

An analysis of boys' and teachers' experiences in a Grade 6 writing programme, using a positioning perspective

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ABSTRACT

Existing research shows that in South Africa there are reasons for concern regarding the achievements of a large proportion of Grade 6 learners in language learning. The impact of this poor language achievement affects their success rates across learning areas and in higher grades. It has also been found that historically, Grade 6 boys have achieved, and continue to achieve, lower results than their female peers in national language assessments. However, boys' language learning in the Intermediate Phase in South African schools is surprisingly under-researched, particularly their writing skills development. This study contributes to understanding Grade 6 boys' writing development by providing descriptions of two English Home Language classroom contexts, in two different schools, in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The study aimed to

1. analyse the strategies, perceptions, challenges and experiences of two Grade 6 teachers' and their male learners' teaching and learning of writing in English Home Language;
2. provide a holistic account of the development of the boys' writing skills, presented in terms of the process genre approach to writing, theories of teacher knowledge and positioning theory;
3. determine the role that formative assessment plays during the stages of the writing cycle; and
4. draw from the findings suggestions for further study and improved classroom practice.

To this end, in each school, a cycle of the Grade 6 writing programme, as prescribed by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011a), was analysed. The experiences, perceptions and challenges of the two participating teachers and their male learners were analysed using exploratory and comparative case study approaches. This interpretative, qualitative, theory-seeking case study was bounded by time (2015), space (Grade 6 classrooms in two mainstream schools in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) and theme (how boys and their teachers experience and perceive the learning and teaching of writing and their positions and challenges during these writing lessons). Data were gathered from classroom observations, teacher interviews, activity-based questionnaires and the boys' written submissions with their teachers' feedback. Classroom and interview data were analysed from the perspective of positioning theory and the process genre approach to writing, and document analysis was conducted on learners' written submissions. Although these teachers had similar schooling backgrounds and training and followed the same policy statement (the CAPS), it was found that their scaffolding approaches within the stages of the writing cycle differed significantly. This

thesis argues that there are significant links among three key elements: teacher knowledge, teachers' and learners' positioning in the writing process, and the quality of the final written product.

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DECLARATIONS

I, Nazarana Mather, declare that

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As the candidate's supervisor I agree to the submission of this thesis.

Signed: 
Prof Peter Neville Rule, Supervisor

As the candidate's supervisor I agree to the submission of this thesis.


Signed: 
Prof Ayub Sheik, Supervisor

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ANA	Annual National Assessments
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
C2005	Curriculum 2005 (2000–2002)
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FAL	First Additional Language
HL	Home Language
IP	Intermediate Phase
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal, one of the nine provinces of South Africa
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching i.e. Medium of Instruction
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SA	South Africa
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In his budget speech for 2017, Minister of Finance Pravin Gordhan listed education as the top of the five priorities for Government to focus on with a substantial portion of the national budget being allocated to education. However, Gordhan (2017) stated that despite the large budget allocated to education, the performance of SA children in literacy and numeracy is reason for concern as SA children have performed poorly compared with their other African counterparts in international tests. To this end, in this thesis, I focus on the development of learners' literacy skills in the subject English Home Language¹. In particular, my study analyses how Grade 6 boys and their teachers perceive and experience the writing programme prescribed by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)² (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011a), the strategies used for writing development, and the challenges encountered during their writing lessons.

1.2 Context of the study

1.2.1 The current education landscape in South Africa

South African education remains in crisis. Although there has been some improvement in the results, SA learners remain the poorest in the class when compared with their international counterparts in literacy assessments. For example, according to the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2006, as cited in Long & Zimmerman, 2008), SA Grade 4 and 5 learners achieved the lowest mean performance scores in comparison with 39 other participating countries. Further to this Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman (2012) contend that SA learners were placed at the bottom of the barrel in the 2011 PIRLS out of 49 countries, and 58% of the Grade 4 and 5 learners could not read for meaning in any language.

The situation declined in the 2016 PIRLS. Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena

¹ The level at which the language is taught. Learners can choose to learn one language at Home Language level and a second language at the First Additional Language level. Most schools offer English at HL level and the learners' mother tongue at FAL level.

² Revised education policy document implemented by SA teachers.

and Palane (2017, n.p.) state the following based on the 2016 PIRLS results:

- 8 of 10 SA children cannot read and 78% of SA Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any language
- SA learners scored last in reading of the 50 participating countries
- SA learners fall far behind other countries in reading. While 78% of SA Grade 4 learners cannot read, in America this is only 4% and in England only 3%.
- There is no evidence of improvement between 2011 and 2016.
- The SA gender gap in reading is the second highest in the world. Girls scored much higher than boys in reading across the board. In Grade 4 girls are a full year of learning ahead of boys. 84% of SA boys did not reach the low benchmark category.
- The gap between boys and girls is also growing over time and was larger than 2011. The average Grade 4 girl in SA scored 341 points in 2011 and 347 points in 2016. On the other hand, the average Grade 4 boy in SA scored 307 points in 2011 and 295 points in 2016.
- Within SA, KZN (the province in which this study was conducted) came 5th out of the 9 provinces, scoring 61 points lower than the highest performing province: Western Cape, and 51 points higher than the lowest performing province: Limpopo.

Assessments conducted within SA suggest that this poor ranking is credible. The Annual National Assessments (ANA) are conducted annually by SA's Department of Basic Education to determine the standard at which Grade 3, 6 and 9 learners are performing in First Additional Language, Home Language and Maths. In the Annual National Assessment (ANA) tests of 2012 in KwaZulu-Natal, Grade 6 learners achieved an average of 43% in Home Language with only 39% of the learners who wrote obtaining above 50% (DBE 2012). 2013 saw an improved 59% average and 68% of the learners achieving higher than 50% (DBE 2013). In all provinces in SA, in 2012 and 2013 girls achieved higher scores than the boys.

Not only is the education crisis evident in these results, but also there exists the predominant issues of infrastructural shortages and poor conditions in schools, overcrowded classrooms and few reading materials (Verbeek, 2012) and high dropout rates. Firstly, it was recently reported that a rural high school in KZN collapsed during a storm, due to its poor construction, so learners had to resort to “learning under a tree” (Wicks, 2017). Secondly, Savides (2016) reports that teachers took to the streets to protest the high teacher: learner ratios with many schools in the townships having a 1:70 teacher: learner ratio (Savides, 2016).

To exacerbate the problem in these poorly constructed, overcrowded classrooms, there is a shortage of reading and learning support materials. According to Read (2017) teachers reported that the shortage of learning and teaching material had an influence on learning with many schools having no classroom or school libraries. Lastly, if one considers SA schools’ throughput rates, 44.6% learners dropped out of school before reaching Grade 12 (Businessstech, 2017) which may be attributed to learners not passing so not returning to school, no adults at home, or a shortage of money, which impacts on uniforms, transport, job opportunities and nutrition (Rademeyer, 2017). However, Businessstech (2017) reports speculation that learners may have been ‘culled’ prior to the writing of the 2016 Grade 12 exams to inflate the Grade 12 pass rate as a political move to show an improvement in these results under ANC (ruling party in SA since the fall of apartheid in 1994) governance. Although it has been 23 years since the fall of apartheid, many of the problems facing SA’s education system still have their roots in apartheid.

1.2.2 A brief history of education in SA prior to 1994

During apartheid, black South African learners were subjected to an education policy, known as Bantu Education, designed to enforce racially separate schools and to restrict black learners to what the apartheid government believed would be relevant for their roles in life (Mgqwashu, 2006). The Bantu Education Act of 1953 ensured that white learners received a better education than their black counterparts, who were, according to Hendrik Verwoerd, (the then Minister of Education and future prime minister, “the architect of apartheid”, and at that time in charge of education), to be educated only enough to be “hewers of wood and drawers of water” (Joyce, 1999). Thus, Bantu Education was aimed to direct non-white (especially black) youth to the

unskilled labour markets (Byrnes, 1996). It was the belief of the apartheid government that by limiting black people's education, their access to knowledge would be limited and thus also their power within the country. In addition to black people living in overcrowded, impoverished conditions, black schools were afforded little funding and attention, so they lacked valuable resources like textbooks and sporting equipment and were often overcrowded (Sachs, 2002). Furthermore, Davids (2009) states that an uneven landscape of teacher development was created by Bantu Education, as it did not make quality education accessible to all. Many black teachers started teaching even though they had not completed the highest grade of secondary school. If educators are not adequately trained and developed, the overall quality of education will be adversely affected (Davids, 2009).

According to Nkondo (n.d.), prior to 1955, education syllabuses were the same for all racial groups. However, in 1948, the Nationalist Government came into power and it was decided that each racial group ought to have their own education system. Mother tongue was the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in black primary schools for all subjects except English and Afrikaans (Nkondo, n.d.). This placed black learners at a disadvantage because they wrote the same examination in Standard 10 (Grade 12) as their white counterparts, who had received instruction in English or Afrikaans (Nkondo, n.d.). Nkondo (n.d.) states that for the primary years of their education, black learners received instruction in languages that did not prepare them for high school and was unsuited for their adult needs.

In the late 1960s expenditure on Bantu Education increased because the apartheid government saw the need for a trained African labour force. Thus, more black children attended school, even though the quality of the education and resources was inferior. Pupil to teacher ratios went up from 46:1 in 1955 to 58:1 in 1967 throughout the country. The overcrowded classrooms also lacked teachers, and many of those who did teach were under-qualified. In 1961, only 10% of black teachers held a matriculation certificate, which meant that black education was essentially retrogressing, with some teachers being less qualified than their students (SAHO, 2012).

It was in the context of those under-resourced, inferior conditions that language

learning took place in black schools during apartheid. English and Afrikaans were each allotted four and a half hours per week, and Home Language (which was the learners' mother tongue) three and a half hours (Nkondo, n.d.). In a study conducted by Mather (2012), the participants, who had all attended school during the era of Bantu Education, stated that they were taught reading from textbooks and poems and were taught to write formal letters to apply for a place in a new school. They were limited in the genres they were exposed to and the skills that they were taught. Black learners were limited to only what was necessary for menial labour, so they were taught from textbooks, and read poems, magazines and newspapers and were taught to write only a few texts, including job application letters (Mather, 2012). Because the product approach to teaching writing is the more traditional one, it was probably used by teachers during Bantu Education to develop their learners' writing skills. Therefore, learners would have to mimic or imitate a model text, an approach which was essentially about linguistic knowledge, with attention given to appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices. During this time, which Nordin and Mohammad (2006) coined the term "audiolingualism era", writing was a supporting skill that focused on sentence structure as a support for the grammar class in English second language classes. The product approach was used to foreground syntax and form with an emphasis on rhetorical drills (Nordin & Mohammad, 2006), with little emphasis on communication and meaning.

1.2.3 Government interventions since 1994

At present, schools are divided into Primary and High schools. Primary schools accommodate Grade RR to Grade 7 learners. Within the Primary school there are 3 phases: Grades RR to Grade 3 is called the Foundation Phase (FP), Grades 4 to 6 is the Intermediate Phase (IP) and Grade 7 to 9 is the Senior Phase. However, learners go to High School to complete Grades 8 to 12.

After the fall of apartheid in 1994, the apartheid school system that was segregated by race was replaced and access to schooling was expanded. Schools that were formerly reserved for Indian, Coloured and Black learners became public schools which houses learners of all races. In theory, Model C schools formerly reserved for whites (now called ex-Model C schools) had to open their doors to learners of all race but the reality was that these schools charged fees that separated learners not by race but by financial privilege. The ex-Model C schools boast extensive fields for

sport, swimming pools, well-resourced media centres and libraries and lower teacher: learner ratios, while many schools in the townships remain categorised by poor construction, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate resources and teachers who need development. However, it cannot be concluded that lack of finance is the reason for the malaise. According to The Economist (2017) in SA public spending on education is 6.4% of GDP whereas the average share in EU countries is 4.8%. A lack of accountability and the abysmal quality of most teachers are more likely the cause of the continuing education crisis in SA (The Economist, 2017).

In addition to the increase in money allocated to education, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has implemented policies and interventions in an attempt to improve the quality of education learners are receiving in the classroom. In 1996 the *Lifelong Learning through a National Curriculum Framework* document was the first major curriculum statement of a democratic South Africa. In October 1997, the Statement of the National Curriculum for Grades R–9 was published, and in December 1998, The Assessment Policy in the General Education and Training band for Grade R–9 was introduced. Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was also introduced into schools in 1998 and, after being reviewed in 2000, this curriculum was strengthened by streamlining its design features and simplifying its language. C2005 was a form of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) (Chisholm, 2003). It was introduced in 1997 in an effort to overcome curricular divisions of the apartheid era (DBE, 2011).

OBE failed dismally in South Africa. Olivier (2009) states that while the intentions behind OBE were noble, it did not work because educators were overworked, overloaded by elaborate lesson preparation, recording, marking and giving constant feedback. Moreover, OBE expected detailed, precise lesson plans that were divided into phases, starting with the introduction to the lesson and ending with the way in which the educator would conclude the lesson. Olivier (2009) critiques this because of the human element. He argues that things cannot always follow a plan to the letter and room must be allowed for variations. Other criticisms of C2005 and OBE were that it was a skewed curriculum structure and design and there was no alignment between curriculum and assessment policy. Since this curriculum was introduced immediately after the fall of apartheid, many teachers were still unqualified or under-qualified to teach, let alone competent enough to develop learning programmes with the

appropriate materials. Another point is that, based on the inferior education that learners had received under Bantu Education, a curriculum in primary school that focused on reading, writing and thinking was what was needed at that time. Furthermore, many schools lacked the resources that were required to make the creative, innovative lesson plans work, and the numbers in many classrooms were too high for teachers to control group work activities and find time to mark and provide constant, meaningful feedback for the learners to build on (Chisholm, 2003).

Due to the failures of C2005 and OBE in South Africa, education policy was reviewed in 2000. The first curriculum revision was known as the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (Department of Education (DoE), 2002) for Grades R–9 and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE, 2002) for Grades 10–12 (DBE, 2011a, p.3). The six learning outcomes stipulated in the HL RNCS policy document were: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing, Thinking and Reasoning, and Language Structure and Use. Under each learning outcome, assessment standards which guided the teacher in the specific skills that needed to be taught, were provided.

Although the RNCS was clearer and more explicit than OBE, teachers found its implementation problematic and experienced difficulties with understanding what they were supposed to do, when to do it and how much time to allocate. Thus, in 2009 there was another policy change, which gave rise to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12. This new statement replaced the RNCS (Grades R–9) and the NCS (Grades 10–12) and seeks not only to build on the RNCS, but also to update it and to provide a clearer, more detailed plan of what is to be taught and learnt each term (DBE, 2011a, p.3). It represents a policy statement for teaching and learning in South Africa and has three components:

1. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for all subjects listed in this document;
2. National Policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12;
3. National Protocol for Assessment Grades R–12 (DBE, 2011a, p.3).

Each subject has its own policy statement which lists the breakdown of hours that need to be spent on the different skills, content and subskills that need to be taught. In addition to this, weekly lesson plans are provided for each term as well as the

structure of formative and summative assessments per term. In this way, the expectation is that all schools should be covering the same content at any given time of the year as all teachers will be following the same lesson plans. In reality this is not the case as learners learn at different paces and schools have different extra-curricular calendars.

Another measure taken by the DBE to improve Maths and English results was the design and distribution of workbooks for Grade 1-6 learners, which teachers are required to complete alongside the CAPS content. However, this could place teachers under a huge amount of pressure for time. The DBE also developed 'Action Plan to 2019' to "inspire, inform and guide the many men and women working for a better basic education in South Africa" (DBE, 2015b, p.2). This plan has 30 goals that the DBE hopes to achieve by 2030. These goals include improving learners' competence in language and maths, improving infrastructure, and access to Early Childhood Development, Further Education Training and e-Education. It also plans to use teachers effectively, avoid large classes and prevent dropouts at least before the age of fifteen. The second goal states, "Increase the number of learners in Grade 6 who, by the end of the year, have mastered the minimum language and mathematics competencies for Grade 6" and goal 7 states: "Improve the average performance of Grade 6 learners in languages" (DBE, 2015b, p.3), thus highlighting the importance of this year of schooling.

1.4 Rationale of the study

This study seeks to further explore the challenges in the SA education system, specifically to address boys' writing skills in the Intermediate Phase (IP). Assessments conducted nationally and internationally have revealed that South African boys are achieving lower results than their female counterparts in literacy. According to the 2014 ANA results, girls performed better than boys in SA's nine provinces, in all three grades and subjects (DBE, 2014). Although the ANA report highlights the differences in achievement between boys and girls, it does not suggest reasons for, nor does it provide strategies to help improve these boys' lower performance.

In the PIRLS reports compiled by Howie et al. (2012) on the achievement of SA learners in literacy, it was found that boys from all the participating countries achieved lower results than girls in this international test as well, but this report also only

provides the differences in achievement. It is important to note that this report found that SA learners achieved the lowest results in literacy of the 49 participating countries. The 2016 PIRLS report also evidences a gender gap in SA (Howie et al, 2017) and provides possible reasons for the underachievement of SA learners (such as classroom contextual factors and the home environment). This report also provides recommendations for improvement such as: reducing teacher: learner ratios, strengthening teacher training of pedagogical and content knowledge, increasing the proportion of time spent on reading and parental involvement, targeting interventions for high-risk populations including boys, increasing resources such as school and classroom libraries and reducing learner and teacher absenteeism (Howie et al, 2017, p.12). Attention to the plight of boys in SA is finally gaining momentum because, although boys have been performing more poorly than girls for a number of years, it has only been commented on following the 2016 PIRLS assessment. Howie et al (2017) provide a recommendation to address the gender gap but do not detail the type of target interventions required for boys. They also do not provide reasons for the gap. A further omission in this report is the need to afford writing instruction more attention as writing is an essential tool for improving reading (Graham & Herbert, 2010). (The link between reading and writing is further detailed in Chapter 2). Following the findings of the 2016 PIRLS report, this study could be useful for providing insight into boys' learning and writing development in SA.

National and international research have found the same trend with regards to boys' performance in literacy. Such studies conducted in Australia (Pavy, 2006), Seychelles (Geisler & Pardiwalla, 2009), France (Pritchard, 1987), Germany (Maubach & Morgan, 2001) and South Africa (Gxilise, 1993; Zuze & Reddy, 2013) have all concluded that girls achieve better results in language than boys. These studies indicate that boys have been achieving lower results than girls in language learning for many years. It is thus surprising that boys' language learning has not been given more attention in SA. SA boys have the double disadvantage of possibly receiving instruction from teachers who do not understand their learning needs and many boys are learning English at Home Language level, yet their mother tongue is not English.

Another area of research that has not been prominent in SA is the development of learners' writing skills. The focus of both the ANA and PIRLS reports is on monitoring

learners' progress in reading (Moloi & Chetty, 2010), yet according to Read (2017) learners who write the ANA performed adequately in multiple-choice tasks but performed poorly in tasks that required them to produce written responses. Learners' writing ability is a matter of concern internationally as learners are not writing at the required level, but there is not much data available on writing instruction in elementary and middle school (Parr & Jesson, 2015). Gadd and Parr (2017) state that in both practice and in research, writing remains the "neglected R" of literacy. In SA primary schools, reading rather than writing has been a dominant research focus possibly because reading is associated with literacy and is viewed as the primary medium for learning (Pretorius, 2002; Pretorius & Matchet, 2004). However, writing is also a skill that is central for all learning, as learners need to write answers to questions, essays and other types of texts to demonstrate their understanding of concepts in all subjects. Adding to this, writing supports reading skills (Graham, Harris & Herbert, 2011) and with the increase in popularity of social networking, forms an important part of learners' lives outside school (Gadd & Parr, 2017). Furthermore, Tse and Hui (2015) contend that, as writing is needed for people to communicate and clarify their own thinking and understanding, writing instruction is an especially important part of language teaching.

One SA study on teaching writing at primary school level, conducted by Navsaria, Pascoe and Kathard (2011) in the Western Cape, found that learners are not writing at the required level, so teachers are concerned about the written language development of their learners as writing is integral to all learning. Other studies which focussed learners' writing development in SA have confirmed that learners' writing instruction and development is reason for concern and have suggested that writing be given more attention (Hoadley, 2010; National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU), 2012; Sailors, Hoffman & Mathee, 2007). The focus of the studies mentioned here was on the performance of learners during writing instruction (Navsaria et al, 2011; Sailors et al, 2007) and the beliefs, practices and attitudes of teachers during writing lessons (Julius, 2013) and none specifically on SA boys. Adding to this, no SA research could be sourced that focussed on teacher knowledge and positioning in the teaching of primary school writing.

Much research foregrounded in SA has foundations in learners' reading development, particularly in the Foundation Phase, which is Grades R-3 (Pretorius & Matchet, 2004;

Fleisch, 2008) with little emphasis on the teaching of writing, particularly in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6). The manner in which the learners' skills are extended in the IP is equally important as it prepares them to cope with the level of the content in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9) and as learners progress through the Grades, their ability to demonstrate their learning in written form increases (Gadd & Parr, 2017).

The purpose of my study was to contribute to SA literature regarding IP boys' writing development by gaining insight into boys' development of this vital language skill, that is not only connected to other language skills such as listening, reading and speaking, but also to all other learning in school. Thus, my intention was to describe the approaches that the participating teachers took to scaffold the boys' writing, how the boys responded to those approaches, and the role that formative assessment played in the stages of the writing cycle. My study analysed how Grade 6 boys and their teachers perceived and experienced the affordances of the writing programme prescribed by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a) and the challenges that they encountered during their writing lessons. This study could also contribute to international literature on teaching and learning writing in English Second Language (ESL) learning to eleven to twelve-year old boys. Whilst there is much literature on ESL writing development and boys' writing development, a gap exists pertaining to eleven to twelve-year-old ESL boys' writing development.

In this dissertation my aims are to:

1. analyse the strategies, perceptions, challenges and experiences of two Grade 6 teachers' and their male learners' teaching and learning of writing in English Home Language;
2. provide a holistic account of the development of the boys' writing skills, presented in terms of the process genre approach to writing, theories of teacher knowledge and positioning theory;
3. determine the role that formative assessment plays during the stages of the writing cycle; and
4. draw from the findings suggestions for further study and improved classroom practice.

