers. The researcher also gathered that TBLT relieves stress on the teacher as he or she does not worry about any stage of lesson development, learners just get involved from the moment they are given the task to the last minute. Other teachers believe that TBLT assists slow learners to believe in themselves since their contribution in the group will be welcome also thus realize that they are valuable members of the group or pair too. Another piece of data gathered was that TBLT helps to easily identify a leader as high achievers mentor low achievers. TBLT also empowers learners to find solutions on their own and it allows learners to learn from their colleagues and they learn faster. This proves that the belief that learners do learn from each other is true such that through TBLT the whole class find solutions on their own if they are actively involved. If that happens it is obvious that the job of the teacher will be very easy as he or she will not be worried about the development of the lesson as the learners are in total control. This then fosters a relaxed classroom atmosphere, leading to low achievers believing in themselves as they are mentored by the high achievers. Also chances of having these learners laugh at each other are minimized since in a group it is easy to curb such as compared to the whole class.

Coming to FDGs teachers had this to say:

School A

Mr. Z: *It creates critical thinkers, empowers and besides, students learn from their colleagues, so somehow it is a useful learning strategy.* So after this response the researcher had a follow-up statement.

So I get it there are benefits-the teacher has unearthed some of the things he feels the strategy does. Then the other two teachers had this to say:

Ms. Y: I can add that it also helps them to master whatever concept we are doing faster, they remember it and apply it where necessary. (Pausing) Yes, it is a fact that from your equals you learn easier.

Ms. X: On top of what my colleagues have said, it helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them. The researcher then interjected with this question: If I may get back to what the last speaker has said; through task-based language teaching, learner' strengths and weaknesses are unearthed, what can you say about that?

Mr. Z: I share the same sentiments with the last speaker. Learners are not empty vessels. I get to know their strengths and weaknesses though TBLT.

If TBLT really helps teachers to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses, with the big numbers of learners that teachers are made to teach then TBLT is the way to go. This is so because you do not have to wait for the learners to write so as to determine whether they have understood or not. The teacher gets to correct whatever mistake they are making as he or she moves around in the group asking what they have discussed and their findings. If there is a correction to make, the teacher will make it there and there.

School B

Ms. T: Active participation, language development, the speaking of the language is fostered. It also helps those who are reserved, to a certain extent, they tend to open up. When they are working as a group they may talk to their colleagues.

Ms. K: I agree with you Mam, because when you look at them, those who are introverts, you find them smiling then you know that something is going on in the group.

Mr. M: I would like to add-even though we are not using it that much but it is helpful to both the learners and the teacher. For the learners as they have said, they get that atmosphere where they talk most probably boost their confidence as it helps them to use the language such that it runs in their veins. As for the teachers, you find that there are things that we learn from the kinds ourselves.

Ms. K: Maybe to add onto that sir, our students are free to work alone, maybe when the teacher is with the other group.

This is not totally different from what other teachers have raised but these teachers are putting it in other words. The point of active participation on the side of the learners is a recurring one, which highlights the importance of TBLT in a life of a learner. There is also nothing rewarding than seeing that there is progress in a language a person is learning, more so if that happens to all types of learners even the ones that have been labeled as introverts.

School C

Ms. T: *Some of the students enjoy task-based learning since they sit in the group, playing not knowing that they are learning.*

Ms. P: *If used properly, the high achievers tend to mentor the low achievers and there is active participation. Everybody gets an opportunity to participate.*

Ms. S: *They actually learn from their peers even though they might not be aware of it at the time it is happening.*

What the teachers said during the focus group discussions actually validates what they supplied in the questionnaires. Even those who use TBLT rarely they attested that the strategy does a lot of wonders for the learners who are the center of all the teaching and learning. If teachers as adults are aware that learners are very fond of playing, why is it that they cannot have the learners learn as they play? Since they think they are playing in the groups, have them sit in the group quite often for them to look forward to those lessons because they are beneficial to them according to the teachers.

4.1.6 Challenges encountered by teachers as they use TBLT

To address the above sub-heading the researcher asked the participants this question: What challenges do you encounter during TBLT? Results indicated that some teachers have gathered that learners do not complete the given tasks. Other teachers attested that some of the learners are uncontrollable during TBLT. Some said that slow learners take long to believe in themselves and some do not apply themselves at all during TBLT. Another was that learners are unable to interpret questions in the given tasks and those who do keep repeating one and the same mistake like confusing tenses and attributed that to lack of exposure and motivation. The issue of big class sizes was raised as a challenge which then make the learners are uncontrollable. To other teachers TBLT is time consuming. Wang (2013) contends time allocation may be a challenge as it may be insufficient to implement a successful lesson with learning skills and if time is limited the learners cannot fulfil the task in an effective way which will then have an effect on task-based learning itself. It is for this reason then that some teachers will constantly remind the learners about time left each time they do task-based learning activities so that they may finish the given task on that particular day. Another challenge is that some school administrators do not understand the dictates of TBLT such they give teachers of English a tough time when they find their classes noisy. Another challenge raised was that some learners dominate the lessons.

Findings in this research reveal that teachers feel the big class sizes are one of the challenges that they encounter such that they become sceptical to use TBLT on a regular basis. They cite reasons like learners do not apply themselves since they would be in big groups of ten which may lead the groups not finishing

the tasks. In the rural areas in the Lubombo region where these teachers are based, they feel that the learners lack exposure to quite a number of factors that are key to English language learning. Learners in rural schools in the Lubombo region are not exposed to a computer itself, never mind the internet. Even if one or two learners in a group would be lucky enough to come from homes where there is at least one person who owns a cell-phone that connects to the internet, you may find that they are not allowed to use it. Those who do not even know what that is all about, will be aloof in the group since there will be nothing motivating them to engage in the discussion. They will be uncontrollable as they will be telling their own stories such that some school administrators may have problems with the whole teaching strategy because of the 'chaos' that would be coming from the classrooms. In such cases teachers believe that only those learners who are exposed to factors favouring TBLL dominate the lessons something they feel should not happen in class.

With FDGs the teachers had this to say:

School A

Mr. Z: *Sometimes I use students as group leaders and they also facilitate especially those who seem to understand.*

Ms. Y: *Some groups may be too big which makes it difficult for the teacher to manage, so I instruct them as leaders on what to do.* Those two responses prompted that researcher to probe: So you think you need help with managing the groups?

Ms. Y: *Yes. I cannot be in all the groups at the same time.*

School B

Ms. T: *One student brings some order in the group, give people a chance to talk in the group. That person most probably will be the one who does the writing if there is any writing that they need to do.* The other two participants just nodded in agreement when this was said, then one this added.

Mr. M: *I would say sometimes it depends on the subject but I would say sometimes it becomes very easy for us teaching English because we involve our students quite a lot.*

School C

Ms. T: *You move around, and there are also group leaders, you assign them to make sure that everything is done in English.*

Mr. S: *Those just have to make sure that everything that is being discussed is in the English Language.*

Ms. P: *They are definitely punished since they know that in an English class there is no other language you are supposed to use.*

This is proof that even though teachers of English are in favour of TBLT there are challenges which come with this strategy. There could be many as these challenges, but the teachers are not discouraged to use TBLT. They have even have come up with strategies to curb them.

4.1.7 How these teachers overcome the challenges they face during TBLT.

The researcher asked the teachers the question: How do you overcome these challenges? The findings indicated that teachers overcome the challenges they face during TBLT by allowing the learners to talk about themselves in groups or pairs before they are assigned the task. There is punishment for those learners who do not apply themselves; and there is revision of each and every task that had been done. The findings also revealed that learners are encouraged to use dictionaries and to read for pleasure. The teachers are therefore encouraged to explain the significance of TBLT to the learners. The teachers are of the view that if teachers could do a thorough supervision more especially for bigger classes as the groups would be bigger too, TBLT would work very well for both the teachers and the learners. The findings also revealed that dividing the tasks among members of a group works too instead of just asking the whole group to do the whole task, works well. If a teacher decides to assign the learners these tasks it should be done according to their capabilities to avoid discouraging the learners. For the learners to finish the tasks, the teacher needs to constantly remind them about the time left as they do the task. The findings suggest that teachers should have the learners sit in small groups so that they all have something to do and say. The belief is that these roles should rotate in the groups.

With the FDGs, the teachers had these to say:

School A

Mr Z: *Sometimes I use students as group leaders and they also facilitate especially those who seem to understand.*

Ms. Y: *Some groups may be too big which makes it difficult for the teacher to manage, so I instruct some of the learners to be leaders of the groups giving directions on what to do. After a pause the teacher added: As a teacher you will always make sure that there is order in the group, you are still in control.*

Ms. X did not want to commit on this one and the researcher did not want to put the teacher on the spot.

School B

Ms. T: *Just one student brings some order in the group. He or she gives people a chance to talk in the group. That person most probably will be the one who does the writing if there is any writing that they need to do.*

Ms. K: *We always give ourselves time to prepare for what we are going to do the following day.*

Mr. M: *We involve our students quite a lot, you have to hear them talk, they practice the language. So I think this one suits like a hand in glove.* Even though there are some similarities in what these teachers in this school alluded to which is similar to what teachers from the previous school said, these brought in something a bit different. They are aware that since they know their learners well they are the ones who should thoroughly prepare for task-based lessons. When the teacher assigns the learners the tasks he or she has to make sure that it is something that the learners will enjoy so that they may finish it within the stipulated time. If they do not finish they will be given time to finish before the next lesson starts.

School C

Ms. T: *You move around, and there are also group leaders, you assign them to make sure that everything is done in English.*

Mr. S: *Those just have to make sure that everything that is being discussed is in the English Language.* When that was said, the researcher interjected: *And if it does happen that not everything is in English?* To which the teachers responded:

Ms. P: *They are definitely punished since they know that in an English class there is no other language you are supposed to use.* After a pause, the teacher continued: *We emphasize on the use of English but if it happens that they cannot think of an English word to use at that particular time, we then help them with a word or phrase to use but we emphasize that they should get the right word.*

Teachers in this school operate a bit differently from those from other schools. There is just no room for the mother tongue during English language lessons as they punish learners who use the mother tongue during English lessons.

4.1.8 Teachers' views with regards to TBLT

Through the questionnaire the researcher posed the question: What are your views generally with regards to TBLT? The researcher wanted to find out what the teachers' opinions were with TBLT more especially because the new syllabus expects them to use such a strategy. The results indicated that all the teachers were of the idea that TBLT is an ideal teaching strategy as learners are actively involved. There was a view that TBLT helps the teacher to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses and that the pupils get to

practice all the language skills at the same time. These skills being speaking, writing, listening and reading. Some teachers shared that TBLT removes that stigma from learners of passively receiving information and that there is nothing that the teacher does during TBLT since the method is learner-centred. Another view was that TBLT revives self-esteem as learners find information on their own. Finding information on your own is fulfilling and exciting, that is why the learners feel good about themselves and their achievement. Another was that TBLT can work wonders if initiated at an early stage as others added that it gives the teacher feedback on the class's needs instantly. One more view indicated that TBLT improves committed learners' language, both written and spoken and it builds a healthy relationship in the class as the learners mingle and get to know each other. The belief that each learner opens up and believes in him or herself was raised by other teachers.

For the purposes of triangulation the researcher also used focus group discussions to verify the data that was supplied in the questionnaires. This is what the teachers had to say:

School A

Mr. Z: Some of the students are comfortable with TBLT, they feel they are in control, they are comfortable with TBLT. I have alluded to the fact that they are being trained to be future leaders so they actually enjoy: while on the other hand some are not comfortable as some are used to the lecture method, especially those from the school primary level. They feel that the teacher should be the one coming up with information. If they are to find things for themselves they feel they are not learning.

Ms. X: Let me just make this clear. I'm a product of this teaching strategy and even before coming here I started there, so it is not like that ended during our school days, it is still being used. After a pause the teacher then continued: If you look at students from our feeder primary schools, you can tell where they came from because they portray a very different behavior that this one is coming from a school I won't mention but above all, it helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them. Identifying the learners' strength and weaknesses helps if and when the teachers assign the learners tasks as they will have a clue on the kinds of tasks to be given to each of the learners, even outside class. The teachers will know the kind of responsibilities they will assign different learners and this caters for what is stipulated in the current SGCSE syllabus, which advocates for strategies that will have the language skills taught in an integrated way and bring about the development of positive attitudes, values and extension of knowledge. In the process of integrating the skills, the learners will shrug off the stigma of being passive receivers of information as they practice all the four language skills at the same time putting at an advantage committed learners whose written and spoken language improves greatly with not much of an effort by the teacher.

Mr. Z: *I share the same sentiments with the last speaker. Learners are not empty vessels. I get to know their strengths and weaknesses through TBLT.* What these teachers said was an indication that teachers are willing to use TBLT even though with the classes at the lower level (Form 1), it is a challenge. The teachers have observed that not all primary schools use TBLT. This has not dampened the spirits of the teachers because they are quite aware of the good that TBLT come with. *It helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them.* This is according to Ms. X something which Mr. Z agreed with.

School B

Ms. T: *I may say that teachers out there are using TBLT because as they know that with language all the language skills must be taught. So there is no way you can run away from it as a teacher. They just have to use TBLT; there is just no way you can have the learners not discuss.* When the teacher said this the other teachers just nodded in agreement. What was raised though goes back to what came out from the focus group discussion in School A, the issue of TBLT helping to attend to all the language skills that have to be taught.

School C

Ms. S: *In rural areas, it is not used in as much as it is used in urban areas; whereas for those teachers in urban areas, their students are able to express themselves, so they use it because it is fun to them.*

Ms. P: *And another thing, in the urban areas, it is cultivated in the early stages yet with us you find that we start using it in Form 1 yet in the urban areas they might have started using it earlier so it becomes a lot easier for those teachers to use this strategy as compared to us here in the rural areas.*

Ms. T: *Students in urban areas talk about these issues that are raised at school even at home; whereas here in the rural areas, the parents are not even there, they are not part of the learning. You give these students tasks to do at home; the parents are not there even though they are expected to be part of the learning.* What the teachers raised in School C was not different from what came out in School A, the issue of TBLT not being used as frequently in some schools at primary schools.

4.1.9 Teachers recommending TBLT to others

From the teachers' experiences of using TBLT the researcher wanted to ascertain if the teachers would recommend the strategy to their colleagues. The researcher had asked the question: Would you recommend TBLT to other teachers of English? Why?

The findings indicated that all the teachers would recommend TBLT to other teachers of English language giving quite a number of reasons for their answers. Some teachers were of the view that they would recommend the strategy to others since it promotes students' involvement in the learning process and two teachers were going to recommend TBLT to others because it is a stress-free teaching strategy as the teacher does less (learners teach themselves) but the teacher still gets paid at the end of the month. Some teachers believe that TBLT improves the students' learning and that it helps to construct the learners' own understanding and appreciation of their school work. TBLT according to one teacher emphasizes the importance of relevant skills. Some added that it is just an ideal teaching strategy. Some teachers believes that TBLT builds a good teacher-pupil relationship as they tend to ask more questions in a very relaxed atmosphere and that if TBLT is used well, it can produce good results. Some teachers shared that TBLT fosters the understanding of the target language and that it caters for all the learners. Wang (2013) says there is proof that TBLT discourages teachers from explaining things or telling pupils something that they could have challenged them to explain or find out themselves. Findings in this research are that TBLT will be recommended to other teachers since it helps to construct the learners' own understanding and appreciation of their school work at the same time promoting the learners' involvement in the learning process which is important in teaching learners to be responsible not just for their own learning, but in general.

Willis and Willis (2009) believe that one of the problems that could have led other teachers to abandon TBLT is their failure to realize that language is more than a grammatical system. Most teachers who are aware of this and the fact that TBLT offers a more realistic alternative to the conventional grammar-based approaches to communicate effectively in a language for all kinds of purposes have all the reasons to recommend TBLT to those teachers who are sceptical about its effectiveness in English language teaching.

As alluded to earlier, focus group discussions were also used to gather data that address the first objective. These were the finding:

School A

Ms Y: *It is a fact that from your equals you learn easier.* The other teachers did not want to say more they just nodded their heads.

School B

Ms K: *The students are free to work alone like maybe when the teacher is with the other groups.* Again teachers in this school did not say much when this question was posed. But looking at the response given by this one teacher one would agree that the teachers have all the reason to recommend TBLT to others since it creates such a conducive environment. Even if the learners are by themselves but there is work that is going on. The teacher will have obviously presented the task, and then it means they would be practicing it to produce it in a wider context.

School C

Ms. S: *But then the environment in our area is what should be considered. You find that the community does not bother themselves about the learning of their children. When the learners have to talk in front of others you find that they just don't know what to say because they have not been taught to stand and talk in front of people. If maybe the community could somehow encourage the students to speak, have things like a competition maybe on poetry in the community to help them, to encourage them to talk in front of other people.* To this teacher teaching English language does not end in a school or classroom but it extends to the community. The community can be sensitized by teachers on the things it expects. As the policy implementers they should know better, understand and appreciate TBLT. Since their schools are in the rural areas in the Lubombo region which is rural Swaziland, challenges are bound to be faced by these teachers. So teachers understand that they cannot do all the work themselves.

Nishida (2012) attests that some task types might be more appropriate for particular learners than others. So it is important for teachers to vary these so as to cater for the different learners in their classes. This contention tallies with the reason the teachers from the three schools in the Lubombo region in Swaziland gave as grounds to recommend TBLT to others that it caters for all the learners. It is not surprising then that Wang (2013) argues that information gap task is one type that teachers have found especially compatible with their teaching, and that it is to this type of task that teachers should turn to if they are serious about helping learners compete and/or participate in the global market. This supports that TBLT is an ideal teaching strategy since it develops the learners holistically, something that Wang (2013) states that as the learners compete and/participate in the global market it has to be economically, technologically, politically, culturally, socially and otherwise, as English is the main language for entertainment and sport in the world, something they are passionate about. So through all these spheres of life that the teachers will be exposing the learners to the understanding of the target language and it will be fostered. It is one reason the teachers gave as a motive they would recommend TBLT to others.