1.5 Key Research Questions

1. How do teachers and boys perceive the affordances of the writing cycle?
2. Why do they perceive the affordances of the writing cycle the way they do?
3. How do teachers develop their learners' writing skills?
4. Why do they develop their learners' writing skills the way they do?
5. How do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle, if at all?
6. Why do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle the way they do?

1.6 Researcher positionality

My position in this study is informed by my experiences as a teacher of writing and researcher. Whilst completing my Honours in Education in 2010, I undertook a study for the Independent Research module; which explored Grade 7 boys' and girls' performance in my English HL classroom, possible causes for their performance and suggestions to improve that performance. I undertook this study because I was growing concerned by the fact that the boys in my classes each year were seemingly lagging the girls, not only in English HL but in the other subjects that I taught such as Life Orientation and Social Science.

It must be noted that although I was an English HL teacher, all my learners were mother tongue isiZulu speakers. The level at which each language is taught depends on the individual school's language policy. This policy will indicate the LOLT (language of learning and teaching), HL and FAL that are offered by the school. In KZN, most schools offer the languages isiZulu, English or Afrikaans. For example, a school may choose English as their LOLT and HL and Afrikaans as their FAL. Another school may choose isiZulu as the LOLT from Grades R–3 and English from Grades 4–7, with isiZulu as the HL and English as the FAL. The reality of this situation is that many learners in South Africa learn in English and learn English at HL level, whereas their mother tongue is taught at FAL level.

During the data analysis stage of my Independent Research, I found that the girls in my class outperformed the boys and during a discussion with the Natural Science teacher, unveiled that the same was true for his subject. He told me about a female

learner who was surpassing his expectations and those of the curriculum. I asked the learner to show me her book, and amongst worksheets and neatly written notes an essay stood out. Perhaps it was the red 95% that caught my eye. Upon closer inspection of the essay, I noticed that the content of her essay was lacking, but what was extremely impressive was the fact that the essay was a perfectly structured academic essay. I compared this to one written by a male learner who scored 62%. His spelling was poor, there were many grammatical and punctuation errors and his essay was not very well structured, but his content had a bit more depth than hers did.

I had been a teacher of IP English HL to second language learners for several years, but my research led me to see the practical connection between language proficiency and academic performance. If learners were able to express themselves proficiently in the language of instruction, the chance of them succeeding academically was greater. As I began furthering my studies, I started learning more about research and how it could be used to improve my practice, so I began conducting informal action research projects in my classrooms.

As my identity as a researcher grew, I began conducting research in classrooms other than my own. I wanted to research boys and writing instruction in other classrooms to analyse, in greater detail, the occurrences that I observed in my own classrooms. I believe that research has the potential to make the following contributions to the field of study of teaching and learning writing: this research will detail what is happening in these two Grade 6 writing classrooms; the opportunity will be provided to view theories of writing development in SA classrooms where the vast majority of learners are learning in an additional language; provide an understanding of how positioning theory can be used to better understand how teaching and learning takes place in the writing classroom; and allow for the consideration of boys and teacher development in terms of writing instruction.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the literature that informed the thinking behind exploring the teaching and learning of boys' writing experiences and challenges, and the assessment techniques. Thus, theoretical models and dominant approaches to the

teaching of writing, strategies for scaffolding writing, issues surrounding teaching and assessing learners' writing, teaching writing in the SA context and teaching boys will be discussed.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, the methodological framework within which the research was conducted is explained. The research style, paradigm and type of approach that was selected are discussed. In addition, the data collection methods and techniques, sampling, analysis and interpretation of the data, reliability and validity, ethical considerations and the limitations of the study are outlined. In addition to this, a rationale for the design of the activity-based questionnaire, which was used as a creative, "boy-friendly" method of collecting data to gain insight into how the Grade 6 boys experienced a cycle of the writing process is included in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

The participants' responses during the interviews and the observation data are discussed in this chapter. The major themes and trends that emerged from the experiences of the participants regarding their learning, teaching and assessment of writing are also explored in this chapter. These main themes and trends are examined in relation to the key research questions and literature review and through the lens of the theoretical frameworks.

Chapter 5: Positioning in two writing classrooms

Using positioning theory as a lens through which to analyse the data is the focus of this chapter. The findings that are presented in this chapter are based specifically on the classroom observations done to explore the positions adopted by the teachers and boys during the writing process.

Chapter 6: Linking pedagogy, positioning and the written product

The boys' written submissions and their teachers' marking and feedback are analysed in this chapter. Thus, an in-depth analysis and the findings from the boys' written submissions and their teachers' feedback are provided by examining their ability to apply the stages of the process approach and their positioning when writing and completing a piece of writing following the structures and conventions of the genre

selected by their teacher. The chapter also attends to the teachers' assessment of the boys' writing.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this last chapter, conclusions that are drawn from the findings are presented and suggestions for future research and classroom practice are made. This chapter is followed by the appendices and references.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyse how Grade 6 boys and their teachers perceived and experienced their writing lessons, and the challenges that they experienced during teaching and learning writing. Briefly, the study phenomenon at the research site is as follows: Firstly, SA learners are not on par with their international counterparts with regards to their literacy levels (Howie et al, 2017). Secondly, writing constitutes an important component of literacy, as it is a skill that is essential for communication, reading development, and is a tool for developing learners' thinking skills. Thirdly, highlighted in the 2016 PIRLS report was that the gender gap in SA was the second highest in the world (Howie et al, 2017). However, there is little research on writing instruction in South African schools (Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014) and more research into SA boys' learning is required. Thus, this study seeks to contribute to the field of literature in SA pertaining to Grade 6 boys' writing development. In this chapter, I review literature pertaining to writing for learning by discussing what constitutes writing, understanding writing as a socially situated practice and the dominant approaches to writing development. Also included is a review of writing in the South African context, issues pertinent to teaching and learning writing, boys and language learning, and boys and writing development.

2.2 Writing for learning

2.2.1 Writing

This study analysed the way the research participants (a sample of Grade 6 boys) perceived and experienced the Writing and Presenting skill, as described in the Home Language (HL) Intermediate Phase (IP) (Grades 4–6) Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). This Writing and Presenting skill is explained in the HL IP CAPS as follows:

Writing is a powerful instrument of communication that allows learners to construct and communicate thoughts and ideas coherently. Frequent writing practice across a variety of contexts, tasks and subjects enables

learners to communicate functionally and creatively.... Writing is important because it forces learners to think about grammar and spelling.... Learners will learn to write a range of creative and informational texts.... They will also employ the writing process to produce well organised, grammatically correct writing texts.

(DBE, 2011a, p.11)

As can be seen, learners who are learning English at the HL level in the IP are expected to produce different types of texts, for different purposes using the process approach to writing. Such writing is important for spelling, grammar development and accuracy. According to Blease and Condy (2015, p.2) writing is a “means to gain or share understanding by using print to contribute ideas, to apply knowledge and skills, as well as record important information”. Hyland (2007) goes on to state that writing is based on expectations, so the writer needs to anticipate what the reader expects based on other similar texts, to increase the reader’s understanding of the text. The overall purpose of writing is to communicate ideas and shapes how we learn, reason and think (Blease & Condy, 2015). Spoken language provides a critical foundation for the development of reading and written language, and this relationship is reciprocal (Bishop & Clarkson, 2003; Grabe, 2003). Written language, together with spoken language and reading, contributes to the process of literacy (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2002). This emphasises the significance of developing learners’ writing skills.

Dornbrack and Dixon (2014) contend that people are spending more and more time writing in learning situations. As writing forms a major part of higher education, success in higher education is dependent on the student’s ability to write (Atkinson, 2011; Graham et al, 2011; Drennan, 2017) so if learners can write well, the likelihood of them breaking free from the stigma of illiteracy and poverty increases (Blease & Condy, 2015). Written language is also a vital tool for learning and for assessing learners in the classroom. According to Akinyeye and Pluddeman (2016, p.1) “writing has long been a staple form of assessment” and our global world is “networked through multiple modes of literacy”. Thus, writing is becoming increasingly important because

of the demands our new age places on competence in this skill; so, understanding the effects of writing pedagogy is necessary. Nowacek (2011) states that writing is important because you can express who you are as a person and it equips you with communication and thinking skills; which are essential in the workplace. Adding to this, Blease and Condy (2015, p.3) opines that “many writers believe that writing clarifies thinking.” The teaching of writing is therefore vital, as it will equip learners with critical thinking skills, better and appropriate usage of language, prepare them for the working world and develop their social communication skills. Graham et al (2011, p.10) contend that technological advances “have made writing central to social, community and civic participation in twenty-first century life” as people use writing for social communication via emailing, Facebook and texting.

According to Graham et al (2011) good writing is no longer an option for the youth, it has become an essential skill but too many young people are not good writers. Hendricks (2008) also found that learners’ writing was of a poor quality in SA. Adding to this Akinyeye and Pluddemann (2016) state that teaching methods and assessment practices of writing in SA are ineffective yet writing instruction is afforded less attention than reading instruction and that there is little research on writing in SA schools (Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014).

2.2.2 Writing as a Situated Social Practice

Language has a social and communicative function, and in becoming literate, children learn the processes and structures inherent in socially meaningful literacy practices, so interactive events are at the heart of learning to write (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). Street and Lefstein (2007) highlight the importance of reading and writing as academic literacy practices, and literacy as an instrument of conceptual and cognitive development. Such literacy practices provide a “powerful way of conceptualizing the link between the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which they help shape” (Barton, Hamilton & Ivanic, 2000, p.7).

When developing learners’ writing skills, it is important for educators to bear in mind that writing is, among other things, a social practice (Barton & Hall, 2000) rather than merely a cognitive, technical skill (Baynham, 1995). Barton et al. (2000) present the theory of literacy as a social practice where emphasis is placed on how culture is

interwoven into written language. This means that the writer's social identity (gender, race, class) influences what the writer brings to the text and how the writer interacts with the text. Thus, the relationship between school literacy and non-school literacy events, especially in the home context is particularly noteworthy (Duke & Purcell-Gates, 2003). Castro and Chala (2013) describe writing as closely related to the learners' personal background, dynamic in nature and shaped by social and situated features. To understand writing as a socially situated practice the subjectivity of the writer, the purpose and the audience, the writing process, the text as a product, the power of the written genre and the source of that power are aspects that must be considered (Baynham, 1995).

According to Castro and Chala (2013), writing is social because it happens within a social realm, arising from the writer's need to communicate ideas, using his or her own culture, experiences, feelings and beliefs, which are shaped through contact with others. It could thus be said that writing takes place in the midst of a web of relationships, the most obvious being the relationship between the writer and reader, which is why it is pivotal to teach writing with the audience in mind (Barton and Hall, 2000). However, during the writing process, the writer is surrounded by other people (teachers, parents, friends, fellow writers), who may all also influence the writing even though they are not the intended audience.

Acknowledging that writing is a socially situated practice may have implications for South African schools, because many classrooms are multicultural and multiracial. Thus, it would be important for English HL educators to find out more about their learners' cultures, beliefs and backgrounds to better understand the choices they make when completing writing activities. The teacher could also use this knowledge to design lessons and materials and select approaches to develop the learners' writing skills that are most suitable to the learners' interests and needs. A discussion of these different approaches to developing learners' writing skills follows.

2.3 Understanding writing in the South African context

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) in SA makes provision for learners to choose from any of the 11 official languages as the LOLT, HL and FAL. The School Governing

Body of each school, which comprises of the principal and parent, teacher and learner representatives, choose the LOLT which suits the learners. In the province where this study was conducted (KZN) the dominant languages spoken are IsiZulu, English and Afrikaans. Navsaria et al (2011) state that learners are normally taught in their mother tongue in the FP and then switch to English in the IP, which may be a high expectation as learners go from learning the language for only three years, to learning in the language in Grade 4 (Jordaan, 2011).

English is conceived as a global language so many parents opt for their children to be taught in English (Brock-Utne, Desai, Qorro & Pitman, 2010). Thus, the situation is that these learners have the double burden of trying to cope with learning a new language, whilst trying to learn new concepts in the new language. SA boys also must cope with a schooling system which, based on their recurring underperformance (Long & Zimmerman, 2008; Howie et al, 2017), clearly does not support their learning needs. Navsaria et al (2011) contend that this choice of English does not always place learners in an advantageous position as they may not necessarily have much exposure to English at home, so they are learning in a language in which they may have little competence (Navsaria et al, 2011).

That learners are learning in a language that they may not be familiar with has implications for the writing classroom. Hyland (2003, p.31) states that L2 writing is different from L1 writing in terms of: linguistic proficiencies and intuitions about language, learning experiences and classroom expectations, sense of the audience and writer, preferences for ways of organising texts, writing processes, and understandings of text uses and the social value of text types. To accommodate L2 learners in the writing classroom, Hyland (2003) proposes that teachers need to develop the learners' drafting and revising skills using realistic strategies and their understanding of genre. In this way they can "structure their writing experiences according to the demands and constraints of particular contexts" (Hyland, 2003, p.xv). The CAPS also advocates the use of the process approach to writing, which includes drafting and revising, through the use of a range of texts (DBE, 2011a).

2.3.1 The SA writing curriculum

The CAPS was introduced in the Foundation Phase in 2012 and in the Intermediate

Phase in 2013. For each subject there is a separate CAPS document, which introduces the subject and provides the content and teaching plans, and assessment guidelines. This document acknowledges that although home language is supposed to be the language first acquired by the learners, many schools do not offer the home languages of all learners, so the labels HL and FAL refer to the required proficiency levels and not the necessarily the learners' native languages (DBE, 2011a). What complicates this is that, in the same 'English Home Language' class, there may be learners for whom English is a Home Language, as well as those for whom English is not spoken at home and is only a First or Second or even Third Additional Language. However, they are required to meet HL proficiency levels. The following table shows the time allocation for each skill in the IP, for English HL.

Table 1: IP HL skills and time allocations	
Skill	Time Allocation per Two-week Cycle (Hours)
Listening and Speaking (oral)	2 hours
Reading and Viewing	5 hours
Writing and Presenting	4 hours
Language structures & Conventions	1 hour (but must also be integrated into the other language skills)

(DBE, 2011a, p.14)

The English HL curriculum is packaged into the following skills: Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting, and Language Structures and Conventions. The hours allocated for HL per two-week cycle in IP are divided as follows: Listening and Speaking two hours; Reading and Viewing five hours; Writing and Presenting four hours; and Language Structures and Conventions one hour. This allocation suggests the importance that the SA curriculum places on Writing and Presenting but prioritises Reading and Viewing by allocating an hour more to the development of this skill. Reading and Viewing and Listening and Speaking need to be allocated the same amount of time to ensure adequate development in each of these complementary skills.

The HL curriculum adopts the text-based and the communicative approaches as its theoretical underpinnings. The CAPS states: "a text-based approach explores how

texts work...also involves producing different kinds of texts for particular purposes and audiences...informed by an understanding of how texts are constructed” (DBE, 2011a, p.12). This approach is also known as the genre-based approach and is discussed in greater detail in section 2.4.3 below. According to the CAPS “a communicative approach suggests that when learning a language, a learner should have an extensive exposure to the target language and many opportunities to practise or produce the language by communicating for social or practical purposes” (DBE, 2011a, p.13). This means that the teacher needs to create opportunities that will maximise the learners use of English in authentic situations, which can be achieved by group seating, role plays or whole class discussions. It must be noted that CLT has been criticised for emphasising the function of the language over the structure of the language which may result in learners have gaps in their knowledge about the formal aspects of the language (Swan, 1985). Further to this, Ridge (1992) asserts that the lack of emphasis on the teaching of grammar could result in learners producing grammatically incorrect utterances in the target language, which, in terms of CLT, is acceptable if the receiver of the message is able to make sense of the message.

Despite these criticisms, CLT could be advantageous for ESL learners in the SA context. Firstly, the development of grammatical structures and forms has been integrated into the development of Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing and Writing and Presenting (DBE, 2011a) skills so learners will learn the rules of grammar in meaningful contexts. Secondly, ESL learners who may have little exposure to English in their personal contexts are provided with the opportunity to practice communication in the target language. Lastly, CLT promotes peer and group work so important skills required in the workplace such as teamwork, negotiation and compromise are developed. Adding to this, if one considers SA’s segregated past, having learners from different backgrounds, cultures and race group work in pairs and groups could promote understanding, tolerance and respect.

An overview of the skills, content, strategies and sub-skills is provided followed by a summary of text types that learners should be taught to write in the IP (DBE, 2011a, pp19, 29-31). This list includes narrative and descriptive essays, personal and official letters, curriculum vitae, diaries, e-mails, invitations, obituaries, directions, procedures, advertisements, personal recounts, dialogues, reviews and newspaper and magazine

articles. An explanation of the purpose, text structure and language features for each text type is also included. A breakdown of the length of texts for HL that must be produced by the learners is also presented—for example, an essay in Grade 6 must be 140–150 words and 4–6 paragraphs long (DBE, 2011a, p.32). Text length and the number of words that learners need to know in each grade are the only progression that learners are expected to make from Grades 4 to 6, which is concerning as the complexity of writing activities that learners complete needs to increase as learners progress through the grades (Graham & Perin, 2007).

What follows next are the teaching plans for Grades 4–6 (DBE, 2011a, pp36-87). There is a separate set of plans for each grade (Grade 4: pp36-53; Grade 5: pp54-71; Grade 6: pp72-87). The lesson plans are further divided into terms (Term 1–4) and then into two-week cycles (Week 1–2 to Week 9–10). This means that learners need to engage in listening, speaking, reading, writing and language and vocabulary development activities based on different genre every two weeks. A possible challenge could arise for teachers in terms of time to develop adequately writing, as they are required to engage with each element of the writing cycle, and explicitly teach the genre. The CAPS goes some way in addressing this as it prescribes that teachers use the same type of text to develop listening and reading skills prior to the learners completing a writing activity, thereby exposing learners to the genre. However, the allotted four hours is still insufficient for learners to produce a text using the stages of the writing cycle and certainly does not allow time for feedback and revision activities after the teacher marks the writing.

The plans are divided into the four skills: and explain the subskills that must be taught under each skill over a two-week cycle. Thus, at any given time, it is expected that all schools will be engaged in the same work, as laid out in the CAPS. However, this expectation of the CAPS is not necessarily realistic due to differences in the learners' needs, the pace at which learners progress and schools' extra-curricular calendars. Adding to this, the assumption made by CAPS is that all learners are at the same level and require the same level of support so will progress at the same pace, which is not the case. According to Howie et al (2017) learners from urban areas performed at a higher level than those from rural and township areas in the 2016 PIRLS assessment. Thus, learners in rural areas will require more time and support to grasp concepts than

their counterparts learning in urban areas. This shortcoming of the CAPS could mean that learners progress to the next grade without sufficiently engaging with the concepts or fully meeting the objectives of the previous grade.

Following the lesson plans, assessment in HL is explained. A distinction is drawn between informal and formal assessment and the requirements for formal assessment are explained. For the recorded written component for Grade 6 in Term 1, the learners must write about family, friends, pets, favourite sport or current issues and a poem. In the second term, learners write an instructional text and, in this term, they write an examination which consists of three papers. Paper 3 comprises essays and transactional texts. For Term 3, they must write a short play script and a short story. Finally, in Term 4, they write a report and, as with Term 2, in the examination they write Paper 3. In all four terms, each written piece is marked out of 30, but for Paper 3 the 30 marks is broken down into 10 marks for transactional texts and twenty marks for essays. All three papers in the final examination count for 25% of the learners' final mark (DBE, 2011a, pp94-99). To obtain a pass in English HL in the IP, learners must achieve at least a level 4 rating, which means that they must not get less than 50%.

Noteworthy is that during the writing of Paper 3, learners do not follow the stages of the writing cycle. Instead, they are handed their examination, which comprises of instructions and writing topics and are given a time limit to complete their writing, the focus being on the product rather than the process. This could disadvantage them as the method of developing their writing skills during lessons differs from the examination. Thus, they will not benefit from planning, revising, drafting and peer editing before submitting their final product. Adding to this, teachers might be overwhelmed by the marking load especially because the writing has not been edited which could result in them not providing adequate feedback.

2.3.2 Recent studies into writing in the SA context

Writing research in SA has remained relatively uncharted (Navsaria et al, 2011; Julius, 2013; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014, Blease & Condry, 2015; Olivier & Olivier, 2016). However, these researchers have stressed the importance of writing, teaching writing and researching writing. Tertiary writing, particularly of the academic essay, has received attention in studies conducted by Dornbrack and Dixon (2014) and Olivier

and Olivier (2016). The focus of the study conducted by Blease and Condy (2015) was on writing in multigrade classes whilst Navsaria et al (2011) and Julius (2013) gave voice to the teachers' in the writing classroom. Another area that has received attention in the SA writing classroom has been on assessing writing (Akinyeye & Pluddemann, 2016; Esambe, Mosito & Pather, 2016; Kasule & Langa, 2010).