From the submissions of teachers in Wang (2013), there is proof that TBLT discourages teachers from explaining things or telling pupils something they could have challenged the pupils to explain or find out on their own. Findings in this research are that TBLT will be recommended to other teachers since it helps to construct the learners' own understanding and appreciation of their school work at the same time promoting the learners' involvement in the learning process which is important in teaching learners to be responsible not just for their own learning, but in general.

Even though most of the teachers prefer group discussion for TBLT, findings pointed out that none of the teachers used TBLT more than once in a week such that some use it once in two weeks, another once in three months. This was also echoed in the focus group discussions that from what the participants have observed over the years, teachers are not as frequently using TBLT since you find teachers doing the talking almost all the time.

From the findings, it is clear though that designing these tasks is not a difficult thing to do. During the focus group discussion all the teachers agreed that it is an easy thing to do since there are so many sources at the teacher's disposal from which the teacher gets the tasks that are given to the learners. Skehan (2008) believes that teachers should follow a certain set of principles to guide their selection of options for designing these lessons. He says that teachers should ensure an appropriate level of task difficulty; establish clear goals for each task-based lesson; develop clear goals for each task-based lesson; develop an appropriate orientation to performing the task in the learners; ensure that the learners assume an active role in task-based lessons; encourage the learners to take risks; ensure that learners are primarily focused on meaning when they perform a task; provide opportunities for focussing on form; and require the learners to evaluate their performance and progress.

It is important to ensure that a task is deployed at an appropriate level of difficulty and that it is not just a matter of course design. Teachers can vary the difficulty of a task methodologically, maybe by introducing a pre-task phase into a lesson. Teachers can also ensure that learners possess necessary strategies to engage in task-based interaction. This will be easy to do if teachers get to realise that it is not sufficient to engage learners with tasks on the basis that they will develop their inter-languages simply as a result of using the L2. Methodological options like strategic versus on-line planning can be selected to optimize different aspects of language use for example fluency versus accuracy. If they understand this, they will appreciate why they are being asked to perform tasks. They need to regard them seriously not just as 'fun'. In this respect post-task options may play a crucial role as they demonstrate to the learners that tasks have a clear role to play in developing the L2 proficiency and their ability to monitor their own progress. This means that teachers have to make sure that the learners are provided with an opportunity to participate fully by playing an initiating as well as a responding role in classroom discourse. A key component of being 'active' is negotiating meaning when communicative problems arise. When the

learners perform these tasks they need to stretch their inter-language resources. This requires the learners to be prepared to experiment with language. Methodological choices that encourage the use of private speech when performing a task, that create opportunities for ‘pushed output’ and that help to create an appropriate level of challenge on an effective climate that is supporting of risk-taking will assist this.

As the main purpose of a task is to provide a context for processing language communicatively; thus when learners perform a task they must be primarily concerned with achieving an outcome, not with displaying language. This can only be achieved if the learners are encouraged to do the task. One way in which this can be achieved is by varying task-based lessons in terms of design options. Both Willis (2011) and Skehan (2008) emphasize the need to attend to form in a task-based lesson and make sure that it does not conflict with the learners primarily focussing on meaning when they perform a task. For the tasks that they will have performed, Skehan (2008) points out that learners need to be made accountable for how they perform a task and for their overall progress. A task-based lesson needs to engage and help to foster metacognitive awareness in the learners.

4.2 Presentation, analysis and discussion of data that address objective two: To learn of the factors influencing the teachers’ experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning at secondary school.

The researcher used both questionnaires and focus group discussion groups to collect data addressing this objective. With the questionnaires the findings indicated that factors influencing the teachers’ experiences of teaching English language through TBLT at secondary school were divided into two: external and internal factors.

4.2.1 External factors influencing TBLT

The researcher had posed a question which required teachers to state the factors influencing TBLT, basing these on their experiences. The question was: In your teaching experience, what external factors influence TBLT? The finding revealed that these factors can be classified as external and internal factors. Even the external factors can be further categorized into neutral, positive and negative factors. The neutral factors included among others that the schools’ administration supplying materials required for lessons. It is known that school administrators always require HODs to make their requisitions for the following year.

This becomes easy for the HOD to do if the department has had a meeting and discussed what they think could make their work easy as a department. On the contrary, some schools do not operate like this, everything is left in the hands of the administrators to decide what each department needs. Just their willingness to avail whatever material the teachers need, could be a factor influencing task-based English language teaching. Another factor indicated was how the teachers relate with each other in the school. This is another important factor since it touches upon how the teachers relate in the department and the school at large. The relations among the teachers form the base of team teaching which is another new strategy that is emphasized. If we consider the fact that not all components in English language will be friendly to every teacher then realizing that teacher A handles the speaking component better could work well for a school since that teacher could be asked to prepare tasks that will address that component which he or she is competent in. If the relations within the department are sour, a teacher may be assigned to teach all the four components yet one or two could be a challenge to him or her and that would result in very serious consequences with regards to the learners' performance. It may not just end with the learners' performance but it may also affect the learners' adult life in that sphere. So it is important that teachers remain professional, even if they have differences because that could cloud their work.

The other one raised was the issue of learners' attitude towards the task assigned. This goes back to the issue of the teachers' competencies in the different components of English language which the learners are examined in. If the teacher is not as competent they will not do justice to that component thus giving rise to certain attitudes in how the learners perceive the tasks assigned. A teacher who is not competent in any of the components will not be in a position to design and assign appropriate tasks to each of the different groups or pairs. Some may be assigned easy tasks which they will finish within a short space of time and then start doing things that would disturb others. Some learners could be assigned difficult tasks by a teacher who is not competent enough. These learners might not finish the task and when it comes to presentations they may not even know what to say which could be humiliating. Once they are humiliated they will not have the enthusiasm to try any next time.

Coming to those factors that would positively influence TBLT, the finding revealed that a good parent-teacher relationship creates a very conducive environment for TBLT. If parents and teachers have a good working relationship which should not be a secret to the learners, it becomes very easy for the teacher to carry her duty. With task-based English language teaching, the teacher could ask the learners to enquire from their parents about a certain task even before it is handled in class. The parents would have played a role in what (Willis 1996) terms pre-task. Since the parents will understand the importance of being in their child's school work, there will be no cheating even on the learner's part since they will be aware that their parents will get to know about their failure to attempt to do a pre-task. The parents will not want again to be seen as the ones who have caused their children to fail just because they did not play their part during task-based English language teaching. Parents and teachers have a strong positive influence on

adolescents' academic outcome-and a bigger influence than getting on with peers (Van den, 2009). This means therefore that academic motivation suffers when a learner does not get on well with either his or her teachers or parents. Hu (2013) takes the issues of exposure further. He attests that rich exposure to language allows us to store language in our brains that we can retrieve and access as whole chunks. With task-based language teaching, it becomes easy for the learner to retrieve what they have been exposed to and apply to the present situation. One of the most obvious necessities in teaching a foreign language that the student gets to hear the language, whether from the teacher, from multimedia resources (TV, DVDs, video and audio tapes, radio, online), from other students or any other source, and furthermore be exposed to a rich diet of authentic language discourse as possible (Hu 2013). If a good teacher-parent relationship is fostered, both these parties can work together in making sure that the learners even have access to all forms of multimedia. It is fact that some parents can provide their children with this machinery but those who cannot afford can make sure that a school purchases such. This will be an advantage to those who have TVs, DVDs, videos, audio tapes and radios at home, since they will have another chance to be exposed to such which puts them at an even bigger advantage. Then the issue of those who do not have the slightest idea about multimedia comes in the fore. Through multimedia, when it comes to task-based English language teaching and learning it becomes so manageable since the presentation of an item which Willis (1996) in his PPP theory talks about. The learners will have heard how other people or even the native speakers of English language use the linguistic forms of the target language and when it comes to practice of the item during the task itself, they will encounter minimal challenges thus perfecting production, where they get to use the English language in a wider context thus consolidating what they had presented and practised. So the teachers highlighting a good-parent teacher relationship as a factor influencing task-based teaching of English language cannot be taken lightly. Also, having parents and teachers working together towards availing all what constitutes multimedia, can work wonders for the learners whose teachers want to expose to task-based English language teaching. This will be so because most of the tasks that the learners are assigned to do, are based on everyday life which is depicted in multimedia.

Another favourable factor for TBLT mentioned was, a good pre-school education. The negative factors influencing TBLT included a lack of a good pre-school education and exposure as one stumbling block when it comes to TBLT. The teachers also indicated that mother-tongue usage throughout the day at school somehow compromises TBLT of English. Other teachers mentioned that poor planning on the part of the teacher influences TBLT negatively, which leads to him or her not explaining the task well to the learners. The pressure on the teacher to produce good results could lead to teacher centred methods since the syllabus would be what the teacher wants to finish, hence teachers tend to drill students. The teacher then overlooks the importance of attaining the four language skills.

The researcher conducted focus group discussions to adhere to the dictates of triangulation.

These were the findings:

School A

Ms. X: *If you look at students from our feeder primary schools, you can tell where they come from because they portray a very different behavior that this one is coming from a school I won't mention.* (Pointing with the head to the direction of the school). Then the researcher probed the teacher even further.

R: *If this is giving you a problem in teaching English Language at this level, are there any measures, are there any strategies or whatever means of talking to the people who are passing to you these learners, more especially because you are even saying that you know that this one behaving like this is from school G. Do you have a way of talking to these teachers who pass the learners to you?* All the teachers giggled a bit. Then they responded as such:

Ms. Y: *It's a bit difficult, actually they may appear inferior. They may think you are undermining them. It's not easy.*

Mr. X: *It's like we don't have the yardstick or the instrument to do that. We've tried to ask our headteacher here to talk to his colleague from the primary school or the other primary schools but it's like no solution is forth coming. Try we have but it has not born any fruits for us because the problem is still there.*

Mr. Z: *The issue of exposure comes into the fore here. When you keep on giving students tasks that they don't understand, you find that it delays them as some teachers are concerned about finishing the syllabus as it is very long. Then it becomes a problem when teachers are concerned about the syllabus. The issue of exposure is very serious.* Even though two factors have been raised by Mr. Z but the teacher alluded to exposure which the others teachers had raised. He elaborates that: *This is as issue of urban versus rural. Those teachers who are in town are most likely to use this strategy as compared to those who are not.* Finishing the syllabus is another external on its own which the teacher mentioned as one which he thinks influences TBLT negatively.

School B

Mr. M: *The first challenge is time. To bring the kids together, trying to fuel them up to be ready for the discussion more especially the reserved ones. It's very difficult for them to be part of that discussion. The second one is: our kids here not that much exposed, so you want to pump in more information at a given time then it becomes a more teacher-centered lesson as you want to give them this, you want to give them that.* This teacher raised two factors; time and exposure which have led some teachers into resorting to teacher centered learning strategies.

Ms. K: *Ya, sometimes there are challenges like you may find that we don't have the required materials in the school. Even though these teachers came up with factors influencing TBLT negatively they also mentioned some which they feel have influenced TBLT in a positive way. Ms. K had this to say: We always give ourselves time to prepare for what we are going to do the following day.*

School C

Ms. T: *With the problem of learners not being exposed, you may also find that whatever you want them to talk about could be something that they do not know since they are not exposed. The researcher wanted other teachers to come thus she added: So you are saying exposure you plays a very very important role here.*

Ms. P: *Yes, because you always have to think of a task that is relevant to them. You just have to come up with a task that will excite them so that they do the work. She continued: Another thing, it is time consuming because you have to spend a lot of time grouping the students, giving them tasks and you find that at times they are not keen to do the work themselves.*

Mr. S: *If it is not relevant, you first have to explain it, so that they do not go astray so it tends to be somehow cumbersome.*

Ms. T: interjects, *Time consuming.*

Long (2015), highlights more-or-less the same issues as the teachers of the three schools in the Lubombo region of Swaziland that provided data for this research. He emphasizes that social context plays an important part in determining the learners' social context through a set of social factors associated with their social class, cultural level, home language, environmental language, ethnic and religious context and many more. If the data sources raise a good pre-school education and lack of good exposure as some of the external factors affecting the teachers experiences of task-based language learning, these two are obviously in harmony as both these factors raised by the teachers are as a result of the environment the learner comes from and what exactly happens in that social setting. How the people live and the language they speak will have an effect on TBLT, such that if the people in that community are highly traditional people who stick to the home language with no influence what-so-ever from anyone, then the teaching of English language through task-based learning activities will be greatly compromised, as that culture will be transferred to the school setting whereby these learners will stick to their mother-tongue throughout the school day since there is no other language they are exposed to. Ellis (2008) shares the same sentiments when he points out that it is not the students' social class per se that determines the learners' adaptation to task-based language learning, but its effects on the students' previous experiences, stimuli, attitudes and motivation. These will be determined and influenced by the learners' background, which unfortunately he

or she cannot do much about. Only when a learner decides to be a valued member of the second language spoken in the community and integrates with its members, will motivation for task-based English language learning and good results be enhanced, (Zareian and Jodaei, 2015).

Van Les (2014) attests that teachers' knowledge of TBLT is very important. This cannot be overemphasized since understanding clearly about TBLT helps the teachers know how to design, carry out and adjust tasks to suit their students' levels of English. Then the teachers involved in this study believe that poor planning on the part of the teacher will lead to him or her not being able to explain the task to the learners and one reason why a teacher would fail to clearly explain what is expected of the learners will be the fact that he or she does not understand what TBLT is all about him or herself. That being the case, the planning therefore, will be poor since the teacher will not be sure about what he or she is doing. Worse still, if the teachers in the school do not relate well; but if they are on good working terms, whatever damage that might have been caused by their not-so-good understanding of TBLT can be rectified by engaging the other teachers in the school or even region.

4.2.2 In-service training

Another question that the teachers were asked relating to the factors influencing the teachers' experiences was the one: How often do you attend English language workshops on TBLT? Always [] Rarely [] Never []. Why? The results showed that a majority of teachers always attended workshops on TBLT to gain more strategies on how best TBLT can be used in the teaching of English language by talking to other teachers. These interactions help them to learn more about the different mistakes that learners commit in examinations so as to rectify them. Some teachers revealed that they rarely attended those as they are hardly organized. If there is one it would be group of teachers who have organized a one day information sharing gathering. Another finding was that sometimes information on workshops is not properly communicated to schools such that teachers end not attending these workshops even if they are organised. Some findings revealed that some teachers 'never' attend workshops. These teachers cited reasons that even if these workshops are organized, emphasis is always on the examination which to them is not on the teaching per se but answering examination questions. It is a fact though that those workshops are not always organized even if they are, not every English language teacher can attend at that specified time. What does it mean if a teacher has missed a workshop? It means there has not been any professional development for that particular teacher. The question would be: How detrimental is that? Wills (2011) highlights that a majority of teachers are quite aware that participating in different types of professional learning opportunities equipped them with new knowledge about whatever innovation there is in the teaching of English language. From what the teachers revealed, it is worth noting that teachers need to take it upon themselves to align themselves with what is happening around them with regards to teaching

English language. Reading books recently published on TBLT could be of help to these teachers. Surfing the internet, consulting other teachers could be another strategy, instead of waiting for workshops or in-service programs whose availability is never certain.

4.2.3 Internal factors influencing TBLT

The researcher had posed the question: What internal factors influence TBLT? The results indicated that teachers, administrators and learners are concerned about the results but some of the learners are just lazy. The schools that perform well are the most expensive partly because the administrators are trying to cut down on the number of learners seeking admission into these schools. It is a fact that if a parent does not have money they will not take their child to that school. Teachers then do all that is in their power to make sure that the learners do well at times by doing the unexpected like helping the learners copy the external examination or even teach for the examination. All this is done for teachers to get an appraisal from the administration, parents and the learners. There was a view also that the learners are demotivated. Another factor raised was that there is lack of ambition on the learners' part and that slow learners take long to adapt to the teaching method. The issue of demotivated learners is more serious since the demotivation will not help them in the groups or pairs that they will work in when they have been assigned a task to do. This will also affect the other learners in the group or pair as these lazy and demotivated learners may try all sorts of attention seeking stunts, causing a lot of instability in the teaching-learning process. There are quite a number of reasons why learners could be demotivated, which might include, among others being told they are useless if maybe they are not doing well at school. They then lose the determination to work. Seeing former students not progressing in life could also be attributed to learners being demotivated since they will not have anyone to look up to. They then believe it is useless to learn if people who have been to school are no different from those who have not been.

The researcher also used focus group discussion groups. This is what the teachers had to say:

School A

Mr. Z: *In as much as teachers are using TBLT but they talk about the students being lazy; they can't execute their tasks, some disturbing others whilst working in their groups.*

Ms. Y: *With the introduction of this new syllabus, SGCSE, it kind of pushes teachers to this strategy. Our new syllabus kind of forces us because some of the lessons would require students to discuss before responding to what the teacher has asked.*

Ms. X: *At times the learners come up with points which you may find that the teacher has not thought about, then the teacher will not be at ease.*

School C

Ms. P: *Another thing, the students, are not keen to do the work themselves, they want to be spoon-fed.*

Ms. S: *Even if you can pick something you think it is of interest to them because of their negative attitude, they just don't care because they are not interested in learning in general.*

Ms. T: *They are also not able to express themselves in proper English so you find that they just sit back and relax.*

Ms. S: *Our English lessons have to be in English so that is why some of the learners tend to keep quiet.*

Since during the focus group discussions the researcher did not specify that the discussion was on internal or external factors influencing TBLT, the question was just one of the factors in general. It is for that reason that the teacher did not say much on the internal factors but the good thing is they did say something. Willis and Willis (2009) believe that in TBLT, a task is seen as central to the learning cycle as it unearths a number of defining characteristics, among them being engaging the learners' interest; focusing on meaning; success measured in terms of non-linguistic outcome rather than accurate use of language forms; and relating to real world activities. This is experience that they feel should be shared with other teachers of English language who might not be aware of what TBLT does to and for the learner. With the calibre of learners at the teacher's disposal it is clear that TBLT will help even the shy learners to get over their shyness, participate in the activities and improve their communication skills considerably; which is what every teacher and parent want for their child no matter the circumstances.