These studies have all drawn attention to the paucity of research into writing, and the poor quality of writing and writing pedagogy in SA and have made the following contributions to this area of literature:

Table 2: Summary of writing research conducted in SA			
Authors	Year	Focus of research	Recommendations
Kasule & Langa	2010	FAL tertiary students attitudes toward self-editing	Overall the study has shown that although L2 writers in the research sample see self-editing as complex, they value it in reducing textual inaccuracies. Although a larger study sample would have provided more generalizable results, the findings of this brief attitudinal study contribute to the debate over how effectiveness within L2 writing can be developed: that, despite students' attitude that self-editing is complex, self-editing is a vital skill for improving textual quality; and writing instruction that nurtures its development is beneficial for purposes of developing autonomous L2 writers (p.71)
Navsaria, Pascoe and Kathard	2011	Grade 5 and Grade 6 writing teachers' perceptions	Further opportunities include training for teachers (e.g. around assessment), remedial assistance, a school library, a lower teacher/learner ratio, providing interesting and culturally related reading books, greater parental support and involvement, and safe, nurturing home environments. The school, home/social community and learners collectively play a role in the development of written language and the overall education of the learners. A joint partnership between the school and home is needed to assist and support learners to achieve the writing outcomes of their grade and ensure future success in their academic careers. Furthermore, there is a need for SLTs in ordinary schools in South Africa to support the

			crisis of written language (p.103)
Julius	2013	Grade 5 teachers' writing pedagogies	There appeared to be a distinct mismatch between the theoretical approaches to teaching writing outlined in CAPS and these two teachers' actual classroom practices. This mismatch suggests the need for interventions to bridge the gap between where teachers [and learners] are and where the curriculum is in relation to teaching EFAL writing, and for the teachers to engage with the curriculum...It is essential therefore that teachers, especially those in a similar situation to that of T1 in this study, get support and guidance from the relevant stakeholders in order to increase the effectiveness of their practices (pp.140-141)
Dornbrack & Dixon	2014	Grade 10 writing of the argumentative essay	We contend that this is a result of her teacher not fully understanding the importance of both process and genre steps for argumentative writing. One area is planning and its role in supporting and developing thinking and reasoning. This connection emphasises what a cognitively complex act writing is and the need to provide explicit support at each stage. This makes a case for professional writing workshops that focus on specific genres...Teaching complex genres also requires detailed planning of more than two lessons to meet the needs of FAL students. This means addressing the perception that teaching writing involves standalone lessons. To meet student needs, an integration of all the literacy skills is necessary. Students need time to think, discuss ideas and read. This requires challenging teacher expectations of the forms of capital students have and their ability to think and reason. It also points to the need for teacher trainers to re-examine their assumptions and practices (p.8)
Blease & Condy	2015	Rural multigrade FP teaching of writing	A recommendation is that teacher-training institutions and in-service workshops should provide modules on teaching in rural multigrade environments. In these modules, discussions on how poverty and illiteracy may impact on the development of writing skills need to be included. Strategies should be offered on how teachers can use the more advanced learners, not necessarily the older learners, in the class to assist the slower learners. A final recommendation is that these two rural multigrade teachers would

			like more professional development on writing skills provided by 'more knowledgeable others' in NGO's and the WCED (p.8)
Hill	2015	IP writing and LoLT	The most important feature of the project however, was the competence of the teachers as mediators, their leadership, and their commitment to seeing it through. In one class, not all the children completed their books in the first year of the project. These learners' drafts showed lack of progress, which indicated lack of mediation and leadership. This disappointing result, fortunately not typical of the outcome of the whole project, confirmed the McKinsey report's assertion that 'the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers' and 'the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction' (Mourshed, Chijioke & Barber 2007:15) (p.8).
Akinyeye & Pluddeman	2016	Grade 9 teaching and assessing writing	The pivotal ones appear to be a less-than-coherent language curriculum and inadequately trained teachers, exacerbated by unmanageable learner-teacher ratios and the consequent lack of time available for individualised attention during the writing process. Until all three issues are addressed, the undoubted potential of writers such as Zenobia and the generation she represents is unlikely to be realised (p.7)
Esambe, Mosito & Pather	2016	Tertiary writing and feedback	There is a gap between students' current writing competencies and the required competencies from a disciplinary and institutional context. There is also a gap between the lecturers' perception of their formative feedback provided to the students and the actual interpretation of the feedback by the students. These gaps demonstrate why we see the students' and lecturers' literacies practices as interim (p.10)
Olivier & Olivier	2016	Afrikaans first year tertiary students' writing apprehension	It is therefore important for writing, especially in compulsory academic literacy modules, to be taught through individualised student-centred methods, with affective support and reflective instruction, positive personal feedback, additional support through counselling as well as effective modelled writing behaviour from lecturers (p.8).
Drennan	2017	Tertiary writing of the academic essay through a writing	The writing centre serves as a physical space that promotes the development of writing as a critical skill within these various spaces in tertiary education. By means of collaborative partnerships between writing centre practitioners

		centre	<p>and academic staff members, the writing centre can serve as an intermediary between content lecturers and students. The two collaborative initiatives investigated in the article were perceived positively and it appears that the interventions might have had a positive impact on students' writing performance, although it is very difficult to demonstrate the direct impact of such collaborative initiatives.</p> <p>Such inter-disciplinary collaboration should be promoted and students' writing needs, regarding discourse-specific writing conventions, need to be studied further and in more depth. The identification and teaching of discipline-specific writing interventions can facilitate students' acquisition of and fluency in specialised discourses. In this way, writing centres can assist institutions in meeting the objective of addressing access and success within higher education (p.7)</p>
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As is evident from the table above, these researchers foreground the need for interventions in the writing classroom, particularly in terms of teacher development. Despite the contribution of the studies reviewed above to the area of teaching writing, Grade 6 boys' writing remains neglected. Also apparent is that the DBE has not afforded much consideration to the recommendations of these scholars, as there is still a need for interventions to be implemented to improve learners' writing skills.

2.4 Pedagogies of writing

Pedagogy is what the teacher needs to know, the skills that the teacher needs to have and different types of decisions that the teacher makes about teaching (Alexander, 2003). Shulman (1987) states that pedagogical actions are the ways in which teachers speak, show or represent ideas so that learners' skills, knowledge and understanding can be developed (Shulman, 1987). In other words, pedagogy includes what the teacher teaches, how it is taught and how learning takes place. With regards to writing pedagogy, there is no one correct way to develop this skill as there are many approaches which differs depending on the teacher, learners, and the style of teaching and learning (Raimes, 1983). However, over recent years three major approaches to teaching writing have been advocated: product-based approach, process-based

approach, and text-based/genre approach. These three major approaches to teaching writing are discussed below.

2.4.1 Product-based approach

This approach is a traditional approach to teaching writing, where the focus of writing is more on the product as opposed to how learners approach the process of writing (Badger & White, 2000). Within this approach learners mimic or imitate a model text, with attention given to appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices (Pincas, 1982). There are four stages identified within the product approach, which are the familiarisation stage, focused on making learners aware of specific features of a text, a second stage of controlled writing followed by guided writing, wherein learners practice the skills until they can write freely. This last stage is part of a genuine writing activity, an example of which is an informal letter, (Pincas, 1982). According to Steele (2004), during stage one a model text is read, and features of that genre are discussed. Stage two involves controlled practice of the features identified during stage one, which is usually done in isolation. Steele (2004) states that stage three is very important, because advocates of this approach to teaching writing believe the organisation of ideas is as important as the control of language, but more important than the ideas themselves. During stage four, learners can “choose from a choice of comparable writing tasks. Individually they use the skills, structures and vocabulary they have been taught to produce the product; to show what they can do as fluent and competent users of the language” (Steele, 2004, para.7).

This approach has been criticised as writing is viewed as “mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development as the result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher” (Badger & White, 2000, p.154).

2.4.2 Process-based approach

The process approach foregrounds the processes that learners go through when writing a text (Grossman, 2009). These approaches can be described as activities which help learners to move through the generation of ideas, to the collection of data, to the final presentation of a text (Badger & White, 2000). According to Tribble (1996), in a typical model of process-based approach, there are the four stages of prewriting,

drafting, revising and editing in the writing process. The process is described as cyclical, because writers may go back to prewriting after doing revising and editing (Badger & White, 2000). In a model presented by White and Arndt (1991), six non-linear, inter-related processes are described. The following figure shows these processes.

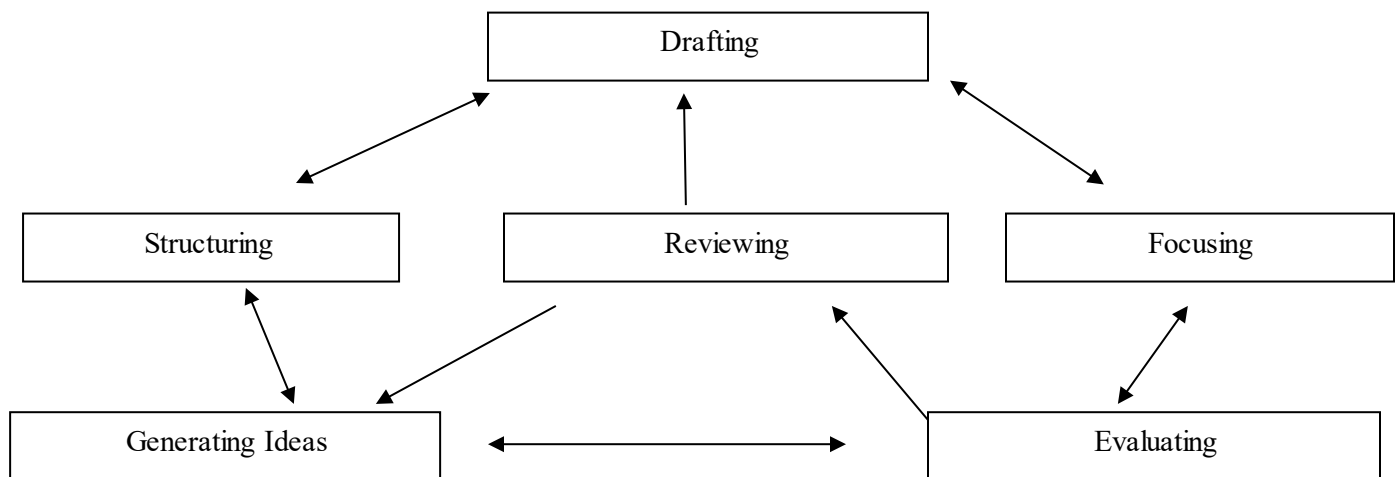


Figure 1: Procedures involved in the writing process

Source: White & Arndt (1991, p.11)

The stages in this model are similar to the ones proposed by Tribble (1996) and involve the learners in generating ideas by using activities such as brainstorming, then deciding which ideas would be most useful and relevant, and subsequently, using language to communicate the message in a process that evolves as it progresses (Grossman, 2009). White and Arndt (1991) distinguish this approach because of the roles that the teacher and learners play. The teacher becomes a reader and responds to what the learners write, in addition to the role of linguistic judge, the learners submit their ideas, feelings and attitudes, and provide evidence of their linguistic knowledge, which is shared with the teacher.

Limitations within the process approach have been identified. Badger and White (2000) state that these approaches tend to have a monolithic view of writing. The process remains the same regardless of what is being written, the audience, and of the context in which the writing happens. Moreover, for it to be successful, the entire process will take a large amount of class time and is aimed more to facilitate the process of writing for native speakers of the language, who already have the

necessary verbal fluency, so the linguistic element of written language can be ignored (Grossman, 2009).

2.4.3 Genre-based approach

Opponents of the process approach began to support the genre approach, which is like the product approach in its view of writing as mainly linguistic, but moves beyond this focus to include an understanding of genre that foregrounds the purpose, audience and organisation of the text. This approach can also be referred to as the 'text-based approach' as is done by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a). A genre or text-type can be described as a "class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (Swales, 1990, p.58). Hammond and Derewianka (2001) assert that genre refers to more than the text type but includes the recurring, predictable patterns of academic, literary and everyday texts within a culture. Most genres use communicative conventions and have rules which are associated with the writers' purpose (Kim, 2006). Examples of these are advertisements which use persuasive language to convince the audience to purchase the product, reviews, business and informal letters, emails and many others. Each has a specific audience and purpose, and has distinctive rules which determine structure, type of register, tone and content.

The genre-based approach to teaching writing focuses on models and key features of texts that are written for specific purposes and audiences. According to Kim (2006), the teacher using this approach introduces the learners to a sample of the genre, and its distinctive features are highlighted so that the learners become familiar with them. The learners imitate the sample and attempt to produce a first draft (Kim, 2006), considering the purpose and audience (Badger & White, 2000). Thus, the teacher plays the role of authoritative guide who scaffolds learners as they progress towards their potential level of performance (Hyland, 2003). As learners can produce a text parallel to the one that was modelled, the teacher will gradually lighten the scaffolding (Hyland, 2003) so the teacher's role shifts from instructor to facilitator, until the learners are finally able to work autonomously (Nordin & Mohammad, 2006), thereby taking responsibility at different phases as learning occurs (Derewianka, 2003).

Text types may change over time as the social purpose for which they may have been

produced may change. Further to this, Derewianka (1996) states that text types may be categorised differently by different people, using different terms to describe them. Table 3 below is adapted from the CAPS and presents some examples of different genres that learners must write in the IP, and the social purpose, structures and language features of the genre (DBE, 2011a, p.27-31).

Table 3: Types of texts in the IP			
Essays			
Text type	Purpose	Structure	Language features
Narrative	To entertain	Orientation Events leading to a complication Resolution and ending	First/ third person Past tense Events described sequentially Connectives Makes use of dialogue Language used to create an impact on the reader
Descriptive	To describe something in a vivid way	Identification Description	Past/ present tense Creates picture in words Adjectives, adverbs and figurative language used

Transactional texts			
Text type	Purpose	Structure	Language features
Personal letter	To inform and maintain a relationship	Address, date, salutation message, closing, signature	Usually informal style of writing
Giving directions	To tell someone how to get somewhere	Use chronological order, refer to a specific direction, indicate the approximate distance, provide information about landmarks.	Use mostly the imperative form and clear, concise sentences.

Literary and media texts			
Text type	Purpose	Structure	Language features
Dialogue	Record of exchanges as they	Write the names of the characters on	The relationship of the characters and

	occur, directly from a speaker's point of view	the left side of the page. Use a new line to indicate each speaker. Advice to characters (or readers) must be given in brackets before the words are spoken.	context of the interaction will determine the style.
Review	To summarise, analyse and respond to literary texts or performances	Context, text description, judgement	Written in present/ past tense. Use of appreciation vocabulary to evaluate text.

(Adapted from DBE, 2011a, p. 27-31)

The above table shows examples of some of the texts that learners in the IP need to be exposed to and produce. It also provides a summary of the purpose, structure and language features of each text. Many teachers in SA have had little exposure to these genres in school and during their training, due to the unfair education system during the apartheid era (Mather, 2012; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Mather & Land, 2014). This tabulated summary in the CAPS thus lacks the detail and explanations that such teachers may need for them to first understand the genre themselves, before they are able to make pedagogical choices about how to best develop their learners' understanding of the genre.

Badger and White (2000, p.155) state that the genre approach can be regarded as 'an extension of the product approach' because both view writing as mainly linguistic, but they are different in that the genre approach foregrounds that writing will change based on the social context within which it is produced. This approach also received criticism because, among other reasons (Refer to Table 4 below), the explicit teaching of a specific genre may limit the learners' generation of unique ideas, which may render this model counter-productive (Caudery, 1998). However, it would seem that researchers favour this approach, particularly for FAL learners (see Hyland, 2007; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014).

2.4.4 Pedagogies adopted by the CAPS for writing development in the IP

The text-based approach (genre approach) and process approach are adopted by the

CAPS to develop learners' writing skills (DBE, 2011a). The combination of these approaches is called the process genre approach and was developed to account for shortcomings of the product, process-based and genre-based approaches. Thus, drawing on the strengths and addressing the weaknesses of the three approaches, Badger and White (2000) have developed a model of the process genre approach as a view of writing and a view of the development of writing. These strengths and weaknesses are provided in the table below.

Table 4: Strengths and Weaknesses of Product, Genre and Process Approaches to Teaching Writing		
Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Product	Acknowledges the need for learners to be given linguistic knowledge. Understands that imitation is one way in which people learn.	Undervalues the knowledge and skills that learners bring to the class. Neglects contextual factors such as purpose and audience.
Genre	Recognises that writing takes place in a social context and has a specific purpose. Understands that writing can happen through imitation.	Undervalues the skills needed to produce a text. Sees learners as passive. Entails the danger of promoting conformity and limiting creativity.
Process	Understands the importance of the skills involved in writing. Recognises that what the learner brings to the classroom contributes to their writing development.	Regards all writing as produced by the same set of processes. Offers learners insufficient input, especially in terms of linguistic knowledge.

(Based on Badger & White, 2000, p.157)

The process genre approach is a synthesis of the three approaches; the underpinning idea presented by Badger and White (2000, p.157-158) is that writing involves knowledge about language, the context in which the writing happens and the purpose of writing, and the skills in using language and drawing out the learners' potential by providing input to which the learners respond. The following figure illustrates the strengths from the product, process-based and genre-based approaches that are integrated to form the process genre approach.

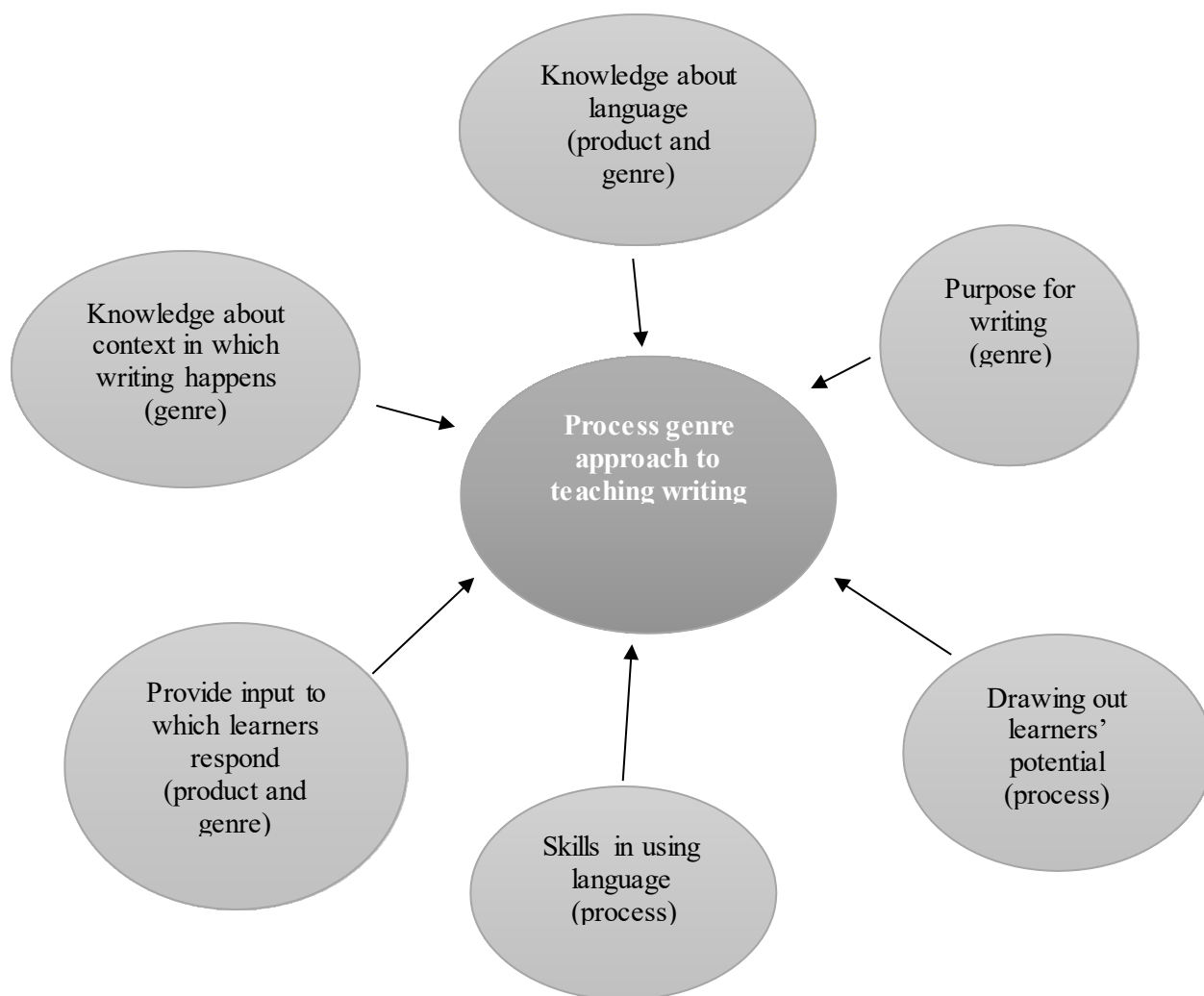


Figure 2: Model of the process genre approach to teaching writing

Source: own, adapted from Badger & White (2000)

Within the process genre model of teaching writing presented by Badger and White (2000), learners are enabled to learn the relationship between the structure and purpose of a genre while using the process described in the following six steps: (1) preparation, (2) modelling, (3) planning, (4) joint constructing, (5) independent constructing, and (6) revising. Linguistic elements like spelling, punctuation and sentence construction are also given attention. Thus, awareness of the composing process, linguistic knowledge and awareness of various genres is developed. The following is a short description of what happens during each step of the writing process in the classroom.

Preparation

The teacher begins preparing the students to write by defining a situation that requires a written text and placing it within a specific genre, such as a persuasive essay arguing for or against an issue of current interest. This activates the schemata and allows students to anticipate the structural features of the genre.

Modelling

During this step the teacher introduces a model of the genre and lets students consider the purpose of the text. For example, the purpose of an argumentative essay is to persuade the reader to act on something. Next, the teacher discusses how the text is structured and how its organization develops to accomplish its purpose.

Planning

This step includes many meaningful activities that activate the students' schemata about the topic, including brainstorming, discussing, and reading associated material. The aim is to help the students develop an interest in the topic by relating it to their experience. Since they have to participate and contribute in the classroom, learners will find the activities interesting and entertaining.

Joint constructing

In this step, the teacher and students work together as a beginning of writing a text. While doing so, the teacher uses the writing processes of brainstorming, drafting, and revising. The students contribute information and ideas, and the teacher writes the

generated text on the black/white board. The final draft provides a model for students to refer to when they work on their individual compositions. It fosters collaborative writing. This step can be boosted by the teacher providing a very caring and sharing environment. This step will provide students with a chance to write in a group and to prepare them for individual work.

Independent constructing

By this time, students will have examined model texts and have jointly constructed a text in the genre. They now undertake the task of composing their own texts on a related topic. Class time can be set aside for students to compose independently so that the teacher is available to help, clarify, or be consulted about the process. The writing task can also be continued as a homework assignment. The teacher has to clarify what students should do for writing homework.