4.3 Presentation, analysis and discussion of data that addresses objective 3: To discover the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based teaching of English language.

The researcher also wanted to find out from the teachers that: Which teaching strategies influence TBLT? Data that responds to this objective were collected using all the three instruments; questionnaires, focus group discussions and document analysis and these were the teachers' daily preparation books. First to be analysed will be data from questionnaires.

Results showed that among the teaching strategies employed by teachers of English during TBLT, the most commonly used is group work. In school, class debates and pair work are other methods which according to the teachers are used during TBLT. Other teachers revealed that project work, research and presentation are some of the teaching methods that use during TBLT. Samuda (2009) mentions that teaching strategies that have influenced the teachers' experiences of TBLT will include, among others cognitive learning strategies, which entail classification/verification; guessing, inductive inferencing; deductive reasoning; practice, memorization, monitoring. In group work there is a lot of cognitive learning going on since the learners engage in discussion which at times also turns into debates. The

teachers might have used different names to refer to the teaching methods they use during TBLT, but when you look closely into them they are not different. If one considers in school and class debates in the target language, pair work; there is a lot of classification, deductive reasoning, and memorization going on. During class presentations, communication strategies which encompass experimental/communicative strategies as highlighted by Samuda (2009) are put into use; and during project work, metacognitive learning strategies which will involve planning, prioritizing, setting goals, self-management are fully utilized by the learners; and all these influence the teachers' experiences in one way or the other.

From the focus group discussions which were a follow-up on questionnaire responses, there was also data that specifically addressed this objective. The sole purpose of these discussions was to probe the respondents to open up, clarify and elaborate on what they had written in the questionnaires. Each group was allowed 15 – 30 minutes. I asked the teachers that from their experience what teaching methods have influenced their teaching of English through TBLT.

From the teachers' daily preparation books it has shown that group work is the mostly used teaching method as the majority of the teachers use it at least once a week. Seemingly a good number of the teachers have realised that in order for learning to be a success, learners should be hands on. As Skehan (2012) notes, a piece of classroom work should involve learners. Some of the teachers are in favour of discussion as a teaching method, some prefer pair and research work. From the teachers' daily preparation books, the researcher also gathered that teachers use presentation and project work as a teaching method. These are task-based teaching methods therefore a sign that teachers are indeed moving away from teacher-centred methods to learner-centred ones. It is a fact though that some teachers even though a minority but they did not state the teaching methods that they use in their daily teaching, a sign then that they may not be using either of these task-based teaching methods. One may wonder then why some teachers are using TBLT in their teaching and some are not. There cannot be any one explanation to this but there could be number of factors which can be unearthed in another research.

Also, there is the fact that some parents are not always willing to help their children do their schoolwork, in fact, some, according to focus group discussion, even complain that their children bring a lot of work to do at home, which needs their approval most of the time which some are unable to do because they work far from their homesteads. Others are just not willing to help. After all the research and project work, there have to be presentations, which help to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses and revive that high self-esteem in the learners, as they will have discovered that information on their own. According to Saab et al (2005), Bruner's Discovery learning holds that learners are more likely to remember concepts and knowledge discovered on their own even though critics cite that this strategy has a potential of availing misconceptions which teachers may fail to detect. However, from their experiences, the teachers

agreed that even with these disadvantages, the strategy is ideal because it caters for all the learners, and that if used well, it produces good results which everybody is after.

From the focus group discussions, it emerged from School A through Mr X that, “*Some are not comfortable as they are used to the lecture method, especially those from primary school level. They feel that the teacher should be the one coming up with the information. If they find things for themselves, they feel they are not learning.*” He continued that, “*If you look at students from our feeder primary schools, you can tell where they come from because they portray a very different behaviour that this one is coming from a school I won’t mention.*” Something worth noting is that, not many teaching methods have influenced the teachers’ experiences of task-based teaching of English Language at secondary school level as compared to what the teachers wrote in the questionnaires and what the researcher discovered as she went through the teachers’ daily preparation books. During the focus group discussion I would attribute such scanty details with regards to the teaching methods to the fact that the teachers were not even keen to be part of the discussion. They were not so free with the fact that they will be recorded. They even wondered where I would take that recorded session to.

Table 4.1

Teaching methods used by teachers during TBLT

Teacher	Which teaching methods does the teacher use?	Which teaching method is mostly used?	How often is it used?	Does the teacher give the learners any tasks to perform as a teaching method?	If the response to 4. is ‘Yes’, what activity precedes the task in the classroom
Mr Z –	Group	Group	Once a	Yes	The teacher explains what

School A	discussion, pair work, project	discussion	week		the day's task entails; what is expected from the learners
Ms X – School A	Discussion, research, presentations	Presentations	Once a week	Yes	Nothing done by the learners but the teacher explains what is expected of the learners
Ms Y – School A	Discussion, group work	Group work	Once a week	Yes	Teacher stating what will happen when the learners perform the task.
Ms T – School B	Group work, pair work, discussion	Group work	Not weekly but fortnightly	Yes	Depends on the task at a given time; the learners are asked to read or brainstorm in readiness for the task
Mr M – School B	Research, discussion	Discussion	Not weekly but fortnightly	Yes	Most of the time the learners are asked to brainstorm about the topic
Ms K – School B	Group work, debates (class and in-school)	Group work	Not weekly but once a month	Yes	Brainstorming about the topic
Ms S – School C	Not clearly stated	Not clearly stated	N/A	Yes	Brainstorming about the topic.
Ms P – School C	Pair work, group work	Pair work	Once	Yes	Nothing much that involves the learners
Ms T – School C	Not clearly stated	N/A	Not week but rarely; noted once a term	Yes	When used the teacher explains what will happen and how it will happen

Findings give a positive picture in that, most teachers teaching the SGCSE syllabus, are relatively young. Their age range of 30-39 and 40-49, gives hope that, these teachers have much time ahead of them to learn from other teachers of English language. This will help them improve their experiences with task-based learning of English language; and make innovations on how best task-based language teaching can be utilized to make learners achieve the receptive skills of reading and listening and the productive skill of writing and speaking the English Language. Whatever negative experiences they have, with more

workshops in the pipe line, understanding of school administrators of this teaching strategy and the learners' appreciation of it, there are prospects for better English language teaching at secondary school level. Also worth noting is the fact that these teachers are highly qualified, which is a sign that their level of preparation to teach this curriculum using TBLT is high.

4.4 Conclusion

The presentation and discussion of findings looked at the data that had been collected in depth. Findings were presented and discussed as per the research questions. First to be presented and discussed was the first research question whereby a detailed description of the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through TBL at secondary school level were given. It was followed by the second research question which detailed factors influencing the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through TBL at secondary school. Lastly the third research question which described the data in detail which address the teaching methods that have influenced the teachers' experiences of TBLT of English language at secondary school. It transpired in the discussions that teachers of English language are keen on using TBLT, even though it may not be as frequent as possible. The reality is that they are really trying considering the location of their schools and the non-availability of resources and in-service workshops for teachers, which they claimed are hardly organized. If organized, the information is not properly communicated to teachers who are in the rural areas. From the findings it is clear that teachers of English appreciate TBLT because it somehow gives them a break from what is expected by administrators who believe that teaching is having the teacher talk all the time. Some are even sceptical of applying TBLT because they once did and they were reprimanded for failing to control their classes when the noisy classes were discovered. So to save their skins from these administrators who do not seem to understand what TBLT is about, they shun TBLT in preference for teacher-centred strategies and forget that it is the learner who is at the centre of learning.

Also part of the finding discussed were, the factors influencing the teachers' experiences. These were divided into two: internal and external factors. The neutral factors included among others the issue of school administrators supplying materials required for lessons; how teachers relate with each other in the school. The last one detailed the learners' attitude towards the task assigned. The positive factors influencing the teachers' experiences of using TBLT as raised by the teachers were: a good teacher-parent relationship and a good pre-school education and exposure. The negative factors were: mother-tongue usage throughout the school day which the teachers believed compromises task-based English language learning. Poor planning on the part of the teacher and pressure on the teacher to produce good results were presented and discussed. The issues of teaching methods that have influenced the teachers'

experiences of TBLT which included among other group work, pair work, in school and class debates just to name a few, was also discussed in detail in this chapter. Chapter 5, which is the next chapter will deal with the summary and conclusion of the whole research; and recommendations and future research.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

Chapter 5 is organized under the following sub-topics: summary of the research objectives, summary of the findings, conclusions from the study, recommendations and future research.

5.1 Summary of research objectives

The study was focused on giving explanations that would satisfy the following: What are the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning?; What factors influence teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level?; and What are the teaching strategies that have influenced the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based teaching at secondary school level? All these were to jointly address the topic: The teachers' experiences with task-based teaching on English language teaching at secondary school level in the Lubombo region of Swaziland.

5.2 Summary of the findings

It is clear from the findings of the study, that teachers have distinguishable experiences, varying from favourable ones to not so pleasant encounters, as well as impartial ones, with the use of TBLT to teach English language. They use the strategy (TBLT), but not as frequently as it is expected for it to yield the desired results. As a result, some teachers who have had the most unfortunate experiences in the school, such as being dragged into the headteacher's office to explain why there was disorder in their classes even though they were there. They were obviously misconstrued to be failing to control their classes when they used TBLT, since there would be noise in the class as the learners would engage in discussions that would be characterized by all the emotions one could think of. As a result, some teachers have decided to stop using TBLT because it really does not make sense to headteachers who feel that during 'proper' teaching and learning there should be complete silence, with everybody concentrating on what the teacher is saying. Some teachers are excited by TBLT since it accords them an opportunity to relax as they never worry about what to say during the development of the lesson as the learners would be in total control. Some teachers are of the view that whether they use TBLT or not teaching goes on, such that they rarely use such a strategy because of the reaction of the learners at times, which discourages them from frequently using the teaching strategy. It is the general feeling of the teachers that, if in-service programs would be a continuous exercise, they would not have problems with the use of TBLT, such that they would have pleasant experiences associated with the use of the strategy and even recommend it to other teachers. They are of the view that in the headteachers' meetings TBLT be talked about so that they may understand what these teachers of English are doing since it is not always easy for them to convince their bosses who are always accusing them. It for this reason that government in consultation with the schools' administrations or even the teachers of English themselves should meet on a regular basis to find out about progress, challenges, successes with the use of TBLT since it does not only benefit the learners in English language but equips them with skills to even face the world that the learners acquire as they work in pairs and groups.

The study also revealed that in most schools, there is a problem of lack of books, libraries and not being able to access the internet, which were some of the contributing factors to learners' negative attitude towards this teaching strategy. The teachers feel that it is impossible to learn if the above-mentioned teaching aids are not supplied by the school. It also came up that the learners' upbringing, is motivation on its own and plays a pivotal role in their involvement during TBLT. The lack of a good pre-school education exposure; and mother-tongue usage throughout the school day were other factors that were revealed.

The findings also pointed out to the fact that, there are other teaching methods which teachers of English language are not fully utilizing, yet learners enjoy them. These were in-school and class debates, watching videos or listening to educational radio programs as part of English Language lessons, which would definitely yield pleasant and positive experiences for the teachers. The mostly used teaching methods were group discussion, pair work, class and in-school debates.

5.3 Conclusions from the study

For any teaching strategy to have its aims and objectives achieved, it has to be in the hands of experts, who understand it and are prepared to defend it. Teachers, having undergone pre-service and in-service training, can successfully put this strategy to use, as long as these in-service programs continue and reach out to the headteachers as well. Although some aspects of TBLT may be a challenge to teachers, there are still chances for improvement in order to develop confidence in teachers to handle SGCSE English language through TBLT. From the findings teachers pointed out their frustration in learners not applying themselves such that they do not complete the given tasks and some being unable to interpret the questions such that the teachers felt there is something wrong with them. Not being able to administer TBLT well also implies a bit of non-confidence in teaching and assessing the higher order skills, which are vital to the SGCSE English Language syllabus. This was also an observation by Mazibuko (2006), who observes that teachers are not sufficiently equipped to meet the stimulating loads of learner-centred teaching strategies and that the education training program does not adequately avail to teachers to a range of methods for TBLT. It was also concluded from the study (document analysis – daily preparation books) that teachers still used traditional methods of teaching like the lecture, storytelling, note-taking, text book reading, an observation which was made in an earlier study by Mazibuko (2006). These have led to the unpleasant experiences since nowadays learners no longer have that kind of concentration span exhibited by learners of the yesteryears. So there is bound to be that kind of a rebellion from the learners, resulting in teaching having not so good experiences for teachers who end up only going to work because they want to be paid at the end of the month.

On a different note, the study also revealed that teachers sometimes used task-based strategies, like small group discussions and class presentations. Mazibuko (2006) has observed in his study that teachers use other methods other than the lecture, and it means that they are aware that learners need to actively part-take in the teaching and learning of English language. What was revealed by the study was that when it comes to the factors influencing the teachers' experiences of using TBLT, every stakeholder seems to have a hand in unearthing the external and internal factors. A good parent-teacher relationship; a good pre-school education are examples of external factors raised by the teachers which involve the learner, teacher, parent, the community and government. The study also revealed that there are some worthwhile strategies when it comes to the assessment part that are hardly used. These included projects and practical work. The most commonly used are classwork, quizzes and assignments. The findings also show no distinction in the way teachers teach both at junior and senior levels. This means that teachers of English at junior and senior secondary school levels still use traditional methods of teaching in their classrooms, a thing contrary to the demands of this new syllabus (SGCSE). The new syllabus was introduced to cater for the calibre of learners that are in the schools nowadays as opposed to those of long ago, thus the not-so-pleasant teachers' experiences that the teachers have alluded to.

On another note, teachers viewed the task-based strategies such as group work, in-school and class debates and class presentations as enjoyable and motivating to the teaching and learning of English language, since they encourage learner participation and expression of different ideas and opinions. It can also be concluded that teachers' experiences are prejudiced by various elements like demotivated learners, parents who are not willing to help their children with school work and the fact that workshops on TBLT are hardly organized.

The principles of task-based language learning mentioned in this paper are not a fixed laws or expectations that is, the researcher has sought to collect and pronounce the various operational likelihoods touching upon the design of task-based lessons, portraying an extensive number of sources. The researcher does not accept as true that methods that can be used by the teachers of English during TBLT should be since the teacher considers a number of factors when designing and assigning tasks to his or her learners who are obviously different from those in school A and school B and so forth. The choices relate to what Stenhouse (2005) has called "provisional specifications" that the teachers of English decide on their own which teaching to use basing on their understanding of what will work best with their learners. The teachers are the ones at the heart of the onion which stipulates the policy of teaching English language in schools. So if government and the other stakeholders want teachers to implement any new teaching approach, they need to listen and appreciate that different teachers at different locations in the country have different experiences with teaching of English language through TBLL. At least government should be seen to be addressing these factors that seem to influence TBLT since this is an approach that is

enjoyed by the learners and it avails quite a number of positives towards English language teaching and to the education process as a whole.

5.4 Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- There is need for continuous in-service programmes for English language teachers, where deliberations on how best TBLT can be applied in the learning of English language. This may curb the current incompetence in teachers in handling TBLT as suggested by the new SGCSE English language syllabus.
- Alternatively, there could be the availability of a ‘Skills manual’ for teachers to use as a reference for teaching and assessing task-based activities.
- The least schools can do is to make the teaching and learning environment conducive to both the teacher and the learner. This can be done by the school through the construction of a library that will be well resourced, with computers so as to access the internet so as to make communication easier and information on workshops reach the teachers timeously.
- Schools without an English language budget should introduce it, so that part of money can be used for buying visual aids like educational videos, and other materials that the learners can listen to. This money can also cater for the installation and payment of internet bills.
- Team-teaching within the department should be promoted, so that teachers can learn that it is possible to use TBLT in the daily teaching but vary the strategies.

5.5 Future research

- There is need for intensive research to find out the effects of the in-service programme on teachers’ confidence and competence in handling the SGCSE syllabus using TBLT.
- There is need for research that will come up with findings gathered from more stakeholders involved in the teaching and learning of English language on how best TBLT could be utilized to the advantage of the learner.
- Research to examine the effectiveness of the SGCSE program with TBLT of English is suggested.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LETTER TO GATEKEEPERS (HEADTEACHER)

Duze High School
P. O. Box 2446
Manzini
Swaziland

The Headteacher

.....
.....

Dear Si/Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

I am **Nomvuyo Phangisile Nhlengethwa, M.Ed** student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa. My topic of research is on **‘The teachers’ experiences with task-based learning on English Language teaching at secondary school level. A case of selected school in the Lubombo region; Swaziland’**.

I humbly seek permission to collect data at your school. I have questionnaires for teachers of English in all the levels at secondary school. In addition, I would also like to have a focus group discussion with these teachers as well as conducting document analysis of their daily preparation books.

The information gained will be highly confidential, and used for academic research only. If you have any questions, contact my supervisor **Prof. G.H. Kamwendo** at Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, at +27 710 852438 (c); +2731 2603459 (w) or email him on: kamwendo@ukzn.ac.za. I would highly appreciate your support.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Nomvuyo P. Nhlengethwa (Ms)

APPENDIX B: GATEKEEPERS’ LETTERS



SIGCAWENI HIGH SCHOOL

P. O. Box 1360
Manzini



2nd October 2014

The Ethical Clearance Officer

University of KwaZulu – Natal

Edgewood Campus

South- Africa

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH:

As head teacher of the above mentioned school, I hereby grant Nomvuyo Phangisile Nhlengetfwa; Student number: **214584116**; an M. Ed candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu- Natal, Edgewood Campus, South Africa to conduct her research in our school. Her study is titled **"The teachers' experiences with task- based learning on English Language at Secondary School level: A case of selected schools in the Lubombo Region in Swaziland.**

Should you require any additional information do not hesitate to contact us in the above-mentioned address.