Revising and editing

Students will have a draft that will undergo final revision and editing. This does not necessarily mean that teachers have to collect all the papers and mark them one by one. Students can check, discuss, and evaluate their work with fellow students, as the teacher again guides and facilitates. The teacher could make an effort to publish the students' work, which would impart a sense of achievement and motivate the students to become better writers. The final achievement would foster self-esteem among learners in their having produced something of their own.

(Belbase, n.d.)

The CAPS IP HL (DBE, 2011a) promotes the writing of a variety of genres and describes five stages of the writing process. The first stage of planning or pre-writing involves brainstorming, the organisation of ideas and the consideration of the target audience and type of writing. Then, when drafting, the learners should focus on word choice, sentence structure, main and supporting ideas, the specific features of the text, reading their own work critically and getting feedback from their teacher and peers. In the next stage learners revise their writing by using the feedback to improve the content and structure of ideas. In the last activity, editing or proofreading the writing is done, which involves refining word choice, sentence and paragraph structure, and correcting any mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation. A neat, legible final version is then presented. Dornbrack and Dixon (2014) caution that conflating the two approaches in the CAPS documents may result in the specificity of each being lost.

Workbooks for maths and HL were designed and distributed for IP learners in South Africa. Following is a description of the writing process which appears on the inside of the front cover of the Grade 6 HL workbook:

Plan

Decide on your topic. Talk to your group to gather ideas. Use a mind map to clarify your ideas about the plot, characters and setting.

Draft

Write your first draft. When you do this think about your audience. Also think about the structure and each paragraph you write.

Revise

Read the draft critically and get feedback from your classmates and teacher.

Edit

Edit to check spelling and punctuation. Make corrections to the draft.

Publish

Write your edited draft neatly as your final version.

(DBE, 2015a, inside front cover)

The following table is an overview of the content, strategies and sub-skills found in the CAPS for Writing and Presenting:

Table 5: Overview of Writing and Presenting skill		
Skills	Content	Strategies and Sub-skills
Writing & Presenting	Word writing (e.g. lists) Sentence writing Paragraph writing Creative writing *Descriptive *Imaginative *Dialogues and short play scripts *Transactional writing *Notes, messages, letters, greeting cards, invitations *Posters, notices, brochures, advertisements *Short written speeches *Procedural texts and recounts *Factual recounts, information texts	Process writing Planning/pre-writing Drafting Revising Editing Proofreading and Presenting Pre-writing/planning Consider target audience Consider type of writing Brainstorm using mind-maps Organise ideas Drafting Word choice Structuring sentences Main and supporting ideas Specific features of the required text Reads own writing critically Gets feedback from teacher and peers Revising, editing, proofreading and presenting Revises: improves content and structure of ideas Refines: word choice, sentence and paragraph structure Edits: corrects mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation Presents neat, legible final version

(DBE, 2011a, p.19)

The table above shows the conflation of the process and genre (text-based)

approaches to writing. The content column, in keeping with the genre approach, includes the different types of text that IP learners need to produce, and the inclusion of the structure and language features provided in the CAPS (DBE, 2011a, p.19). This goes some way to develop learners' understanding of how language works in social contexts (Hyland, 2003). Knowledge of the structure and conventions of a genre helps learners to comprehend what they are reading so teachers need to scaffold their learners so that they have a conscious understanding of these genres and the way language creates meaning in different contexts (Hyland, 2003). However, as was seen in the adapted table of text types (Table 3), the CAPS lacks detail with regards to exactly what needs to be done during each stage of the writing process, why it needs to be done and how it should be done. It merely provides an outline of what each stage entails. A similar outline is provided for the reading cycle (DBE, 2011a, p.8). In a study conducted by Mather (2012) it was found that those teachers used the outline superficially as a checklist rather than engaging with each stage to develop sufficiently their learners' reading skills, which may also be the case in many writing classrooms. Therefore, a detailed explanation of each stage is required, particularly for teachers who were not exposed to the process approach during their schooling and training (Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014).

If one considers the planning stage described in the CAPS (DBE, 2011a, p.19) there are genre elements where learners need to consider the target audience and type of writing. Making the structure and conventions of the genre explicit is key, especially for FAL learners to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the genre, can produce the required text and are able to use this knowledge to facilitate comprehension during reading lessons. To do this the teacher is required to have a deep understanding of the different genres to scaffold the learners' learning, which may be lacking (see Mather, 2012; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Mather & Land, 2014).

A further concern in the planning stage is brainstorming. Buehl (2011) states that learners' knowledge may be flawed or limited, so group brainstorming will be more effective than individual brainstorming. Thus, the teacher needs to know the learners' backgrounds, their needs and abilities, and know strategies to teach brainstorming explicitly (Buehl, 2011). This places huge demands on the teacher as the SA classroom is made up of learners from diverse backgrounds.

During the drafting stage, much emphasis is placed on the product in terms of language usage and vocabulary development. The genre-based approach is included in this stage through the inclusion of “specific features of the required text” (DBE, 2011a, p.19). Missing from this stage, though, is the consideration of the audience when writing the draft. A further concern is that there seems to be a bit of confusion between the description in the table above and the one provided in the inside cover of the Workbook. Under the drafting heading, the CAPS states “reads own writing critically; gets feedback from peers and teacher” (DBE, 2011a, p.19) whilst the Workbook explains, “read the draft critically and get feedback from your classmates and teacher” under the *revising* heading (DBE, 2015a, inside front cover). It is unclear as to whether revising happens during drafting or after the learner completes the draft. Adding to this the CAPS conflates the revising, editing, proofreading and presenting stages into one heading and provides an explanation of each in bullet points underneath. This implies that these are linear steps for learners to follow when in fact, the sub-skills forming each stage of the writing process are recursive (Hyland, 2003) as learners are meant to go back and forth within the stage as their writing progresses. For instance, whilst writing their drafts, learners do not first consider word choice, then structure sentences etc. Instead they consider each of these sub-skills as needed whilst drafting.

The revising and editing stages by the teacher may not be possible due to the large numbers that characterise many SA classrooms. Teachers can overcome this barrier by using peer collaboration during these stages and focus their attention on the learners who have not reached competency in the writing activity. Hyland (2003) states that learning and writing are social processes so peer response is advantageous.

Specific advantages of peer feedback include: active learner participation, authentic communicative context, development of understanding of reader needs and critical thinking skills, and a reduction in the teacher’s workload (Hyland, 2003, p.199). However, Hyland (2003) cautions that learners may not use their feedback, and may prefer teacher feedback. Peers may also focus on surface forms, may be too critical or due to cultural norms may not want to criticise or judge their peers (Hyland, 2003). Adding to this, in SA, classrooms consist of a mix of learners in terms of academic

performance and language competence. In a class, there may be gifted learners, learners with learning barriers, mother tongue English speakers and English first additional language speakers. This means that learners will not be at the same level and may not be able to correct and provide feedback on their peers' writing. A result of this could be that the learners submit inadequately edited products for marking which could increase the time needed for the teacher to mark. Alternatively, the teacher will be over-burdened with revising and editing and thus unable to provide the attention and engagement needed for these stages.

According to Yan (2005, p.20), when using this approach, teachers must bear these three guidelines in mind. The teacher assumes the position of assistant and guide; learners are encouraged by providing positive constructive advice; self-confidence is built, and the learners' curiosity aroused by giving them topics that interest them, and by being aware of individual differences that may appear during the writing process. The teacher also trains the learners about writing strategies directly. This means that learners will be more successful in writing compositions if the teacher demonstrates how schemata are developed through prewriting activities and outlines strategies for the drafting and revision processes. The teacher integrates listening, speaking and reading skills into the writing class, thereby increasing the learners' overall language competence. Within the process genre approach the integration of the four language skills is made possible because background material can be read and discussed during the prewriting stage, learners read their own and their peers' drafts and they speak and listen to each other and the teacher when giving or receiving feedback. This approach also supports the teaching of writing to second language learners as it allows for adequate scaffolding, modelling and support (Derewianka, 1990).

As can be seen, this approach to teaching writing requires experienced, skilled and knowledgeable teachers to be able to combine the different elements with flexibility. Hyland (2003) states that writing is one of the fundamental skills that second language learners need to develop and can be achieved by well-trained language teachers. Such teachers may be in short supply in SA, as many have little knowledge about the process genre approach (Dornbrack and Dixon, 2014). Using this approach as a theoretical framework could provide insight into what is present in the teaching and learning of writing, and what may be absent. It was adopted for this study because of

its comprehensiveness and flexibility in linking process, product and genre.

a. Positioning during the stages of the writing cycle

Positioning theory was originally developed by a social psychologist Harre to try to understand the dynamic, emergent nature of social interaction. He used the term 'position' rather than 'role', which was more fixed and stable. 'Position' could capture the fluid changing nature of how people interact in a social situation. He was interested in how people ascribed 'rights' and 'duties' to each other in the discourse of social interaction (Harre, 2004). "Positioning theory is the study of the nature, formation, influence and ways of change of local systems of rights and duties, as shared assumptions of them influence small scale interactions" (Harre, 2004, p.5). It views positioning as a dynamic form of social role and aims to explain the relationship between discourse and psychological phenomena (Harre, 2004).

Hollway (1984) first used the term position in social sciences, but forty years later Harre used the concept in psychology and sociology, coining the term positioning theory in 1990 (Boxer, 2001). This theory is a fairly recent approach to understanding discursive practices and can be seen as an extension of Role Theory, which was an older framework that described roles as being restrictive, relatively fixed, formally defined and long lasting (Harre, 2004). In contrast, positioning theory offers a conceptual system within which the unfolding of episodes of everyday life can be followed in fresh and enlightening ways because it concerns conventions of speech that are easily altered (labile), can be contested (contestable) and last for a short time (ephemeral) (Harre, 2004).

Hermans drew on this theory in developing Dialogical Self Theory, which looked at how people position themselves and others by adopting and ascribing 'self-positions' or 'I-positions' (Rule, 2015). These are temporary stances which change as people interact. A person might have a coalition of several positions that he draws on, which might complement each other or be in conflict (e.g. teacher-as-disciplinarian; teacher-as-facilitator). More recently scholars have begun to apply Herman's ideas to education.

Positioning theory was also used as a lens to explore teachers' beliefs about literacy

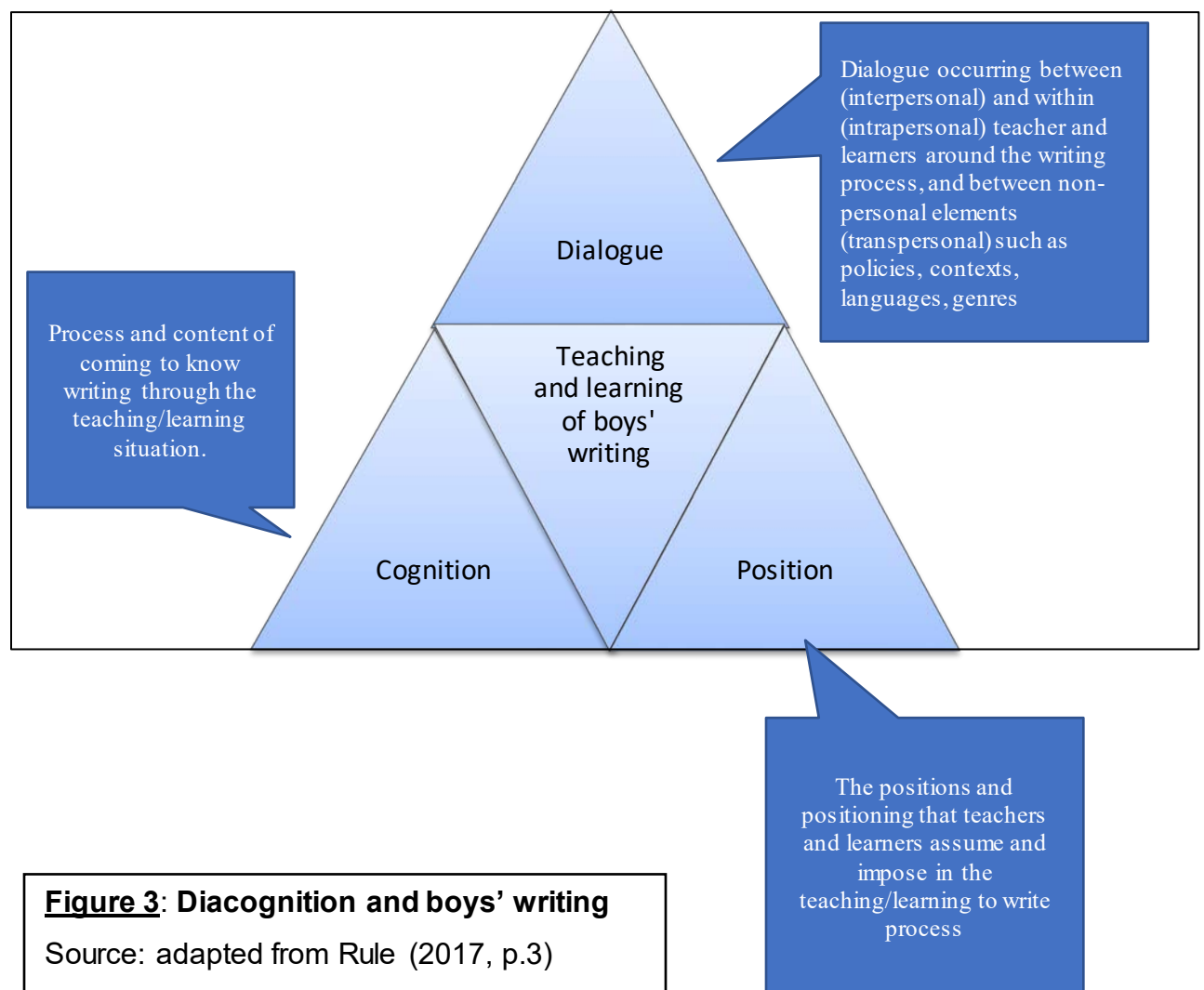
and culture and conclude that positioning can “provide researchers with a beneficial lens to frame discussions of learning and reflection around issues of culture and literacy (McVee, Baldassarre & Bailey, 2004, p.14). Further to this, in a study conducted by de Lange, the Dialogical Self Theory was used as a theoretical lens to illustrate the nature and construction of multiple selves and positions within and as part of the greater cultural and social context of students with ‘hidden’ disabilities in a higher education context (de Lange, 2015). This theory enabled de Lange to analyse the shifting identities of students with ‘hidden’ disabilities as a coping mechanism for their studies. The current study is different as it analyses how Grade 6 teachers position themselves and their learners, and how the boys position themselves, their peers and teachers in the writing classroom. It also looks at how boys position themselves in their final written submissions.

Rule (2015) draws on both Harre and Hermans in using the notion of ‘position’ along with ‘dialogue’ and ‘cognition’ in his framework of ‘diacognition’ for understanding teaching and learning as knowing and is privileged here for his comprehensive explanations of positioning theory and related concepts. According to Bakhtin (1984, p.287) “The very meaning of man (both internal and external) is the deepest communion. To be means to communicate.” This ontological view of dialogue is that dialogue is central to one being a human being. Rule (2017, p.3) states “to be human means to be in dialogue – with others, with oneself and with the world.” When used as an analytical lens, dialogue encompasses interpersonal, intrapersonal and transpersonal dialogue (Rule, 2017). Interpersonal dialogue occurs between individuals so in the classroom it will include communication between learners and between the teacher and learners. On the other hand, intrapersonal dialogue is dialogue that one conducts within oneself. In the classroom, this would involve learners evaluating what the teacher has said or the teacher assessing her learners grasp of a concept that she had been explaining. Thus, intrapersonal dialogue might follow from interpersonal communication. According to Rule (2017, p.3) “transpersonal includes the interactions between texts, genres, situations, ideologies, times and places, and would both inform and be informed by interpersonal and intrapersonal.”

Cognition assumes that the teacher who has a prior knowledge of the object of cognition (skills, concepts etc) intends to guide the learners to the cognition of that

object by leading them through the process of teaching and learning (Freire, 2004 as cited in Rule, 2017). During this teaching and learning process, the teacher *recognises* the object of cognition (knows it again) as a teacher but also from the learners' perspective to best help the learners share the object of cognition (Rule, 2017). Within cognition are *intercognition* (when teachers and learners reach the point of sharing the object of cognition), *metacognition* (when they reflect on their teaching and learning) and *decognition* (when they realise that they do not actually know something that they thought they knew (Rule, 2017)).

According to Rule (2017, p.3) "position is powerful analytical tool partly because of its range of denotations and its metaphorical import." During teaching and learning the teacher and learners adopt temporary, flexible positions. The figure below is a framework that shows dialogue, cognition and position as complementary perspectives which relate to coming to know.



The diacognition model is useful for understanding how teachers and learners position themselves and each other in the process of teaching and learning. This is partly what this study looks at in relation to the teaching and learning of writing, that is how the boys and teachers act as the “agent of positioning” (doing the positioning, including self-positioning) and the “positioned party” (being positioned) (Baert, 2012, p.312). This study also analyses how the dialogue between the teachers and boys is used in these writing classrooms as an instrument of positioning towards attaining the object of cognition, which is the production of a text using the stages of the writing cycle. Rule (2015) further states that dialogues involve a conversation between two people or more as a vehicle for learners to apprehend the object of cognition (content, meanings or skill).

In the classroom, the teacher needs to have knowledge of what she is teaching and who she is teaching when trying to instigate the learners’ cognition (Rule, 2015). She should ask, “How can I get my learners to know this object of cognition?” Thus, she ought to know her learners and their level of understanding to instigate learning and get them to embrace the position that she creates for them so that they can know the object of cognition. In addition to knowing how she can enable her learners to know the object of cognition, she needs to know what and whom will inform her choice of teaching methods, which are supported by why she teaches (Rule, 2015). In this study, the term “miscognition” is used to refer to episodes where learners do not successfully cognise these skills, content or meanings, which are instigated by their teacher.

Intercognition refers to what the teacher and learners cognise together. It is the intersection that the learners and teacher come to during the teaching process and involves the teacher knowing what she is teaching, learning what the learners know about what she is teaching and modifying her teaching methods to accommodate what the learners do or do not understand (Rule, 2015, p.151). By the end of the process the learners can cognise the object of cognition and the teacher might also learn something new about the object of cognition, her teaching methods and her learners (Rule, 2016, p.151).

Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) explain that there is a dominant position with auxiliary positions to support that dominant position. When positions that do not

support the dominant position are adopted, the result will be a conflict of positions. Rule (2015) states that within the discursive role, temporary positions (positions are dynamic) are adopted in the classroom. These are expressed in the speaking-acting-believing-reading-writing Discourse. For example, during the writing process the teacher's dominant position will be teacher of writing, using the writing cycle, while the learners' dominant position will be learners of writing, using the writing cycle. They will position themselves and each other into auxiliary positions such as listeners, speakers, readers, writers, editors, assessors and so on. An instance of this is as follows: the teacher positions herself as the leader of a discussion to introduce the topic that the learners will write about. She positions the learners as participants of the discussion, but they reject this position and choose to talk amongst themselves, there will be a conflict of positions. Thus, she will be unsuccessful in enabling them to apprehend the object of cognition. Therefore, she must use her categories of knowledge to adjust her choice of teaching strategy to enhance the learning experience for her learners. The following table illustrates the dominant position and some of the auxiliary positions that the teacher and learners ought to adopt during the writing process to cognise the object of cognition, which is to know how to write the selected genre using the stages of the writing cycle.

Table 6: Teacher and learner positions during the writing process

Table 6: Teacher and learner positions during the writing process		
Stage of the writing process	Teacher	Learners
	Dominant position:	
		teacher of writing using the stages of the writing cycle
Auxiliary positions:		
Prewriting/planning	Facilitator, demonstrator	Thinker, reader, speaker
Drafting	Assistant/guide	Planner/writer
Revising	Assessor/critical thinker	Assessor/listener/speaker
Editing	Facilitator	Reader/critical thinker
Proofreading	Facilitator	Reader/editor
Presentation	Assessor	Writer

Grossman (2009) states that the process approach to writing focuses on the process that the learners and teacher go through when writing. This writing process includes, “generating ideas, deciding which ideas are relevant to the message and then using

the language available to communicate that message in a process that evolves and develops” (Grossman, 2009, p.7). Therefore, the teacher shifts from the position of being only a linguistic judge to that of a reader responding to what the learners have written and the learners shift between the positions of thinker, planner, writer and reader. The correct positioning of learners and teachers during the writing process is vital as these positions contribute to the successful completion of the writing task. Positioning theory was used in this research to analyse the data from the classroom observations, interviews and written efforts to determine how positioning contributes to teaching and learning writing in the Grade 6 classroom. Important to note in this study was the variety of positions during the writing lessons. The use of positioning theory was a beneficial tool as it provided me with the opportunity to gain deeper insight into how the learning process unfolds in the two writing classrooms.

b. Feedback on learners’ writing

Assessment of writing is conducted for many purposes. Graham et al. (2011) assert that teachers assess writing to monitor learners’ progress, inform instruction and evaluate how effective their teaching has been. Learners assess their own writing and peers assess each other’s writing to determine their strengths and identify areas in need of development. Schools assess writing to determine how many learners meet the national standard and who still needs development. Feedback plays a pivotal role in learners’ writing development and has been the focus of several research projects (Elton, 2010; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Akinyeye and Pluddeman, 2016; Esambe, Mosito & Pather, 2016). These researchers highlight the need for formative feedback to improve learners’ writing. According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is one of the most powerful tools in enhancing learning and teaching but caution that it can be either positive or negative. Feedback is defined as information provided by an agent (teacher, parent, peer, self, book) regarding aspects of the learner’s understanding or performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Hattie and Timperley (2007) state further that effective feedback must be directed at the right level, be clear, meaningful, timeous and compatible with the learner’s prior knowledge and provide logical connections.

Hyland and Hyland (2006) state that formative feedback is necessary for L2 learners to improve their writing and to motivate them to write more. Formative feedback is the

type of feedback that is given to learners to help them understand where their work is lacking and provides strategies to help them improve their writing (Blokhman & Campbell, 2010). According to Graham et al. (2011) formative assessment can be conducted by the teacher, the learner or a peer. Esambe et al (2016) draw a distinction between synchronous- asynchronous formative feedback.

Synchronous formative feedback happens while the learner is actively engaged with the writing task (Brophy, 2004). This means that the teacher, positioned as the 'more knowledgeable other' provides immediate feedback on the learners' mind maps and drafts as learners work towards completing these. Asynchronous formative feedback on the other hand, is provided once the learners complete their final drafts (Clark, 2012), but the absence of such scaffolding at the drafting stage may end up being "too little, too late" (Akinyeye & Pluddemann, 2016, p.6). Learners are more likely to consider feedback and corrections during the writing process instead of applying the feedback to future writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Ferris (2006) states that traditionally, feedback was provided at the end of the writing process and this feedback was primarily focussed on grammar and spelling error correction (asynchronous formative feedback). The inclusion of the writing process by the CAPS means that now, teachers need to provide feedback while the learners are writing (synchronous formative feedback). However, Akinyeye and Pluddemann (2016) found that due to large learner: teacher ratios, a less than coherent curriculum and inadequately trained teachers, teacher feedback during and after the writing process was compromised. They found that the number of formal assessment tasks was unrealistic especially in classrooms with large numbers, so teachers tend to rush through their marking to keep with the demands of the curriculum (2016).

Ellis (2008) provides three types of corrective feedback that teachers can give to their learners to correct linguistic errors. Firstly, direct corrective feedback involves the teacher correcting the learner's errors by crossing out, inserting or writing the correction for the learner. Secondly is indirect corrective feedback whereby the teacher does not correct the errors but indicates that there are errors by underlining or circling. Finally, metalinguistic corrective feedback is when the teacher indicates the error by using codes for the grammatical description. Hyland and Hyland (2006, p.99) suggest the following feedback approaches:

- Provide primarily indirect feedback;
- Locate errors rather than labelling or coding them;
- Vary feedback approaches for treatable and untreatable error types;
- Use a relatively small number of error categories when providing feedback.

In addition to corrective feedback, teachers need to give the learners constructive feedback in the form of comments based on structure, context and cohesion (Akinyeye & Pluddemann, 2016). Hyland and Hyland (2006) contend that feedback needs to be accurate and complete, but disappointingly Truscott (1996 as cited in Hyland & Hyland, 2006) found that the quality of teachers' feedback to L2 learners was deficient. In the SA context, Akinyeye and Pluddemann (2016, p.6) found the same in terms of the corrections being limited to punctuation and grammar while no comments were provided regarding the inclusion of "register, tone, audience awareness and purpose, originality, paragraphing, and development of topic, vocabulary, planning and coherence, editing and proofreading." This may be a consequence of the CAPS not providing guidance as to how teachers should assess writing and provide feedback thereof, nor are there any rubrics or assessment criteria provided for teachers to use when assessing their learners' writing.

An instructional rubric usually describes varying levels of quality, from excellent to poor, for a specific piece of writing (Andrade, 2000). Using rubrics to assess learners' writing is advantageous as they decrease marking time, and they help teachers justify the grades that they assign to learners (Andrade, 2000). In addition to this, Andrade (2000, pp.16-17) contends that rubrics are easy to use and explain, make the teacher's expectations clear, provide learners with more informative feedback about their strengths and areas of improvement and they support learning and the development of skills, understanding and good thinking. The design of such rubrics may be time consuming and requires the teacher to have a knowledge of how rubrics work, and the criteria and descriptors to include. The CAPS does make mention of rubrics ("In formal assessment, use memoranda, rubrics, checklists and rating scales as well as..." DBE, 2011, p.90) but does not make explicit how these rubrics should be created nor does it provide any rubrics for teachers to use. Adding to this, in SA teachers' knowledge may be lacking in terms of the criteria and descriptors to use due to their inadequate schooling and training so teachers probably do not use rubrics to provide feedback to

their learners about their writing, and instead focus on error correction.

For written comments, Hyland and Hyland (2006, pp.4-5) state “when giving feedback, then, we must choose the appropriate language and style to accomplish a range of informational, pedagogic, and interpersonal goals.” These authors add that teachers often do not want to demotivate their learners so try to take “the sting out of them with hedges, question forms, and personal attribution” (2006, p.5) a consequence of which might be that learners misinterpret those comments, especially if there is no follow up or discussion after the learner receives the feedback. The final stage in the writing process is publishing/ presenting which the CAPS describes as “produce a neat, legible, edited final version” (DBE, 2011a, p.12). A glaring omission here is a stage that should follow involving the teacher’s feedback. There is no room in the lesson plans for the teachers to discuss the feedback with the learners or complete remediation activities based on common errors. The assumption here is that the learners will read the teachers’ feedback and view the error corrections and in so doing, they will be able to understand what they need to do to improve their future writing. However, this may not be the case as learners may not necessarily read or understand the feedback, which Hyland and Hyland (2006) state is a crucial component in scaffolding to help build learners’ confidence in writing.

2.5 Scaffolding strategies for teaching writing

Scaffolding theory provides learners with the means to write well because learning to write is a process that requires step-by-step guidance and support for learners to develop their writing skills (Wessels, 2014). This theory was introduced by cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner, and is a learning process designed to promote a deeper level of learning whereby the teacher gives the learners support during the learning process (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). The learning process is designed according to the needs of the learner with the intention of helping the learner achieve his/her learning goals (Sawyer, 2006). Thus, when a learner is experiencing difficulty with a concept, the teacher will increase the support provided and when the learner begins understanding the concept the support is gradually released till the learner is able to work independently on a task (Sawyer, 2006). The teacher needs to provide sufficient support to promote learning when concepts and skills are being first introduced to

learners. In this way the teacher helps the learners to master a task or concept by providing support.

The teacher is viewed as the expert who interacts collaboratively with the learners to make learning effective (Sawyer, 2006). This idea of the teacher being the expert stems from Vygotsky's (1978) notion of the 'more knowledgeable other' (MKO), which is situated in his psycho-socio-cultural theory of development. According to Vygotsky (1978), the MKO is someone who has a better understanding than the learner with regards to a concept or task. Hence, the MKO could be the teacher, a peer or nowadays, a computer. The MKO guides the learners from what they cannot do, through the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD), which is the area in which a learner can do with support, to the area where a learner can do on their own (Vygotsky, 1978). The following figure illustrates the process of Vygotsky's ZPD.

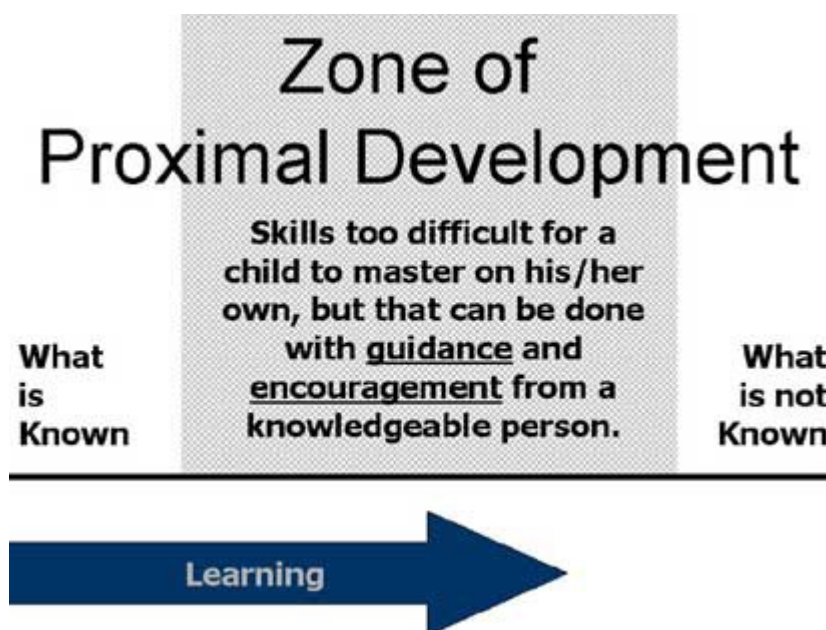


Figure 4: Zone of proximal development

Source: McLeod (2012)

In the case of a writing lesson in Grade 6, the teacher may be teaching learners the structures and conventions of a text that is not known to them like writing a business letter. According to the CAPS, they would have learnt how to write friendly letters in earlier grades. The teacher as the MKO will take them from what is known to what is unknown through the ZPD, where learning takes place, by providing scaffolding based on the learners needs and pace at which they are able to grasp the concept. This can

be done through questioning, explaining or modelling the type of text that they are required to produce.

Wessels (2014, pp.209-214) states that effective scaffolding for writing could include the following activities:

- completing sentences and writing guided passages
- transcribing
- extending a short statement into a paragraph
- adding details to outlines of stories are scaffolding activities
- substitution activities

These activities are necessary for learners to construct vocabulary and knowledge of the topic and may guide learners so that they can write coherent and cohesive texts.

According to Langer and Applebee (1986), writing development is an individual process which reflects the individual language learner, while instruction is a social process that is rooted in interaction between the teacher and learner. Interactive events are central to learning writing, wherein the child is an active learner and the adult provides systematic structure (Vygotsky, 1978). Bruner (1973) also views the learning relationship between the child and adult as pivotal to language learning and the term “scaffolding” is used to describe the tutorial assistance provided by the adult, who “knows how to” control those elements that are beyond the child’s capabilities (Langer & Appelbee, 1986). Thus, the adult provides help with concepts that are beyond the child’s capabilities, while encouraging the child to complete the concepts that are within their range of competence.

While Vygotsky (1978) refers to the adult as the ‘more knowledgeable other’, who knows more than the child and uses that knowledge to extend the child’s knowledge, Bruner (1973) describes the “caretaker” as one who helps the child to use the newly acquired language skills in broader contexts and stops the child from returning to earlier forms once more refined forms have been learnt. In addition to this, Langer and Applebee (1986) contrast the notions of “what” is being learnt and “how” it is being learnt:

What the child is learning includes

1. A definition of the situation; that is, an understanding of the purpose of the activity...
2. An understanding of the structure and implications of the situation; that is, an understanding of the constituent parts and the ways in which they relate to one another...
3. Specific routines for regulating one's behaviour in this context.

The *how* includes participation in a dialogue that has a number of characteristics:

1. A clear structure with well-defined roles for the participants.
2. Reversibility; that is, the novice can eventually take over the functions of the more expert participant.
3. An assumption to meaningful intent on the part of all participants.
4. Primary attention to the accomplishment of the task, rather than on the teaching of task-relevant skills, though the purpose of the specific steps in relation to the goal may be highlighted by the adult's commentary.

(Langer & Applebee, 1986, p.180)

Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) list the following properties of an interactive instructional exchange. First, the educator should recruit the learner's interest. The size of the task could be reduced by the educator to the level manageable by the learner. The educator should keep the learner focused on the task goal. At this stage, attention ought to be drawn to features of the task that the learner can use to compare what was done with what was supposed to have been done. The educator should also reduce stress. At the final stage, the educator ought to demonstrate the task by completing it or explaining a solution so that the learner can imitate it in a more suitable form.

Similarly, Wertsch (1979) describes the child's gradual internalisation of the scaffolding provided by an adult in a rule-governed context. As part of the instructional interaction, adults provide children with metacognitive functions because these inform the child of the nature of the goal, make the child aware of the facts involved, arrange the environment in a way that is conducive to the completion of the task and remind the child of his or her progress while completing the task.

The following five components of effective instructional scaffolding are presented by Langer and Applebee (1986). First, effective instruction should give the learners space to have something of their own to say in their writing and they need to see the point of what they are doing. Then, effective instruction builds on literacy and thinking skills that the learners already have and helps them to complete tasks that they could not on their own. Also, the structure of the task needs to be clarified and the learners must be guided through the task in a way that provides strategies for use in other contexts. A fourth component is effective instructional interactions which build upon and recast learners' efforts without rejecting what they achieve on their own. Control of the interaction must be gradually transferred from the educator to the learner. The last point is that to achieve this, teachers could provide feedback during the stages of the writing process (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), and use speaking, reading and thinking as tools for scaffolding learners' writing through a process of modelling, joint construction and independent construction of the text (Hyland, 2003).

2.5.1 Speaking as a scaffolding tool for writing

The way writing exists in the nest of talk is complex (Graves, 1983), but there are basic processes of learning instruction that hold true for both oral and written learning (Langer and Applebee, 1986). One example is that speakers usually prepare notes which they must write, and they use written visual aids (Heath, 1982). In the same way, play scripts, praise poetry and most other forms of oral entertainment must be written. Additionally, writers often talk to rehearse the content and language that will go into the piece of writing (Graves, 1983). This conversation that they have (with themselves, a peer, family member or even teacher) provides an occasion for writing. When they write, their usual ways of speaking may feed into the sentences that they write, which gives the writing its "voice" (Graves, 1983). The fact that this is the term used reveals the special relationship between speaking and writing.

Writing can be used to develop learners' speaking skills. The teacher could provide opportunities for learners to speak about their writing, as this allows them to rehearse the language that they will use in their texts, and perhaps develop appropriate vocabulary, and to exchange ideas with their peers before committing the words to paper. The teacher could further establish a balance between talk and writing, set up and manage talk in pairs and groups, schedule individual teacher time and use writing for oral presentations (Graves, 1983). Reciprocally, speaking is an important tool for scaffolding learners' writing. The teacher could begin the writing lesson by having a whole class, group or pair discussion where learners are given the opportunity to speak about the topic and genre. During the revision and editing stages of the writing process the learners could speak with the teacher and their peers about ways to improve their writing. Teachers can also use face-to-face conferences, after assessing the writing, to speak to their learners about their strengths and weaknesses (Hyland 2003) and negotiate meaning of the text through dialogue (McCarthy, 1992).

2.5.2 Reading as a scaffolding tool for writing

Learners understand texts better if they can write about it and they become better readers through writing instruction (Graham & Herbert, 2010). Four aspects from early research into the reciprocal nature of reading and writing are provided by Tierney and Leys (1984, p.23):

- (1) Depending upon the measures which are employed to assess overall reading and writing achievement and attitude, the general correlation between reading and writing is moderate and fluctuates by age, instructional history, and other factors.
- (2) Selected reading experiences definitely contribute to writing performance; likewise, selected writing experiences contribute to reading performance.
- (3) Writers acquire certain values and behaviours from reading and readers acquire certain values and behaviours from writing.
- (4) Successful writers integrate reading into their writing experience

and successful readers integrate writing into their reading experience.

This list indicates that learning reading and writing are two processes which are dependent on each other and as the learner progresses from grade to grade the mastery of one would lead to mastery in the other. The more learners read, the more their linguistic knowledge and understanding of the structure of different genres will increase, thus their writing will improve. Although the teaching of reading and writing should be integrated, each should be given equal attention, as both are important literacy skills required for effective functioning in modern society and, according to Grabe (2003), if they are taught together, the result can lead to more effective learning.

Grabe (2003) further states that content-based and task-based learning offer the best opportunity to integrate reading and writing. According to Graham and Herbert (2010) writing could be a vehicle for improving reading, in three ways. Firstly, both reading and writing are functional activities. By combining them, specific outcomes like being able to use reading to learn can be accomplished. Secondly, reading and writing draw upon common knowledge and cognitive processes, which means that improving a learner's writing skills, would result in an improvement of reading skills. Thirdly, the view that reading and writing are communicative activities means that when learners create their own texts, they gain insight about reading, which, in turn, would lead to an improvement in comprehension of texts that are produced by others (Graham & Herbert, 2010, p.4).

On the other hand, reading can be used to develop learners' writing skills. If one considers the structure of the 2-week cycle as outlined in the CAPS' lesson plans, learners start the cycle with Listening and Speaking, then Reading and Viewing, which is followed by Writing and Presenting (the development of language and vocabulary is integrated into these skills) (DBE, 2011a). For instance, in Grade 6, term 1, weeks 1-2 learners listen to a radio or newspaper report and discuss current issues. They then read newspaper articles. Thereafter they write a newspaper article (DBE, 2011a, p.72). In this way listening, speaking and reading are used as scaffolding tools for the writing task by modelling and familiarising learners with the type of text that they are required to produce.

The CAPS adopts this in most of the lesson plans using different text types to develop different subskills. However, for the novel, the CAPS states that learners listen to a novel, participate in a group discussion, read a short novel, and then they must write a book review (DBE, 2011a, pp.77, 80). Although learners have been required to write a book review in the Grade 5 lesson plans, they have not been through the scaffolding process of listening to, speaking about and reading a book review in Grades 4, 5 or 6. The CAPS does state that the learners must write this book review by using a frame (DBE, 2011a, pp.77, 80). Learners, particularly FAL learners learning English at HL level, may have trouble when writing this book review for the first time in Grade 5 as they have not experienced the structures, conventions and language that is particular to this genre. Thus, the teacher will need to include more scaffolding strategies such as listening to and discussing a book review, or reading a book review during the pre-writing and planning stages of the writing cycle.

2.5.3 Thinking as a scaffolding strategy for writing

When writers write, they think of things that they did not have in mind before they begin writing. This would suggest that writing and thinking cannot exist in isolation, as the act of writing generates ideas (Bruner, 1973). The idea that writing is a medium for thought provides writing with many important uses, for instance, solving problems, identifying issues, constructing questions and possibly trying out an incomplete idea (Miller, 2013). The process of writing also involves drafting and revision and these involve exploration and discovery. They are less about simply fixing mistakes in the previous draft and more about finding additional ideas and implications for what one is talking about (Miller, 2013).

Teachers should also bear in mind that new thinking occurs every time a piece of writing is revised, and they need to use creative strategies to get learners thinking about the topic. During the planning stage of the writing process, teachers can use thinking to scaffold writing by asking learners to brainstorm what they think about the topic, preferably through group work or pair work (Buehl, 2011) or they can complete a mind map to help organise their thoughts. In addition to this, when the learners write their drafts, they inevitably shift into the positions of reader and thinker as they read what they have written and think about the best way to edit or move forward. Also, during the revision and editing stages, they have to read and think about how best to

implement the comments from the teacher or peers before writing their final drafts. This relationship between writer, thinker and reader is integral to the writing process.

2.6 Factors influencing teachers' pedagogy

2.6.1 Teacher Knowledge

In addition to processes of positioning and cognising during the stages of the writing process, it is also important to consider what teachers know, that is, teacher knowledge of and about writing. Theories of teacher knowledge have developed over time (Shulman, 1987; Wilson, Shulman & Richert, 1987; Grossman, 1990). Shulman (1987, p.7) states, "A teacher knows something not understood by the others, presumably the students. The teacher can transform understanding, performance skills or desired attitudes or values into pedagogical representation and actions." To do this, Shulman (1987) suggests that teachers should have the seven categories of the knowledge base - content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts and of educational ends, purposes, and values, and the philosophical and historical grounding of knowledge.

Grossman (1990) condensed Shulman's (1987) categories into four categories of teacher knowledge: context knowledge, subject matter knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and subject pedagogical knowledge. This means that she must have knowledge of how to adapt her general teaching to the particular school setting and individual learners; knowledge of the main concepts and facts and their relationships within that area; general knowledge skills and beliefs associated with teaching, principles of instruction and the aims and purposes of education; and have the ability to draw upon knowledge that is specific to teaching that particular subject. The figure below is a model of Grossman's teacher knowledge:

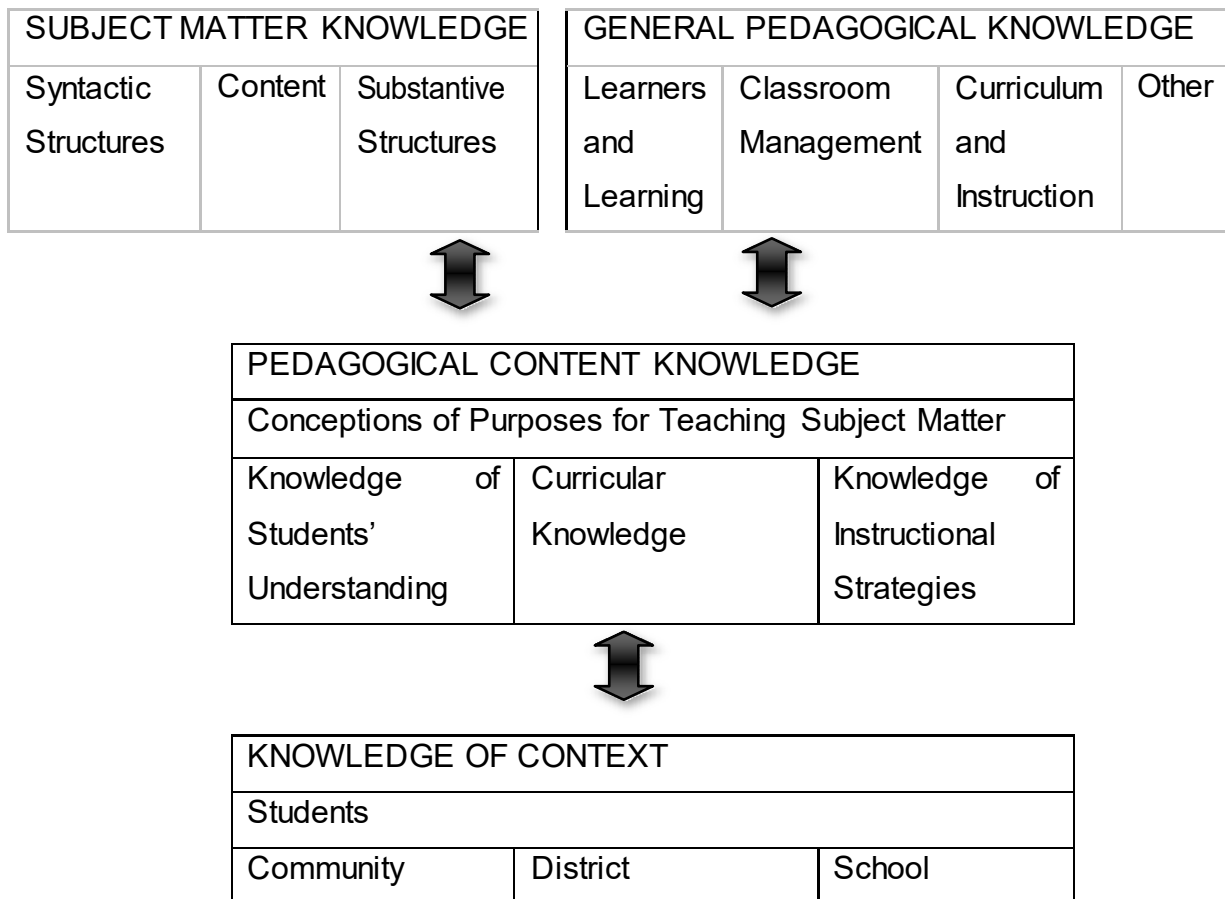


Figure 5: Model of teacher knowledge

Source: Grossman (1990, p.5)

Evident in the figure above is Grossman's (1990) integration of Shulman's (1987) curriculum knowledge and knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds into the category of general pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of learners and their characteristics and knowledge of educational contexts into knowledge of contexts. According to Grossman (1990, pp6-10), subject matter knowledge encompasses knowledge of the major concepts and facts and their relationship within the discipline, different paradigms that influence the organisation of the discipline and the questions that guide further enquiry, and how knowledge claims are evaluated by experts in the field. General pedagogical knowledge involves the teachers' general knowledge, skills and beliefs related to teaching, learners and learning, and the aims and purposes of education; knowledge of general teaching principles; and skills and knowledge about classroom management.