Yours Sincerely

SIGCAWENI HIGH SCHOOL
P.O. Box 1360 Manzini
Phone No.: 25509266
ADMINISTRATION

Miss Siphasha Phumaphi Dlamini

HEADTEACHER

spdlamini701@gmail.com 25509266



GUNDVINI HIGH SCHOOL

P.O. Box 1399
Manzini
Swaziland

Tel: +268 2505 7309

03rd October, 2014

University of Kwazulu Natal
Edgewood Campus
South Africa

Dear Sir/ Madam


RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

As the above mentioned school's Head teacher, I hereby grant **Nomvuyo Phangisile Nhlengetfwa**; student number **214584116**; an **M. Ed** candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu Natal- Edgewood Campus, South Africa to conduct her research in my school.

Her study is entitled **"The teachers' experiences with tasked learning on English Language teaching at Secondary School level: A case of selected schools in the Lubombo region, Swaziland"**.

We wish you all the best in preparation of the research resumption date and we hope your stay with us will benefit the school.

With regards,


Mrs Mphetsile Mabuza
Headteacher





MHUBHE HIGH SCHOOL

P.O. Box 2890
MANZINI
SWAILAND
Tel: 2501-4650

02 October 2014

The Ethical Clearance Officer

University of KwaZulu Natal

Edgewood Campus

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT MHUBHE HIGH SCHOOL

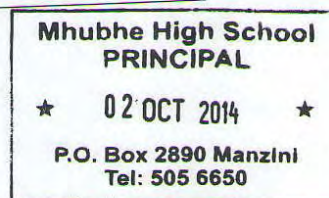
As Principal of the abovementioned school, I hereby grant **Nomvuyo Phangisile Nhlengetfwa** ; Student number: **214584116**, an M.ed candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa to conduct her research at our school. Her study is entitled, *"The teachers' experiences with task-based learning on English Language teaching at Secondary School level: A case study of selected schools in the Lubombo region, Swaziland."*

We sincerely hope that the data collected from our school shall give your student the necessary information to carry out her academic work effectively.

Yours sincerely

Agrippa Dlamini

(Principal)



MHUBHE HIGH SCHOOL | P.O. Box 2890 | MANZINI SWAZILAND | Tel: 2501-4650

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF DATA COLLECTION SCHEDULE TO THE HEADTEACHERS

Duze High School
P. O. Box 2446
Manzini
Swaziland

The Headteacher

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.....
.....

Dear Sir/Madam

DATA COLLECTION OF SCHEDULE

Thank you for allowing me to use teachers in your school for my research. The dates for administering the instrument (questionnaire) will be **November 1-4, 2014**; and **November 9** for the focus group discussion.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Nomvuyo P. Nhlengethwa (Ms)

APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Please answer the following questions (tick where applicable) and feel free to include any additional information you think may be useful in the study.

1. Biographical data.

(i) Teaching qualification: **STD** [] **B.Ed** [] **BA + PGCE** [] **M.Ed** [] **MA** []

(ii) Teaching

majors
.....

(iii) Level taught **Junior Level** [] **Junior Secondary** [] **Senior Secondary** []

(iv) Gender **Male** [] **Female** []

(v) Age **20-29** [] **30- 39** [] **40-49** [] **50-59** [] **60+** []

2. How long have you been teaching English Language at secondary school level?

3. How often do you use task-based language teaching (TBLT)? **Always** [] **Rarely** [] **Never** []
Explain why.

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4. What role do you play during TBLT?

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5. Where do you get the roles that you assign your learners during TBLT?

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6. What are the learners' reactions towards TBLT?

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7. What are some advantages of TBLT that you have gathered over the years?

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8. What challenges do you encounter during TBLT?

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9. How do you overcome these challenges?

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10. What are your views with regards to TBLT?

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11. In you teaching experience, what external factors influence TBLT?

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12. What internal factors influence TBLT?

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13. Which teaching methods influence
TBLT?

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14. Would you recommend TBLT to other teachers of English? **Yes** [☐] **No** [☐]. **Why?**

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15. How often do you attend English Language teachers' workshops? **Always** [☐] **Rarely** [☐] **Never** [☐]. **Why?**

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16. From your experience, do parents assist in any way with TBLT? Explain your answer.

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APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Duze High School
P. O. Box 2446
Manzini
Swaziland

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is **Nomvuyo Phangisile Nhlengethwa**. I am an **M. Ed** student studying at the **University of KwaZulu-Natal**, Edgewood campus, South Africa.

I am interested in learning about the teachers' experiences of teaching English language through task-based learning; teaching methods that teachers use during task-based learning of English Language and basically their views on task-based learning of English Language. My focus is on three (3) secondary schools in the Lubombo region, and your school is one of them. To gather information I would ask you to complete a questionnaire, and will also request to have a focus group with you and go through your daily lesson preparation book.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your input will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The focus group discussion may last for 15 – 30 minutes.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.

- The research aims at knowing the teaching strategies that you use during task-based learning of English Language, also your views and experiences on these strategies that you use during task-based learning.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to complete the questionnaire, be part of a focus group discussion, avail your daily preparation book, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the focus group discussion to be recorded by the following equipment:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

My contact details are:

Email: n.nhlengethwa@gmail.com

Cell: +268 760 2271

Landline: +268 234 410 40 (w)

+268 251 841 39 (h)

My supervisor is Professor G.H. Kamwendo, Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Supervisor's contacts

Phone no: +27 31 260 3459

Cell no: +27 710 852 438

Email: kamwendo@ukzn.ac.za

Research Office

HSSREC

Tel: + 27 31 260 8350

Fax: + 27 31 260 3093

Email: snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

Thank-you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I

(Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

If I am willing to be part of a focus group, I should indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not I am/not willing to allow the discussion to be recorded by the following equipment:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

.....

DATE

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APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Are you using task-based teaching strategies in your daily teaching?
2. Are the task-based teaching strategies in any way useful to you as a teacher?
3. How do learners react towards the use of task-based learning teaching strategies?
4. What do you as teachers rely on as you design task-based activities?
5. Is it a difficult task to design task-based activities?
6. From your experience, are teachers frequently using task-based learning strategies?
7. What are some of the factors influencing the teachers' experiences of teaching English Language through task-based learning?
8. Which teaching methods have influenced the teachers' experiences of task-based learning?

APPENDIX G – DOCUMENT ANALYSIS CHECK LIST

Questions	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
1. Which teaching methods does the teacher use?									
2. Which one is mostly used?									
3. How often in a week?									
4. Does the teacher give the learners any tasks to perform as a teaching method?									
5. If the response to 4. Is 'yes' what activity precedes the task in the classroom?									

Key: T – teacher

Appendix H: Ethical clearance



28 October 2014

Ms NP Nhlengethwa 214584116
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Nhlengethwa

Protocol reference number: HSS/1395/014M

Project title: The teachers' experiences with task-based learning on English Language teaching at secondary school level. A case of selected schools in the Lubombo region; Swaziland

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 20 October 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have 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 Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Professor Gregory Kamwendo
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele
Cc School Administrator: Mr Thoba Mthembu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbao@ukzn.ac.za / snvmanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Funding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville



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SWAZILAND

E-mail: s1kelelad@gmail.com

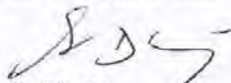
01 December 2015

**“THE TEACHERS’ EXPERIENCES WITH TASK-BASED TEACHING OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHING IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE LUBOMBO REGION OF
SWAZILAND”**

Editorial Comment/Report

I found that this is an already well-structured Master’s dissertation, also ably facilitated by fluent expression owing to the fairly well managed grammar and mechanics of the English language. The dissertation reads like a coherent whole too, as opposed to disparate chapter segments. That speaks to its well thought out organization. The ease of readability bespeaks deliberately elaborate signposting, making it an effortless task for the reader to progress from one section/subsection to the next, and from one chapter to the other. At every turn, the reader is in no doubt as to the writer’s intent. Overall, the dissertation adequately fulfils the purpose for which the research was initiated in the first place; i.e., determining the experiences of secondary school ESL teachers and the factors and strategies influencing those experiences as regards task-based teaching/learning.

By: Dr Sikelela M. Dlamini


Co-Director

THE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES WITH TASK-BASED LEARNING ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL. A CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE LUBOMBO REGION; SWAZILAND

ORIGINALITY REPORT

7 %	6 %	2 %	3 %
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PRIMARY SOURCES

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Appendix K: Transcription of focus group discussion

Transcript for School A

R: As teachers of English Language, may I know, are you using task-based language teaching strategies in your daily teaching?