Pedagogical content knowledge includes knowledge and beliefs regarding the purposes of teaching the subject in different grades; knowledge of learners' understanding, and their conceptions and misconceptions of specific topics within the subject matter; and knowing different strategies and representations for teaching topics. Finally, knowledge of context means that the teacher has a knowledge of the constraints, opportunities and expectations of the district, the culture and departmental guidelines of the school setting, and learners' backgrounds, families, interests, strengths and weaknesses, all of which they must use to adapt their classroom practice to make it more context-specific.

While teaching, the teacher positions herself and her learners, using the above categories of her knowledge to instigate learning and enable learners to cognise the object of cognition. An instance of this might be during the drafting stage of the writing cycle, when the teacher adopts the position of facilitator and positions the learners as creative thinkers and writers. Using her knowledge of this stage of the writing process, she will adopt this position and walk around the class checking her learners' progress, suggesting ways that they could improve their content and correcting some spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. Using her knowledge of her learners, she will know which learners need more support and give them more attention. She could also use her knowledge of her learners to identify those who do not generally work on tasks, but instead position themselves as talkers or daydreamers, for example, and reposition them as writers and creative thinkers to ensure that they achieve the purpose of this stage, which would be to complete their drafts.

2.7 Boys and language learning

Historically, boys have performed better than girls academically. However, there seems to have been a shift, as statistics in the United States show that boys get most D's and F's and a minority of A's. in all 50 states; they obtain lower results than girls and have a higher high school dropout rate (Gurian & Stevens, 2010). Girls are surpassing boys in all learning areas, including those that were previously dominated by boys such as maths and science (Francis, 2000). In 2012 and 2013, South African learners in Grades 3, 6 and 9 wrote the Annual National Assessments (ANA) in home

language and maths. Below is a gender comparison of the results of assessments for Grade 6 boys and girls in maths and home language in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

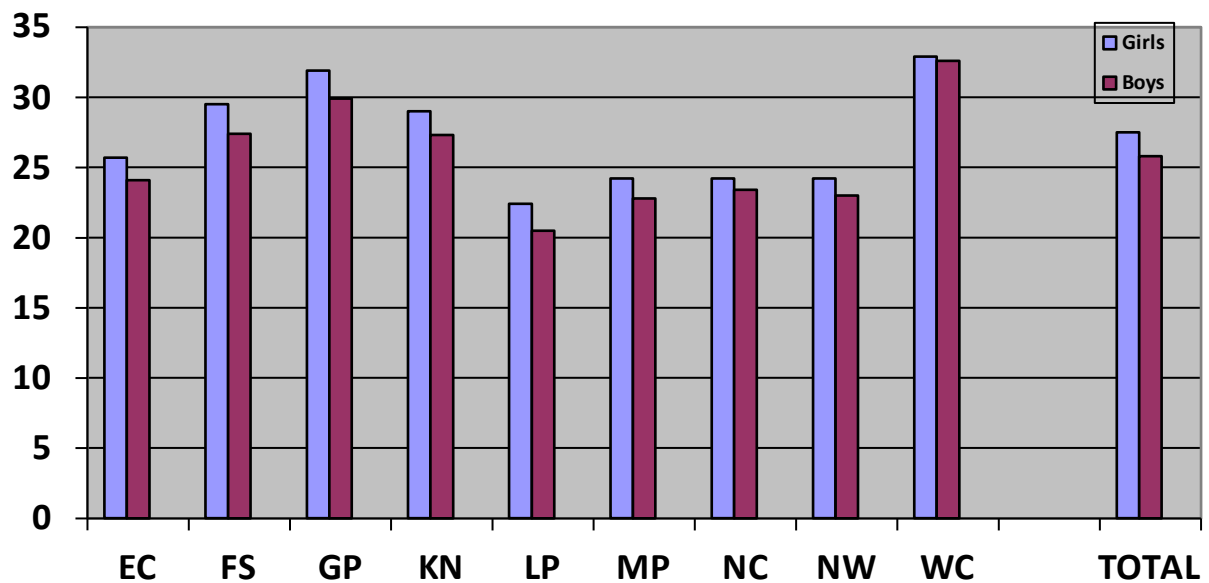


Figure 6: Average % mark in Grade 6 maths by gender in 2012

Source: DBE (2012, p.48)

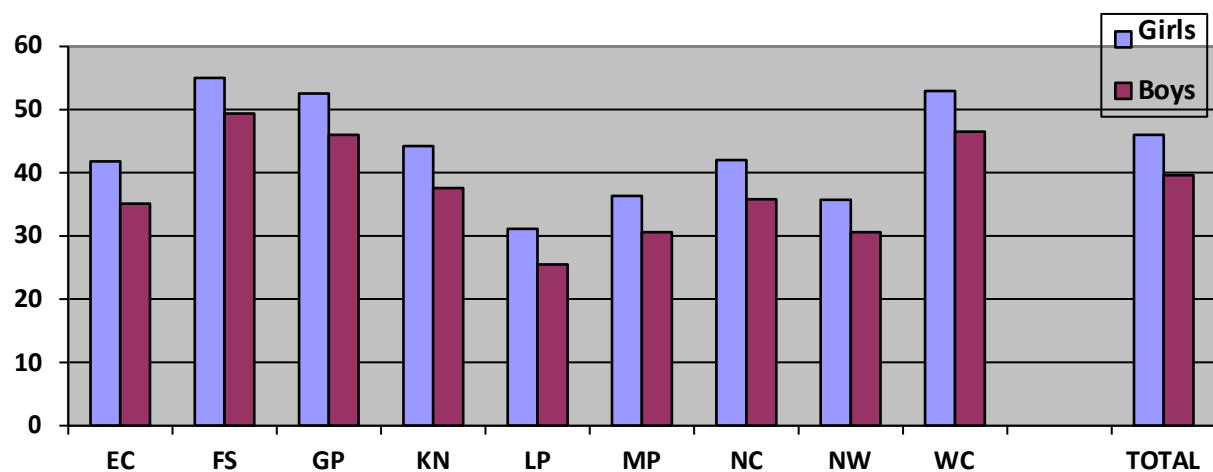


Figure 7: Average % mark in Grade 6 home language by gender in 2012

Source: DBE (2012, p.48)

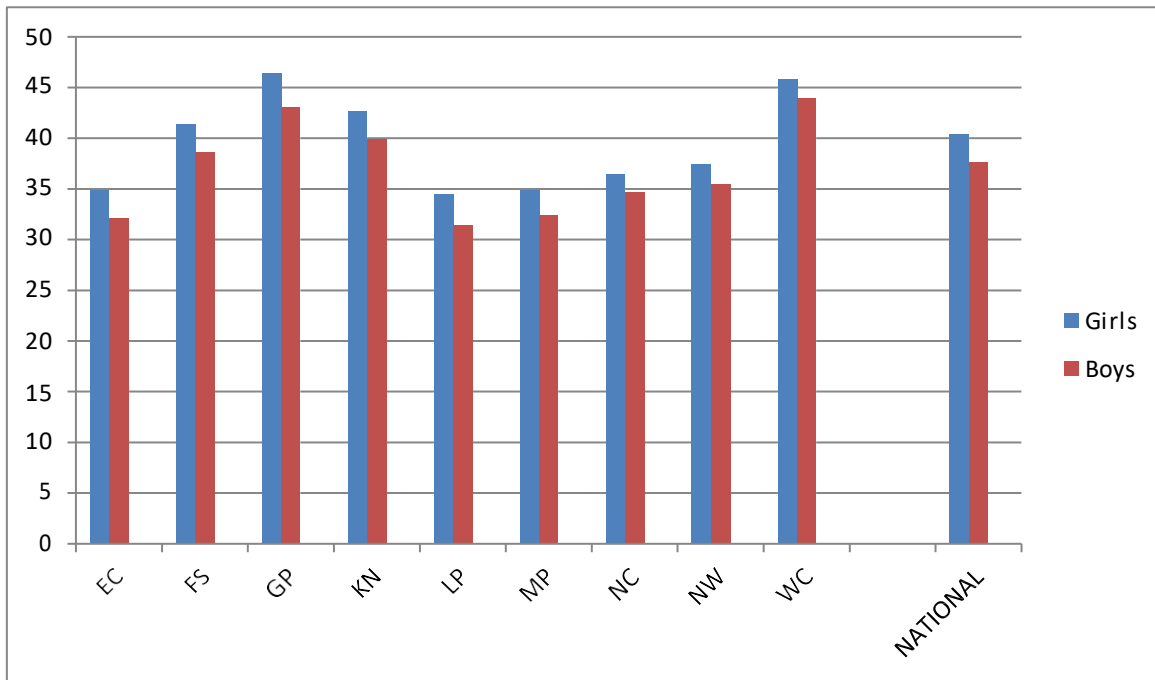


Figure 8: Average % mark in Grade 6 maths by gender in 2013

Source: DBE (2013, p.66)

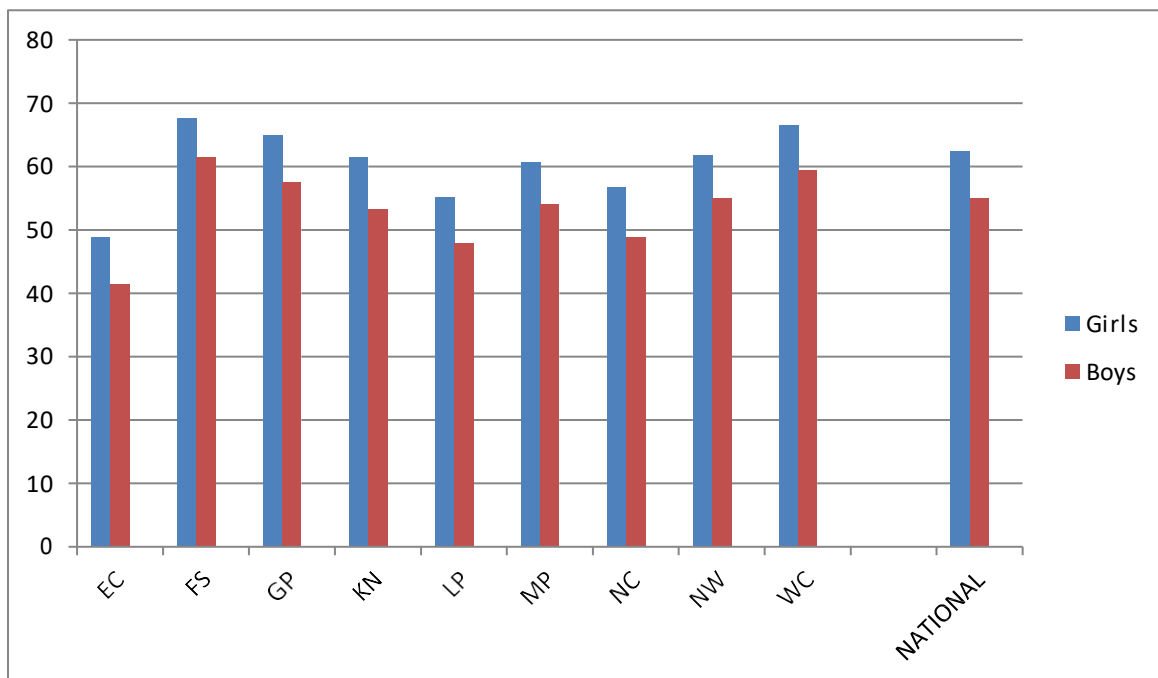


Figure 9: Average % mark in Grade 6 home language by gender in 2013

Source: DBE (2013, p.66)

These results clearly reflect that in both 2012 and 2013, in maths and home language

in all 9 provinces in South Africa, the girls achieved higher average percentages than the boys. The results obtained by the girls could be largely attributed to the feminist movement, which has fought to ensure women and girls receive fair and equal treatment and representation in all spheres (Francis, 2000). A further reason for the improvement could be the role that language plays in all learning areas. The link between all learning is language. To succeed in any learning, learners must have the ability to communicate effectively in the language of learning and teaching. A study conducted in Minnesota confirms this as it was found that students who performed better in language also achieved better results in other learning areas (Albus, Klein, Liu & Thurlow, 2004).

Francis and Skelton (2005) state that there is a significant gap which favours girls in language and learning internationally. Epstein, Elwood, Hey and Maw (1998) contend that girls' most marked area of success at school has been in languages. According to the 2006 PIRLS, South African Grade 5 girls achieved 421 points in reading achievement, while the boys achieved 384 points, and in 2011 the girls obtained 434 points, with the boys scoring a lower 408 points (Howie, et al, 2012). This trend was noted internationally in 2011, with girls obtaining 520 points, and boys scoring 504 points (Howie et al, 2012), and the gender gap in SA was the second highest in 2016 (Howie et al, 2017).

Furthermore, gender studies conducted internationally have also found the same. According to Zhao (2017, p.781) "The boy crisis is not unique in China. It has become an international phenomenon." These countries include the United States (Li & Sun, 2009), Australia (Pavy, 2006), Seychelles (Geisler & Pardiwalla, 2009), France (Pritchard, 1987) and Germany (Maubach & Morgan, 2001) and have all concluded that girls achieve better results in language than boys. Related to this, Clark and Trafford (1995) contend that the disparity between boys and girls in language performance is significant; therefore patterns of learning and teaching need to be reviewed. Gxilishe (1993) found the same to be true amongst Xhosa learners in South Africa, as the girls in his study performed better than the boys.

Similar findings were made by Kissau and Turnbull (2008), who explain that due to lack of male interest in language learning, girls continue to attain better results in the

language classroom. Zhao (2017) contends that reasons for the boys' academic inferiority include: influence of school and family education, lack of educational research and support from education departments, culture and social change, and physiological and psychological differences.

Scientific research suggests that girls outperform boys in language acquisition because the language area of the brain in girls develops before the areas used for spatial relations, whereas the opposite is true for boys (Sax, 1995). Additionally, it is easier for girls to discuss their emotions, whereas in boys, the regions involved in feeling are separate from those involved in talking (Sax, 1995). Zhao (2017, p.790) provides more insight in this regard:

- There is more dopamine content in boys' blood and more blood flowing through a boy's cerebellum, so it is more active. This could explain why boys prefer to move and experience challenges with sitting still in class.
- A boy's temporal lobe has a less powerful neural connection than a girls', which is why girls are better at hearing, particularly tone of voice. This means that boys will not do as well as girls in classrooms where much talking is prevalent as they prefer learning through doing.
- The memory area of the brain (hippocampus) differs for boys and girls. Boys need more time to remember what teachers say which may make them tired and give up easily.
- A boy's front lobe is less active and develops later than girls which is why boys make more impulsive decisions and why keeping them fixed in the seat of learning will reduce their learning.
- A girl's main language center develops earlier than boys and the blood flow to a boy's brain is less than that to a girl's. This slower blood flow means that they need to focus on a single task and continue deep learning for a long time. Changing tasks very often hinders their performance.

However, differences in academic performance between boys and girls extends beyond only physiological differences. Other reasons for boys performing poorer than girls could include social or psychological differences such as: boys' disregard for authority, academic work, homework and formal achievement; formation of concepts of masculinity in conflict with the ethos of the school; differences in attitudes to work;

girls' increased maturity and more effective learning strategies, with the emphasis on collaboration and sharing feelings; and teachers' tendency to interact differently with boys and girls (Younger, 2005). According to Chapman (1995) boys' poorer academic achievement could be attributed to the fact that the socialisation of gender is reinforced at school and is embedded in lessons and textbooks. Gender socialisation refers to the learning of behaviour and attitudes considered appropriate for a given sex by society (Maubach & Morgan, 2001). Boys learn to be 'boys' and girls learn to be 'girls'. This "learning" happens by way of different agents of socialisation like families, peers, mass media and schools (Maubach & Morgan, 2001).

Furthermore, the role that socialisation may play in boys achieving lower results and the way language educators connect with boys in their classrooms are extremely important because their influence in the classroom is greater than any other variable (Pavy, 2006). Boys are relational learners, so they need to connect with their teacher and show a higher level of productivity when the teacher creates a positive, structured, demanding and "no-nonsense" approach (Hawley & Reichert, 2010). In research conducted by Rowe, boys said that good teachers are firm, friendly, fun, fair and focused (as cited in Pavy, 2006). Additionally, Pavy (2006) states that a language educator who engages with boys is one who cares. This means that they connect with their learners, actively involve themselves in learning, are relaxed and have a sense of fun, are enthusiastic about the language that they are teaching and are able to strike a balance between fun and discipline.

In contrast, Zhao (2017) states that female teachers make up the larger portion of teachers in primary school which may not be favourable to boys who need male role models in school. Huang and Tang (2016, as cited in Zhao, 2017) contend that boys and girls receive the same education and evaluation in school with does not account for boys' learning needs. As such "departments of education and education researchers, to fully understand the urgency and significance of boy education, and provide the necessary intellectual support for boys' education" (Zhao, 2017, p.789). Zhao (2017, pp792-795) suggests the following 7 strategies to give boys and girls the same opportunities to compete in schools:

1. Create enough space for boys' growth
2. Objective evaluation of boys' inappropriate behaviour

3. Mobilize the power of parents
4. Create more display platforms in schools
5. Strengthen the development of the curriculum
6. Form flexible and effective mechanisms of process evaluation to keep boys' interested in learning
7. Develop boys' good learning habits in a planned way

As can be seen, there are many possible reasons and strategies suggested by researchers to account for the boys' academic crisis. However, the background, experiences and contexts of SA is different so there is still a need for reasons and strategies to privilege SA boys and help empower them academically.

2.8. Teaching boys writing

Whilst numerous gender studies have been conducted in SA schools (Morrell, 2000; Wood & Jewkes, 2001; Pattman & Bhana 2006; Bhana, 2015) no research into IP boys' writing development could be sourced. Instead, the focus of most of these studies is on gender violence and male and female sexual experiences (Pattman & Bhana, 2006). Pattman and Bhana (2006, p.252) state that in the West, boys have been the centre of concern particularly due to their educational underachievement, but in SA this concern is on the "presumed anti-social and delinquent nature of young black males" and not on their poor academic results. They further add that the underachievement of black boys receives no publicity, possibly because it is not considered a problem (Pattman & Bhana, 2006).

It is surprising that there is not more focus and research into boys' learning in the SA contexts as they have been obtaining poorer results than girls for many years. For instance, Gxilishe (1993) found that the sample of SA boys who participated in his study achieved lower results than the girls in language. It is only now 14 years later, with the results of the 2016 PIRLS has the plight of SA boys being taken seriously. In his study, Gxilishe (1993) assessed high school learners' oral achievement in isiXhosa. The current study builds on Gxilishe's research in terms of understanding an area of boys' language learning but differs as the focus is on IP boys' writing development in English.

Gxilishe (1993, p.18) states that girls may be performing better than boys in language learning because in SA the societal norm views languages as “feminine” (a view that is reinforced by the fact that women teachers increasingly dominate language teaching), personality, motivation, verbal fluency and attitude. More recently, in a study conducted by Olivier and Olivier (2016) amongst tertiary students, it was found that there was no difference in attitude towards writing between males and females. The same finding was made in a study conducted by Reddy (2017) into the attitudes of Grade 7 boys and girls toward Mathematics. This could indicate that boys have improved their attitude towards learning, but their continued underperformance would suggest that more than a change in attitude is required to bring about a noticeable improvement in their results.

Internationally, in studies conducted on middle school learners (approximately between 12–15 years old), Sax (2005) found that boys may be achieving lower results in language because they need different types of instruction due to biological differences. For instance, boys do not hear as well as girls do, their visual systems are better at seeing action and they are more energetic. In addition to this, King and Gurian (2006) state that researchers have identified more than one hundred structural differences between the male and female brain, hence they may need different writing instruction. These structural differences include verbal and spatial differences, which could explain why girls use more words on average and tend to think more verbally. Also, a boy’s frontal lobe develops slower than a girl’s, and at a later age. Thus, girls are less impulsive, can sit still, and read and write, and they learn to read and write at an earlier age, so they are generally better at literacy. Furthermore, girls’ brains generate more crosstalk between hemispheres, which means that they are better at multitasking. On the other hand, boys take more time to transition between writing tasks and become irritable when teachers continually move them from task to task. Thus, it is suggested that teachers should balance multitasking when developing boys writing skills with project-driven and depth-driven learning (King & Gurian, 2006).

Because of these differences, Weil (2008) motivates for separate classes for boys and girls, and Sax (2005) for separate schools. In the selected city in KZN where this study was conducted, most single sex schools are either ex-Model C or private schools. Due to contextual factors like a lack of resources, not enough male teachers or learners,

or a shortage of space, it may not be possible for public schools to have separate sex classes.

In order to assist teachers who teach mixed sex classes, based on the connection between brain science and classroom differences, King and Gurian (2006) suggest that teachers use same sex seating arrangements in the classroom and provide the following strategies to make the writing classroom more boy-friendly. One approach is to increase experiential and kinaesthetic learning opportunities by planning activities which keep boys energised and attentive and promoting healthy competition and movement around the classroom. Another approach is to address boys' visual-spatial needs with activities like story boards or drawing pictures as part of the planning stage in the writing process will help them to put down on paper what they are thinking. Opportunities providing options and letting them choose their own writing topics would address the different interests, boys and girls have and suit boys' stronger desire to choose their own (Higgins, 2002). Moreover, educators could make writing purposeful by connecting it to real-life situations. A last suggestion is to seek out male role models, which may also include older respected male learners, to visit the class and share their writing experiences.

Gurian and Stevens (2010, p.1) provide the following ten practical strategies, based on research and on a practical baseline for success to close gender gaps and raise student performance.

1. Teachers increase the use of graphics, pictures and storyboards in literacy-related classes and assignments.
2. Classroom methodology includes project-based education in which the teacher facilitates hands-on, kinaesthetic learning.
3. Teachers provide competitive learning opportunities, even while holding to cooperative learning frameworks.
4. Classroom curricula include skills training in time, homework and classroom management.
5. Approximately 50 percent of reading and writing choices in a classroom

are left up to the students themselves.

6. Teachers move around the classroom as they teach.

7. Students are allowed to move around as needed in classrooms, and they are taught self-discipline in their movement.

8. Male mentor systems permeate the school culture, including use of parent-mentors, male teachers, vertical mentoring (e.g. high school students mentoring elementary students), and male peer mentoring.

9. Teachers use boys-only (and girls-only) group work and discussion groups in core classes such as language, arts, maths, science and technology.

10. Teachers and counsellors provide skill building for sensitive boys (approximately 20 percent of males fall somewhere on the “sensitive boy” spectrum), and special education classes are taught by teachers trained in how to teach boys specifically.

These strategies increase motivation, diminish rates of acting out and failure and may increase girls’ performance. Adding to this, Pavy (2006) states that boys prefer content that is relevant to their lives, purposeful activities and progress indicators to show what they have achieved and how far they are from achieving their goals. Other factors that promote an improvement in boys’ writing include confident teachers who are able to make the writing curriculum relevant and create a writing culture in their classrooms by improving the learners’ attitude, purpose and motivation (Barrs & Pigeon, 2002). Furthermore, teaching must be structured with tools for learning such as visual and diagrammatic ways of organising information, writing templates and genre samples (Frater, 1998). Also, boys will be more motivated if any planning and drafting has clear aims (Barrs & Pigeon, 2002). Penny (1998) found that boys benefitted from reading and hearing their own and their peers’ drafts. Lastly, discipline must be maintained by using non-confrontational approaches such as praising learners in public and rebuking them in private. Boys also respond positively to receiving merits or awards, which can

encourage good behaviour and more effective writing (Frater, 1998). It could be argued that the above suggestions could possibly be applied to girls and benefit them in the writing classroom as well but if these strategies are specifically aimed at the boys it could be a starting point towards developing more tailored strategies to assist SA boys.

Pattman and Bhana (2006) provide some insight in this regard and recommend that the role of the teacher is crucial in working with young black males, so teachers must be caring, sympathetic, young person centred, and treat them with respect. The reason for these recommendations is that they found that black boys in SA have a bad reputation of being violent, sexually violent and disruptive. However, Pattman and Bhana (2006) found that the “bad” boys who participated in their study were good as they had a strong work ethic and attached a high importance to education. These boys also stated that working with girls was better as they helped them to concentrate and were less noisy. In their study, Pattman and Bhana (2006) highlight the plight of young black males in SA, who are not only negatively stereotyped, but also come from impoverished backgrounds. This means that many must seek part time employment at a young age, whilst still in school, and have the burden of being potential breadwinners in communities characterised by high unemployment rates (Pattman & Bhana, 2006).

The boys in their study also explained that they were always viewed as suspects and were often not given the opportunity to explain any action that was perceived as wrong by their teachers and principal. For instance, if something went missing, the black boys were singled out, or they were punished for arriving late for school when in fact their lateness was as a result of the poor transport many of them rely on (Pattman & Bhana, 2006). To add to their challenges, they are still learning English, and many are learning through the medium of English in a schooling system that does not accommodate their specific needs and challenges. The recommendations that Pattman and Bhana (2006) suggest go some way in catering for boys in the classroom, but they are not specific enough to assist SA IP boys improve their writing skills, and possibly their overall academic performance. In fact, there seems to be a gap in SA literature in this regard. This is significant for my study because out of the 39 boys who participated, 23 were black. Understanding how the challenges described above may impede their writing

development and analysing the strategies that their teachers may use to help them overcome these challenges, could contribute to the dearth of research in this area.

2.9 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyse the writing experiences, challenges and perceptions of Grade 6 boys and their teachers in the English HL classroom. Thus, this chapter has discussed some key literature pertaining to writing and the development of learners' writing skills, with emphasis on FAL and boys in the Intermediate Phase. Writing in the SA context, approaches to teaching writing, strategies for scaffolding writing, theories of teacher knowledge and boys learning were explored.

Revealing in the literature reviewed here are several key issues. The importance of writing, a fundamental twenty-first century skill, linked to academic success in all subjects at all levels of education, cannot be over-estimated. Sadly, however, SA learners are poor writers, which may be the result of several factors. Firstly, the CAPS is deficient in terms of providing guidance for teaching and assessing writing. Secondly, teachers in SA, because of their limited schooling and training, may not necessarily be knowledgeable about how to teach and assess writing as per the conflated process genre approach that is adopted by the CAPS. Thirdly, they must deal with language barriers, time constraints, large classes and learners from diverse backgrounds when developing their learners' writing skills. Fourthly, research into writing, especially boys' learning in SA is limited. More research of teaching and learning writing practices, and boys' learning are needed to find possible solutions to address the poor performance of SA learners in national and international assessments. Finally, policy makers need to take cognisance of the role that writing plays in reading development and all aspects of learning. Literacy includes writing, but writing remains neglected with no interventions made by the DBE to improve teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge of writing. There are also no direct interventions to develop learners' writing skills or strategies to assist boys bridge the gender gap; this illustrates why this study is indeed warranted.

In the chapter that follows, I present methodology used in this study to collect and

analyse data pertaining to how Grade 6 boys' writing is developed at the two participating schools.

CHAPTER 3:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the process involved in conducting the study is discussed and the approach and methods selected are justified by citing appropriate literature. Explaining the research methodology and design is important to show how all the major components of the study, such as sampling, data collection methods and analysis, work together to address the key research questions.

In conducting this study, I hoped to gain insight into boys' development of a vital language skill, writing, that is not only connected to other language skills such as listening, reading and speaking, but also to all other learning in school. Thus, my intention was to describe the approaches that the participating teachers take when teaching boys' writing, how the boys respond to these approaches, and the positioning of the teachers and learners during the stages of the writing cycle.

The key research questions are:

- How do teachers and boys perceive the affordances of the writing cycle?
- Why do they perceive the affordances of the writing cycle the way they do?
- How do teachers develop their learners' writing skills?
- Why do they develop their learners' writing skills the way they do?
- How do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle, if at all?
- Why do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle the way they do?

To answer these questions and thus gain insight into these boys and their writing development, this study was a qualitative case study, conducted under the interpretivist paradigm. To gain an in-depth understanding of the teachers' and boys' perceptions, challenges and experiences, semi-structured interviews, structured observation schedules and questionnaires were the chosen data collection methods.

3.2 Research approach

3.2.1 The Interpretive Paradigm

Paradigms are ways of seeing the world and define how to research what is acceptable for researchers who adopt this view (Christiansen Bertram & Land, 2010). Terre Blanche and Durheim (1999) extend on this definition of paradigms as systems of interrelated assumptions about epistemology, which is the nature of the relationship between what can be known and the knower; ontology, which is the nature and form of reality and methodology, that is, the way the researcher researches what she believes can be known. Within a research paradigm, the purposes and techniques of the framework must fit to ensure that the research design is coherent.

The three major paradigms are post-positivist, interpretivist and the critical paradigm. In the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher's focal point is describing how people make meaning of their worlds and their particular actions, rather than aiming to predict what people will do, as in the post-positivist paradigm (Christiansen et al., 2010). Interpretivists aim to understand, and are interested in observing and understanding people's behaviour, attitudes, perceptions and beliefs and how they make sense of the contexts in which they live and work (Christiansen et al., 2010, p.23).

The key words relating to this paradigm are engagement, participation and collaboration (Henning, van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004). Thus, in the interpretivist paradigm the researcher is a participant observer, who separates the meanings of actions as they occur within the given social contexts, as opposed to the researcher standing above or outside this context (Carr & Kemmis, 1989, p.88). In conducting this research, I sought to gain insight into my participants' teaching and learning of writing by observing their behaviour during the writing lessons, determining how they viewed these writing lessons using the process genre approach and noting their positioning during the stages of this writing process. Thus, I believe the interpretivist paradigm was appropriate for this study, as it allowed for a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions, beliefs, challenges and experiences of the writing programme.

This paradigm was also deemed suitable in relation to the qualitative research design of this study, because it attempts to understand human and social reality, that is, how the participants experience and view the development of writing using the process genre approach. This study did not aim to change the participants' behaviour (critical paradigm) or seek to find a truth (post-positivist paradigm) but was instead concerned with exploring and understanding a particular occurrence in a particular classroom setting, so operating within an interpretivist paradigm was most suitable.

Guba and Lincoln (1994), who have taken the lead in the understanding of research paradigms, provide three assumptions about interpretivism. The first is that the purpose of educational research is to understand the meaning, which informs human behaviour. The purpose of this research was to understand how the teachers' categories of knowledge and the boys' and teachers' positioning informed their behaviour in the classroom, thus the first assumption can be said to be pertinent. The second is that there is a set of truths or realities, which are non-generalisable, historical, local and specific. The third assumption is that results are created through the interpretation of data. What may be viewed as a truth for the classrooms in this study may not be found in other schools, even though the contexts may be similar. The results in this study were drawn from thematic, positioning and document analysis and interpretation, making the second and third assumptions relevant here.

3.2.2 Qualitative research

Qualitative research is concerned with understanding some area of social life, is categorised by its aims, and generates words, rather than numbers, as data that need to be analysed (Brikci & Green, 2007, p.2). The data collected for this study from the questionnaires and during the interviews and observations were textual and sought to understand a social aspect of the participants' lives in the writing classroom.

In addition to the social aspect and textual data, a qualitative research style best suited this study for a few reasons. Qualitative data are verbal or textual data that are collected when depth is required (Christiansen et al, 2010). To gain a clear picture of the boys, their teachers and the writing programme, in-depth, rich data were required, so the qualitative research design was most suitable for the study, as both textual and verbal data were needed. This research style allowed for the collection of verbal data

in the form of the teachers' accounts of writing during their interviews and in their teaching of writing, and of textual data in the form of the boys' written efforts and their teachers' feedback. The qualitative research design also allowed for an in-depth analysis of data in relation to the research questions, and enabled me to provide descriptions of the participants' contexts and their experiences, challenges and perceptions during the development of writing skills.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001, p.15) state that qualitative research assumes that multiple realities are socially constructed through individual and collective perceptions of the same situation. This kind of research is also concerned with understanding a social phenomenon from the perspective of the participants. The study provided a detailed description, analysis and interpretation of phenomena and data collected in the form of the participants' words (verbal descriptions) to portray the richness and complexity of events (the teaching and learning of writing) that occur in a natural setting (the Grade 6 HL English classroom) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p.41). To accomplish this, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions were used, as they allowed the teachers to share their experience and challenges of the writing programme, and of other related aspects of their lives. I designed and used an activity-based questionnaire (evaluated and discussed in the next chapter) to allow the boys to share their experiences and the challenges of the writing programme in a manner that suited their learning preferences. Thus, the data collected in this small-scale study were mostly the words obtained from the interviews, questionnaire, lesson observations and boys' written submissions with their teachers' feedback, which took place in the natural setting of the English classroom.

Qualitative research is criticised because of the small sample sizes which do not always represent the larger population, so the extent to which the findings can be generalised is difficult to measure (Brikci & Green, 2007). This critique of qualitative research is not applicable to this study, as it was not the intention to generalise the findings to other contexts, although these findings could be used comparatively with those other contexts. Another criticism of qualitative research is that the findings may lack rigour and may be biased by the researchers' opinions (Brikci & Green, 2007). These issues are addressed under '3.7 Trustworthiness' below.

a. Researcher Positionality

The role of the researcher in qualitative research cannot be ignored as it may have an impact on the research process. It is thus essential that I acknowledge my positionality in this study.

I taught English at HL level to both mother tongue and FAL learners for about thirteen years, during which time I continued with my studies, and tutored language modules on the Advanced Certificate in Education. I thoroughly enjoyed the interaction in the tertiary space with those teachers who were looking to upgrade their qualifications. As I grew as a researcher, I realised that I wanted to become more involved in teacher training, so I moved into a full-time position lecturing language modules to student teachers.

There are many similarities between the participating teachers in this study and I as we come from the same racial group, so we attended schools that were designated for Indian learners during the apartheid era. These schools were generally well run but were limited in terms of resources such as sporting equipment and libraries. In these schools we learnt how to read and write but our exposure to different genres was limited as was the development of our critical thinking skills. We mainly read and wrote narrative essays and letters. The teacher usually gave us a topic which we wrote about and submitted. The teacher would then mark the essay by correcting all the errors, assigning a mark and writing a comment such as 'good' or 'poor effort'. Teachers often emulate their teachers or adopt aspects from their schooling when they teach (Mather, 2012). Adding to this, I have many years of experience teaching language to large classes of mixed IP learners, including classes of FAL learners learning English at HL level. Thus, I can better understand the schooling system that the participating teachers experienced. I am also able to identify with some of their challenges and frustrations in the writing classroom. However, there are also differences as I have furthered my studies, developed my role as a researcher and now occupy lecturing position at tertiary level. As such, I need to constantly be aware of how my positions may affect the dynamics in the classroom and, also guard against being judgemental or overly critical of the participating teachers.

In terms of the boys, their learning has become an increasing area of interest for me.

I have always found that the boys in my classes added a fun element to the lessons. Many boys also proved to be more challenging academically and behaviourally than the girls in my classes. The girls seemed to be more organised, participatory and obliging, whilst the boys made up the majority for incomplete homework and needed more encouragement to complete written activities. It is with these preconceived ideas of boys that I am conducting this research, so I must acknowledge that these might be unique to my classrooms and may not be the case in the classes in this study, so I must take care to report what I see as a researcher and not use my practitioner experience to make assumptions about these boys and teachers.

3.3 Research approach

With a case study, the researcher aims to capture the reality of the participants' thoughts and experiences regarding a situation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). An exploratory, inductive case study research design was used to: (a) to gain a better understanding of the issues surrounding the teaching and learning of boys' writing; (b) generate ideas for a more extensive study and establish priorities for future research; and (c) develop new interpretations or theories of certain areas of interest (Cohen et al., 2000). A case may be a programme, an event, an activity or a set of individuals bounded in place and time and is chosen to either illustrate an issue or because of its uniqueness (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The case in this study was the Grade 6 writing programme in two English HL classrooms so this study was a multiple case study.

Bassey (1999) states that educational case study is empirical, conducted within a confined boundary of time and space. It probes into interesting features of a programme in its natural context with the intention of informing policy makers, theorists or practitioners. This case study is confined to the teaching and learning of writing in two specific schools at the specific time that this teaching took place. Thus there are bounds on space, that is, two Grade 6 English HL classrooms; on category, that is, the teaching and learning of writing; on theme, that is, writing development, using the stages of the writing cycle; and also on time because the research was conducted for the duration of a specific time which was the time that it took for the teachers and boys to complete a cycle of the process genre approach.

The case study design best suited this research in that it provided the opportunity to gain deeper insight into how boys are taught and how they learn writing. By focusing on a limited, defined instance of the writing cycle, the actions of teaching, learning and writing were studied and contributed to, and meant that as a single researcher I could collect and analyse the data myself.

Due to the responsive nature of case studies, adaptations must be made for unanticipated events. In this study, adjustments to accommodate comparative case study, which only became apparent during data analysis, had to be made. Comparing the two schools was inevitable, as the choices that the teachers made and approaches that they used when developing their learners' writing skills had some similarities and differed to a large extent. This was also true for the boys' responses in the activity-based questionnaire and in their final submissions, and in the teachers' marking of those submissions. According to Goodrick (2014), comparative case studies emphasise comparison across and within contexts over time and involve the analysis and synthesis of the patterns, differences and similarities across two or more cases. In this study, the cases that were compared were the writing programme in School A and the writing programme in School B. A limitation suggested by Goodrick (2014) is that findings may be less reliable if there is too much of a time lag in the comparison activity, but this was not an issue in this study as the data was collected from each school during the same week, as both teachers were involved with writing development at the same time.

3.4 Data collection methods

To collect the rich, in-depth data required for this study, the teachers were interviewed, the sample of male learners completed questionnaires and the lessons that made up the writing programme were observed. In addition to this, the sample of boys' writing efforts from the planning stage of the writing process to the final assessment feedback provided by their teacher was collected and analysed.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Conducting research with children, particularly boys as in this case, can be

unpredictable. However, if the researcher carefully considers the research process and instruments used, rich, in-depth data can be elicited. The purpose of this section is to provide a rationale for the design of the activity-based questionnaire. Through this questionnaire, the boys would be given a voice to express how their perceptions and challenges that they encountered when writing. The boys' responses in the questionnaire also provided me with the opportunity to see if the lessons that I observed and the responses that the teachers provided during the interviews were similar to the regular occurrences of their writing lessons. The boys were asked to complete the questionnaire at the end of the cycle of the writing process to enable them to reflect on their writing skills development and challenges and to make links to previous writing lessons. 39 boys completed the questionnaire: 21 from School A and 18 from School B. They took approximately an hour to complete the questionnaire.

a. Rationale for the design and use of the activity-based questionnaire

Eliciting children's perceptions and experiences can be of value to research because children provide new insights into their daily lives that are free from adult interpretations (Laws & Mann 2004). Researchers use a variety of methods when conducting research with children, which should be child-appropriate. Shaw, Brady and Davy (2011, p.20) provide the following general guidelines to consider when conducting research with children:

- Data collection must be brief and concise because children have a shorter attention span than adults.
- An informal, open environment must be created.
- The approach should emphasise that there are no correct or incorrect answers.
- Short questions and simple language should be used while abstract concepts ought to be avoided.
- Researchers should be aware that questions may not be interpreted as intended.

- Data collection tools must be accessible (content, length, format and language), based on the age and intellect of the children.
- Piloting of the data collection tools is essential.

While various methods are advocated for conducting research with children, including focus groups (Hennessey & Heary, 2005), observations (Christiansen et al, 2010; Mather, 2012) and participatory methods (Shaw *et al.*, 2011), an interactive questionnaire was used to elicit data from the boys in this study.

A questionnaire is a list of questions, either open-ended or closed-ended or both, which the participants answer (Christiansen *et al.*, 2010) to elicit attitudes, beliefs or reactions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The activity-based questionnaire was selected for this study of boys' writing in view of the following factors. Boys do not always have a long attention-span and need to move around periodically (Zhao, 2017), so the data collection method should allow for variety, choice and movement. They also need to see the purpose of what they are doing and be interested enough to provide meaningful responses. Shaw et al. (2011) state that, to maintain their interest when collecting data from children, the researcher must be clear at the outset about what is expected from their participation. Another factor Shaw et al. (2011) caution against, is making unreasonable demands on their time. In the case of this study, negotiating time with the boys' teachers to collect data from them was challenging, because there was not much time to spare due to the sequence and pace of the CAPS.

Initially I wanted to interview the boys at the end of the observed writing cycle as this would have possibly allowed me to gain greater insight into the boys' experiences and challenges. However, both teachers were unable to allocate time for interviews and one teacher expressed concerns that their parents would not want them to miss any work. I suggested using breaks or after school, but the teacher explained that most of their learners were reliant on the schools' feeding scheme during break and travelled with public transport to and from school. Thus, I engaged with the boys while they were completing the questionnaire at the Help Desk and by walking around, noting any questions or comments that they had. As such, contextual factors, pre-pubescent

boys' learning preferences and different data collection methods were all considered and evaluated (the discussion of each is provided below) which led to the design of the activity-based questionnaire.

b. Conducting research with boys

As the focus of the study was the boys and their teachers' experiences, with emphasis on their perceptions and challenges of teaching and learning writing using the process genre approach. The need for self-reported data pertaining to the participants' experiences and challenges arose, so the teachers were interviewed. The initial plan was to also interview the boys. However, after reviewing the literature related to boys' learning preferences and what an interview entails and unsuccessfully trying to negotiate time with the teachers to conduct interviews with the boys, this was reconsidered. To elicit rich, in-depth data would have required interviewing each boy for not less than 30 minutes on two occasions. The teachers explained that this would be time consuming as it would disrupt their normal teaching programme. Thus, there was a need for an alternative method to elicit the required data from the boys.

Finally, the idea of using questionnaires was considered. It was surmised that this data collection tool could work best, as it could be administered to all the boys at the same time with the researcher present to provide clarity should there be any misunderstandings. The use of open-ended questions would certainly have elicited in-depth responses but expecting young boys to sit still and provide responses to a questionnaire may not have elicited trustworthy responses, as they may have rushed to complete the questionnaire without really thinking about their responses. Choosing closed-ended questions that required the boys to simply choose the most appropriate response may have been unstimulating for them and may have limited the depth of the data.

c. Design of the activity-based questionnaire

An activity-based questionnaire was designed that would be enjoyable for the boys, allow for movement, cater to the boys' different learning styles and not be too time consuming. 39 boys (21 from School A and 18 from School B) completed the

questionnaire after having been through a cycle of the writing process. The specific purpose of the questionnaire as a data collection instrument was to gain insight into how the boys perceived and experienced a cycle of the writing programme and the challenges that they may have encountered when writing. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section was “General”, which required information pertaining to the boy’s age, address and so on. The second was “School”, where the boys provided insight into their school experiences such as their best friends, favourite subjects and favourite and least favourite aspects of school. The third section was “English”, to determine the boys’ favourite and least favourite aspects of learning English. The last section was “Writing”. Here boys indicated the genres of writing that they did in class, their favourite and least favourite types of writing, and difficulties that they experienced when completing a piece of writing. They also had to draw a picture of a writing lesson. The purpose of the drawing exercise was to elicit visual representations of how the boys experienced a cycle of the writing process. Shaw et al. (2011, p.23) state that pictures are best used for capturing the participants’ ideas or thoughts to supplement interview or focus group data and must be accompanied by a caption so that the participating children are given the opportunity to explain their drawings. Thus, I included a block at the bottom of the page allocated for their drawing of how they learnt writing, and for them to write a paragraph to explain the picture.