Mr. Z: Yes, I do.

Silence

R: So I'm getting a response from one teacher who alludes to the fact that he uses this teaching strategy, what about others teachers?

Ms. X: Yes we do, *(Quickly changes)* I do, not daily, depending on what we are doing.

R: So it is not used on a daily bases. Somebody else?

Ms. Y: I use it, not every day.

R: I get it from this beautiful school that TBLT is used even though not daily but I hope that it will be revealed why it is used daily and for some not daily as we move on with the discussion as teachers have reasons for doing A, B, C and D.

R: If and when you have used TBLT, do you find these useful to you as a teacher in anyway?

Mr. Z: Yes, it is useful as it creates critical thinkers, empowers and besides, students learn from their colleagues, so somehow it is a useful learning strategy.

R: So I get it there are benefits-the teacher has unearthed some of the things he feels the strategy does.

Ms. Y: I can add that it also helps them to master whatever concept we are doing faster, they remember it and apply it where necessary.

R: So you would say it is beneficial in a way.

Ms. X: Yes.

R: So you are actually saying they master the concept faster than with a teacher-centered teaching strategy.

Ms. Y: Yes, it is a fact that from your equals you learn easier.

Ms. X: On top of what my colleagues have said, it helps me to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses and in that way it becomes easier for me to help them.

R: If I may get back to what the last speaker has said; through task-based language teaching, learner' strengths and weaknesses are unearthed, what can you say about that?

Mr. Z: I share the same sentiments with the last speaker. Learners are not empty vessels. I get to know their strengths and weaknesses though TBLT.

R: If you say learners are not empty vessels, are you actually saying that they become teachers of the other learners?

Mr. Z: I would say, kind of, since those who seem troubled learn from those who find the tasks easy.

R: So for a moment, if this strategy is used the teacher gets relieved of the traditional duties, that of teaching if you are saying the learners teach themselves.

Mr. Z: Not really but in a way. Like with the issue of tenses which a teacher might have taught over and over, the learners may teach each other.

Ms. Y: They even correct each other; laugh at each other as they say the tenses wrongly.

R: Still on that. You are saying they correct each other. Which language are they using?

Ms. Y: English (Emphatically).

R: So they are made to use English in the groups or pairs whenever they are given a task?

Ms. Y: Yes. If someone uses an incorrect tense, they correct one another there.

R: Is it easy for you as a teacher to manage, facilitate the learning in pairs or groups?

Mr. Z: Sometimes I use students as group leaders and they also facilitate especially those who seem to understand.

R: Why do you need the help of the students? I still want to find out why you seriously need the students to help you.

Ms. Y: Some groups may be too big which makes it difficult for the teacher to manage, so I instruct them as leaders on what to do.

R: So the strategy does not just become a teaching strategy but some kind of training for leaders and you obviously need some help. She has mentioned some groups being too big. So you think you need help with managing the groups?

Ms. Y: Yes. I cannot be in all the groups at the same time.

R: I heard somewhere someone complaining about the issue of numbers saying the classes themselves are just too big. What can you say?

Mr. Z: In actual fact, as a community school, the numbers are just too big. The issue of classroom management becomes somehow cumbersome.

R: May I get the rough estimate of these numbers? Actually it won't be rough estimate because you are people on the ground, the educators. How many pupils are we talking about?

Ms. X: 48.

Ms. Y: 50 sometimes close to 60.

R: Are these numbers something you would find across the board because here I know there is Form 1 to 5? So at junior level do you have something different from the senior level?

Ms. X: They are always the same throughout the school.

R: Then if you have a junior class, are you specializing at junior level?

Ms. Y: No, I teach at both levels.

R: So the issue of numbers is a problem at both senior and junior level?

All the teachers: (*Chorused*) yes, it is.

R: So you are saying in a way, through task-based language teaching, the issue of numbers is somehow minimized, the fact that they will be grouped rather than you talking to 60, you talk to a group.

Mr. Z: Ya. I would say that it is true. Instead of you standing in front of those 60, not even sure if everybody is picking what you are saying. So somehow this teaching strategy helps because you end up with fewer students which becomes a bit better because you can easily tell if someone is struggling or not.

Ms Y: When I use this method, all the students are actively involved unlike when you are talking to the whole class and you will find that the ones at the back are not concentrating but when using this method, most of the students will be participating because the group leader will make sure that everybody is participating.

R: Thank-you for those responses. We move on to another question now. When you have made it clear to the students that today you will be learning through task-based language teaching, what is their reaction towards this teaching strategy?

Mr Z: Let me just say the reactions are mixed, some of the students are comfortable with TBLT, they feel they are in control, they are comfortable with TBLT. I have alluded to the fact that some are being trained to be future leaders so they actually enjoy: while on the other hand some are not comfortable as some are used to the lecture method, especially those from primary level. They feel that the teacher should be the one coming up with information. If they are to find things for themselves they feel they are not learning.

R: So you are saying there are mixed reactions as some feel that the teacher should be the one talking to them all the time. They feel they have been taught if a teacher is standing in front of them. Now you are changing that belief that they are the authority. Are you talking from experience or just painting the primary school teachers.

Mr X: Let me just make this clear. I'm a product of this teaching strategy and even before coming here I started there, so it is not like that ended during our school days, it is still

R: so you are actually saying, it promotes the behavior of students being timid?

Mr Z: Ya; in a way.

R: I don't know if it is true that if you are not used to voicing out, it could be your feelings and thoughts, it becomes difficult to write.

Mr X: Definitely! If you look at students from our feeder primary schools, you can tell where they came from because they portray a very different behavior that this one is coming from a school I won't mention.

R: If this is giving you a problem in teaching English Language at this level, are there any measures, are there any strategies or whatever means of talking to the people who are passing to you these learners,

more especially because you are even saying that you know that this one behaving like this is from school G. Do you have a way of talking to these teachers who pass the learners to you?

All the data sources giggling a bit.

Ms. Y: It's a bit difficult, actually they may appear inferior. They may think you are undermining them. It's not easy.

Mr. X: It's like we don't have the yardstick or the instrument to do that. We've tried to ask our headteacher here to talk to his colleague from the primary school or the other primary schools but it's like no solution is forth coming. Try we have but it has not born any fruits for us because the problem is still there.

R: So you want to tell me there are no other means you are trying to somehow alleviate the problem. Anyway let me not put you on the spot; let us move to another question.

R: If you decide that on such and such a day you are going to use this strategy TBLT-what do you rely on as you design these tasks-based activities as teachers?

Ms. X: Sometimes we use the text books because there are prescribed books with these tasks.

R: Oh! Text books that they have themselves?

Ms. X: Yes.

R: So the text book is mainly one source of these tasks that you end up giving to them?

All the three data sources chorused - Yes

Mr. Z: In as much as I use the recommended text books, I also source other material from other sources like the internet and television. So I can't really say I over rely on the text book. I pick what will fascinate my students, something that will generate interest. I also find a newspaper then design a task-based learning activity. I kind of expose them to a number of things.

R: Okay. Then we move on to the one. Then from your experience whether as a student or a teacher-would you say teachers are frequently using TBLT in their teaching of English Language. Your interaction with teachers at your school because I believe you are not the only teachers of English here, there are others. From neighboring schools or even in the country as a whole, are there teachers of English using TBLT in their teaching?

Mr. Z: In as much as teachers are using TBLT but I would not say they use it frequently and from our informal discussions it came out that this kind of strategy has some challenges. They talk about the issue of time, students being lazy; they can't execute their tasks, some disturbing others whilst working in their groups. There are quite a number of factors that teachers cite as those that hinder the use of TBLT.

R: So it is not a so popular strategy with the teachers from what I get.

Ms. Y: Ya! But with the introduction of this new syllabus, SGCE, it kind of pushes teachers to this strategy. Our new syllabus kind of forces us because some of the lessons would require students to discuss before responding to what the teacher has asked.

R: So you are actually saying the new syllabus kind of pushes teachers towards the use of this strategy even if the teacher was not keen enough to use this strategy?

Ms. Y: Ya!

R: So teachers are not happy about this. Someone was telling me that it kind of remove the authority from the teacher, as it has always been known that when a teacher comes to class, the students are going to pay attention to him and this particular teacher was telling me that they want to be in control all the time.

Ms. Y: But as a teacher you will always make sure that there is order in the group, you are still in control.

Ms. X: Ya! At times the learners come up with points which you may find that the teacher has not thought about, then the teacher will not be at ease.

R: Meaning that they forget that they don't know everything. There is nobody who knows everything.

Mr. Z: The issue of exposure comes into the fore here. When you keep on giving students tasks that they don't understand, you find that some teacher delays them as some teachers are concerned about finishing the syllabus as it is very long. Then it becomes a problem when teachers are concerned about the syllabus. The issue of exposure is very serious.

R: So you feel students from this end are not exposed to quite a lot as compared to learners from somewhere else.

Mr. Z: This is as issue of urban versus rural. Those teachers who are in town are most likely to use this strategy as compared to those who are not.