The draft questionnaire was three pages long, with a blank fourth page for the boys to draw their pictures and write a paragraph. Three workstations and a help desk were created in the classrooms where the questionnaire was administered. At the first workstation, the boys would come to complete parts of the questionnaire that required them to write answers using pens. The second workstation contained crayons and coloured pens for the boys if they needed to colour in or draw. The last workstation was for the boys to use stickers for the different parts of the questionnaire. This allowed for movement, which, according to Zhao (2017), is necessary, so that the boys would not get restless and fidgety.

Each of the three workstations that they boys had to go to was represented by a symbol, and these symbols appeared in the relevant place on the questionnaire to indicate to the boys which station they would need to go to. For example, the following star image was the symbol for station 2:



Thus, on this questionnaire, wherever the boys saw this symbol, they would have to go to station 2 to use the stickers provided. An example taken from the questionnaire is provided below.



5. Pick your favourite sticker and stick it on your favourite subject. Then stick a green star on your least favourite subject.

ENG	AFRIK	ZULU	MATHS	LIFESKILLS	SS	NS
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This questionnaire assumed that the boys would be able to read and understand the instructions, so it was vital to ensure that these were unambiguous, clear and pitched at the appropriate level. For instance, instead of using the word *genre*, *types of texts* was used, and instead of using *descriptive*, *narrative*, *expository* and *visual*, simpler terms like *stories*, *descriptions*, *news reports* and *adverts* were used. I paid careful consideration to the font size and type to ensure that the boys would be able to read the instructions with ease and not risk missing any questions.

Another consideration, taken from King and Gurian (2006), was giving the boys the freedom to make their own choices. Thus, in the pilot questionnaire they could choose their favourite stickers and use their favourite colours for certain aspects. In this way, some effects of socialisation on these boys could also be observed, because colours like pink are considered more female-oriented colours while blue is a favourite for boys. There was also a range of stickers provided such as hearts, stars, flowers, cars and other motor vehicles, and stickers of handbags, shoes and cosmetics.

d. Piloting and adapting the questionnaire


I piloted the questionnaire at a public school with eight Grade 6 boys. The aim of the pilot was to test and refine the questionnaire to ensure that I obtain rich, thick data, that are congruent to my area of research, in the final run. The teacher introduced me to the boys before she left the classroom. This happened during an English period of

sixty minutes. I proceeded to explain the purpose of the questionnaire, how they would use the workstations to complete it and the general rules to maintain order. The workstations were set up on the far ends of the classroom and the Help Desk was in the front by the teacher's table. The boys moved around freely and easily and had a great amount of fun with the stickers and colours. They took about one hour to complete the questionnaire.

After piloting the questionnaire, I decided to add something to accommodate the boys' competitive nature, as boys enjoy healthy competition (King & Gurian, 2006). I added instructions that would make the boys look for certain items at the different workstations and whoever found the item was instructed to bring it to the Help Desk to claim a reward. The reward instructions also ensured that the boys were reading all the questions and instructions carefully. There were four reward instructions, an example of which is given below:

find a pink pen and bring it to the help desk to claim your reward

According to King and Gurian (2006), boys prefer to make their own choices so the instruction pertaining to their favourite subjects was changed to allow the boys to choose their favourite stickers to indicate their favourite subjects. At the workstation a selection of motor vehicle, handbag, cosmetic and shoe stickers were included. In addition to allowing choice, it allowed me to see which stickers the boys would choose, as they did with their favourite colours and the colour flower stickers they chose to mark their age. The modification is shown below.

1.  Pick your favourite sticker and stick it on your favourite subject. Then stick a green star on your least favourite subject.

ENG	AFRIK	ZULU	MATHS	LIFESKILLS	SS	NS
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This previously read as follows:



1. Stick 3 smiley faces on your favourite subject. Then stick 3 sad faces on your least favourite subject.

ENG	AFRIK	ZULU	MATHS	LIFESKILLS	SS	NS
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From the pilot, further modifications were made to the questionnaire regarding formatting and font size to improve readability and ease of use.

3.4.2 Interviews

To gain insight into how the teachers perceive the affordances of the writing programme, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) state that semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to clarify topics and ask the participant to provide further details, and extend or elaborate on their responses, thus inviting in-depth, full and honest answers. A structured interview is an oral administration of a set of questions in person prepared in advance, from which the participant may select a response from alternatives provided (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p.40). The interviews gave the teachers a voice to express their challenges when developing their boys' writing skills. It also allowed me to gain insight into their pedagogical knowledge and compare how they viewed their teaching methods when teaching writing with how the boys' views and my views during the lesson observations.. This study also investigated an aspect of the participants' lives in detail, so to extract the amount of detail necessary to validate the findings, semi-structured interviews were most appropriate.

According to Christiansen et al. (2010), interviews have several advantages. With face to face interviews, the researcher is present with the respondent, so questions can be elaborated on and clarified. The researcher also has the flexibility to probe and ask further questions to obtain more detail if the response provided was vague or insufficient. In addition, participants may find it easier to provide oral responses to an interviewer, rather than write long responses in a questionnaire. This means that interviews could elicit more detailed responses and thus a more complete picture.

For the purposes of this study, two Grade 6 English Home Language teachers were interviewed for an hour after the observations to try and guard against them adapting their teaching based on what was discussed during the interviews. The time and place for the interviews were determined by the participating teachers, as their comfort and ease were paramount for them to be willing to share details of their experiences of the writing programme. Christiansen et al. (2010) state that interviews can generate large amounts of textual data when transcribed which may be overwhelming for the researcher, so the focus of the questions during these interviews was to gain insight into the perceptions, challenges and experiences of the participating teachers and male learners during the different stages (planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading and presenting) of the writing process. The interview schedule consisted of four sections: general (focussing on some biographical details); the teachers' own experiences of writing as school learners, in primary school and high school; their pre-service training; and their current teaching practices (see Appendix 4).

During the interview process the participants had to be given full attention to ensure that information was not overlooked, salient points were elaborated on and clarity could be obtained. In addition to this, it was important to make sure that if a participant provided a sufficient response to a question that was further down the interview schedule as part of a response to a previous question, that question was not asked. Therefore, a tape recorder was used. Using a *GoPro* video recorder instead of taking detailed notes also kept the conversation flowing and ensured that valuable information was not lost or forgotten, as note taking requires summarising and there is a risk that all relevant information may not be captured. The use of the *GoPro* video recorder also saved time that would have been lost taking notes while the participant sat waiting to hear the next question. It was less intrusive than a regular video camera, so the participants were more comfortable and relaxed during the interviews.

In addition to providing the teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their experiences of and challenges with the writing programme, these interviews provided me with insight into their perceptions of teaching writing using the writing cycle. The one-on-one conversation and personal manner elicited detailed information about the participants' writing experiences. However, a disadvantage of interviews is that they can result in self-reported data which may be inaccurate representations, so these

ones needed to be verified with observations (Christiansen et al., 2010).

3.4.3 Observations

Observation requires the researcher to go into a school or classroom and examine what is occurring. It can be described as a powerful method for gaining insight into situations (Christiansen et al., 2010). During an observation, the researcher can see what is happening rather than rely on the perspectives of others. In the case of this study, observing the lessons meant that the accounts provided by the participants during the interviews could be verified. I was also provided with the opportunity to experience the development of the boys' writing rather than relying solely on reported accounts of what transpired in these writing classrooms.

Christiansen et al. (2010) draws a distinction between structured and unstructured observation. The latter means that the researcher focuses on one or two aspects to observe and makes notes, which are free descriptions on those aspects. This requires more than one person to collect data, as it is not possible for one person to notice everything. On the other hand, a structured observation schedule has specific categories and checklists and is used when the researcher directly observes a phenomenon, then systematically records what is being observed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Structured observation works best when the researcher has a very clear idea of what she is looking for and uses a structured observation schedule with observation categories that have been worked out in advance (Christiansen et al., 2010).

Structured observations were used for this study to record what transpired during a cycle of the writing process in each school. The first part of the schedule allowed for me to record general information such as the date, name of school etc. Next was a table which included specific areas of focus with question for me to respond as the lesson unfolded. Following this was a table to tick the phase of the writing cycle. I also included a space to note the duration of the lesson and finally I allocated two large sections to make notes, guided by two questions (See Appendix 6). In School A the teacher used three one-hour lessons and in School B this cycle was completed in four one-hour lessons. The reason for observing the lessons was to ascertain how the writing process was taught and viewed, how the boys and teachers positioned

themselves during the different stages of the writing process and the challenges that they encountered. The clear intentions behind what needed to be observed made using a structured observation schedule work best and leaving blank spaces on the schedule for additional notes provided the opportunity to include aspects that were observed but not included in the schedule. Therefore, all aspects of the interaction that were relevant to the teaching of writing were observed. Christiansen et al. (2010) state that a potential weakness of observations is that what the researcher chooses to write down and how the classroom interactions are interpreted depends on his or her view of the world, and it is impossible to observe everything that is happening. To take account of this weakness, in addition to the structured observation schedule, I used a *GoPro* video recorder to ensure that information was not lost or omitted. The *GoPro* video recorder was able to capture the whole class (as it is a wide-angle recorder) and the detail of body language and facial expressions. It was advantageous in this instance, as it was smaller and more compact than a regular video recorder so was non-invasive, which meant that the teachers and learners were more likely to behave naturally and thus provide an accurate and natural picture of the regular occurrences of their writing lessons.

Another potential weakness of observations is that the researcher may not fully understand the meanings of some of the interactions in the classroom (Christiansen et al., 2010) so the teachers were interviewed after the lessons were observed, which provided me with the opportunity to clarify anything about the interactions that I did not understand. Another reason for conducting the observations before the interviews was to ensure that the participants would not be aware of the specific details which may have been revealed by the type of questions asked during the interview. Thus, the possibility of the teachers displaying the Hawthorne effect was reduced. The Hawthorne effect is a term used for a situation when participants behave in a manner or provide responses that appear to be more positive or conforming to what they think the researcher is looking for (Christiansen et al., 2010). The possibility of the participants in this study behaving differently during the classroom observations was expected, so interviews and questionnaires were also used. Table 7 below shows the different methods of data collection and which research question each method addresses and highlights how triangulation occurred in this study.

Table 7: Data collection				
Key research question	Interviews	Questionnaires	Observations	Written submissions
How do teachers and boys perceive the affordances of the writing cycle?	X	X		
Why do they perceive the affordances of the writing cycle the way they do?	X	X		
How do teachers develop their learners' writing skills?	X	X	X	X
Why do they develop their learners' writing skills the way they do?	X		X	X
How do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle, if at all?	X		X	X
Why do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle the way they do?	X		X	X

3.5 Data analysis and interpretation

Following data collection is data analysis, a process which McMillan and Schumacher (2001) describe as inductive organising of the data into categories and then finding of patterns within those categories was used. Christiansen et al. (2010) explain that inductive reasoning starts with the raw data that are collected. Within these raw data, patterns and regularities are sought which form a basis for formulating some tentative hypotheses that need to be investigated. Thereafter, general conclusions and theories may be drawn. The data were analysed using content analysis, the process genre approach and a positioning theory perspective. Thus, the teachers' and boys' experiences and challenges during the stages of the writing cycle, their positioning during those stages and the effect that those positions had on them being able to know

the object of cognition were examined. Content analysis is a process whereby texts are analysed, reduced, interrogated and summarised using pre-existing categories as well as emergent themes for testing or generating theories (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). By analysing my data using this method, I was able to refine my data into themes and smaller categories.

The data that were analysed for this study were video recordings from the observations (3 lessons were observed in School A and B), completed questionnaires and interviews, notes from the structured observation schedule and the boys' written submissions, 21 from School A and 18 from School B. The data analysis process began with me listening to and watching the video recordings of the interviews, completion of the questionnaire and lesson observations several times. Next, I began transcribing the recordings verbatim using two laptops: one for playing the videos and the other for typing, while also referring to my field notes. Even though it was a very time-consuming process, I decided to complete it on my own as doing so increased my familiarity with the data and note any emergent themes. These transcriptions, together with the observation schedule, completed questionnaire, interview notes and the boys' written submissions, were used to generate a list of codes. These codes and the key research questions enabled me to categorise the data into themes.

According to Rule and John (2011), codes are labels that identify and foreground various themes within the data, so coding entails selecting labels and allocating them to different parts of data. The codes categorised the data into themes, which were further reduced to simplify the data. This part of the process was recurring and was completed several times to allow me to organise the data into a comprehensible form. Using these themes, the findings were elaborated on, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were suggested.

The final part of the data analysis, using document analysis, was of the boys' final marked submissions. According to Bowen (2009, p.1), "Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material", which have been recorded without any intervention on the researcher's part. Document analysis can be used as a stand-alone data collection method but works best when complemented

with other data collection methods such as interviews and observations. This complementary data is valuable in the case study design for data triangulation (Bowen, 2009).

To see evidence of the role that the teachers' approaches, knowledge and positioning played in the final product that the boys submitted, document analysis was used to evaluate the sample of the boys' construction of a narrative story. When analysing documents, Bowen (2009) states that the researcher skims (superficial understanding), reads (thorough examination) and interprets, a process which combines elements of both thematic and content analysis. Thus, I first skimmed through the boys' submissions, then I read through them in detail, and used a rubric for selecting them in School A and typology sampling in School B, which is discussed in more detail below. Using content analysis, the information from the submissions and the teachers' feedback were organised into categories which were related to the research questions about the challenges the boys experienced when writing and how their teachers assessed their writing. Thematic analysis was used after carefully reading and reviewing the boys' submissions. A list of codes was drawn up to categorise the data and to uncover specific themes in the sample of boys' writing.

The boys' written submissions were sampled in the following way. In School A, most of the boys' followed the structures and conventions of the narrative genre, so I designed a rubric based on the salient features of the narrative genre, provided by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a), to categorise the submissions according to best, satisfactory and those which needed most development. The rationale behind this method of sampling was that the rubric provided me with the opportunity to analyse the boys' understanding of the narrative genre. Moreover, the teacher in this school seemed to have used the frequency of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors to categorise the boys' writing into "very good" and "good" without paying much attention to content and form. Also, most of the boys' stories did not have any teacher comments, so by just reading through them, it was not clear which fitted into which category. In School B, the situation was very different, as some boys submitted copied stories, some were original, some were complete, and others were not. Thus, they were categorised and analysed accordingly. Stratified sampling was used for the boys' written submissions, as the entire population in this case was divided according to the categories listed

above and then purposive selection was used to select the final subjects from the different strata, based on their suitability and possible contribution to the study.

3.6 Sampling

Sampling is the selection of people, events, behaviour or settings which are most appropriate for the study (Christiansen et al., 2010). The two main methods of sampling are random sampling and purposive sampling. The latter is advantageous because it is less costly and time consuming, assures higher participation rates and the required information is obtained (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Sampling for this study was purposive, in which participants should be handpicked to be included in the sample because of their typicality (Cohen et al., 2000). It must be noted that although the schools used in this study were typically suited, as they were local government schools that were formerly reserved for 'Indian'³ and 'Coloured' learners, they were not necessarily handpicked because most of the schools that were contacted declined to participate in this study. Thus, I had to use schools based on relationships that I had previously formed with their principals. This is reason for concern, because if schools do not participate in research initiatives, it will be difficult to gain insight into possible causes for the poor performance of South African learners in national and international assessments and find ways in which their performance could be improved.

The sample was also biased and was not meant to represent the wider population or to be generalised to other contexts, as qualitative research is more about gaining insight into people's lives and experiences and less about making generalisations that may hold true for the whole population. Although the sample might be considered small as only two Grade 6 classes were included, this study was more interested in depth of analysis than breadth of coverage. Rule and John (2011) explain that the purpose of a case study and the resources available for the study will influence the size of the sample. The cycle of the writing programme, which is the case (unit of analysis) for this study, takes about a week to complete, and an in-depth account of that cycle, the participants' views, their experiences and challenges of that entire process, and the final written product that the boys submitted were required to make

³ SA has a history of racial categorisation and for coherence it is commonplace that these categories are used. See Pattman and Bhana (2006), Badroodien (2011) and Nehal (2016).

the study more reliable.

Grade 6 was selected as it is the end of the IP, so it would be interested to see the boys' progression in terms of writing development to prepare them to enter the Grade 7; which is the start of the Senior Phase. Navsaria et al. (2011) state that most research around language learning is focused on the Foundation Phase, but research is limited on the Intermediate Phase (IP). Also, Grade 6 SA learners write the Annual National Assessments to assess their competence in literacy. In this examination, learners are expected to complete a writing piece; which may be an essay or a transactional text. Grade 6 boys were selected because they achieved lower results than the girls in the Annual National Assessments in 2012, 2013 and 2014 in all nine provinces.

3.6.1 Profile of the schools, teachers and learners

a. The research sites

School A is situated in a suburb in a large city in KZN. Upon arriving at the school, one is welcomed by an efficient receptionist and friendly teachers who are busy making photocopies. The school is clean and has resources such as computers, photocopiers and a library. I was fortunate to be at the school to watch their assembly, which was informative and very organised. The learners were silent and listened attentively to the principal. All the teachers were present at the assembly and led their form learners to class in two neat lines. The LOLT and HL is English. Most learners who attend the school are 'Indian', but there are also some 'black' (all isiZulu mother tongue speakers) and 'coloured' learners. The Grade 6 class that was used for this study consisted of 21 boys and 14 girls. The class was laid out in a vertical linear manner, with the double desks (mixed gender seating) all facing the chalkboard. The teacher clearly took pride in the layout of her classroom and organisation of charts as everything was neat and well displayed. Included on the walls were the class timetable, maps, and language and number charts.

School B is located in the central part of the same large city in KZN. This school is not as pristine as School A but is free from litter and has a very warm friendly atmosphere. I was enveloped in many hugs from the receptionist, principal and participating

teacher, and learners greeted politely as they passed me. Assembly at this school was also very well organised and learners were led to their classrooms in neat rows by their prefect. The learners in this school are mostly 'African Black' (all IsiZulu mother tongue speakers), with a small number of 'Coloured' learners. The school lacks resources such as computers and a library because of several break-ins. Wash basins, chairs and tables, and copper piping have also been stolen from the school, so learners must take their chairs into the hall at the end of each school day to be locked up for the night. This does cut into instruction time as learners have to collect the chairs at the start of the first lesson and pack up before the end of the last lesson. There was only one Grade 6 class in this school, which was used in this study, consisting of 18 boys and 24 girls. The seating arrangement was similar to School A, except that the middle two rows ran horizontally facing each other.

The learners in both classes were very well behaved, polite at all times, and made an effort to participate in the lessons. It was observed that both teachers deliberately focused their attention on the boys during all the lessons, possibly because they were the focus of a study, so it must be borne in mind that this may not have been their normal practice.

b. The Teachers

The descriptions provided here are based on the participating teachers' accounts during the interviews. To protect their identities, the names of the participants have been changed, in School A to Ms Chetty, and in School B to Ms Naidoo.

Ms Chetty from School A was in her late forties and enjoyed reading in her spare time. She has a very warm, caring personality and is committed to her learners. She attended school during the apartheid era and said that under the House of Delegates (formerly the house of parliament that controlled Indian affairs in South Africa), education had been very well run and her primary school teacher made a big impression on her. As a consequence, not only did she learn a lot, but she found that now, she teaches in the same way—for writing her teacher used the same writing process that she uses today. However, her high school experience was different, as the teachers had not used the writing process. Instead, they had simply given the learners a topic and told them to plan, prepare, write and hand in for marking. During

her schooling, she had been exposed to narrative, descriptive, persuasive, expository and visual texts.

She had studied at a university in KZN to obtain a degree and post graduate diploma, which qualified her to be a teacher. She had started her Bachelor of Education Honours but had a child, so had found it difficult to complete it, and feels that she is now too old to go back. Ms Chetty explained that she was well trained to teach writing, so does so very confidently, and that she was in fact trained to teach writing using the process of planning, brainstorming and preparation. She had been teaching English for 23 years and particularly enjoyed teaching literature because she was able to engage her learners in discussions and sharing of opinions.

She said she feels that the CAPS follows the same approach to teaching writing as was followed when she was at school, but she pointed out the difference in how information is sourced: “We were not told to look for information. It was just given to us; you just learnt what they told you... there wasn’t [sic] many resources like now. We only used textbook and poems and what the teacher gave you.” When teaching writing, she explained that she uses fact and fiction texts, narratives, descriptive texts, letters, advertisements, persuasive and informational texts. She incorporates listening and speaking skills through discussion and reading skills by sometimes reading a similar type of text when teaching writing.

A challenge that she said she experienced when developing her learners’ writing skills was that learners did not do the work, and she finds that girls are better at completing writing activities because they are more focused: “boys’ minds generally wander too much”. However, she said that most boys completed their homework and if she had a problem, she made an entry in their homework books, which generally elicited a response from the parents. When asked what challenges her boys experience when completing their writing activities, she explained that they were not as well versed as the girls because they hardly read, so, although they have good ideas, they cannot put their thoughts into written words. She elaborated that the boys also made more mistakes than the girls, particularly in spelling, so require more of her time and attention. However, there was not always enough time for her to check everything, so she asked the girl desk partners assist, but they also needed to complete their work

and were not always able to identify all the errors.

Ms Naidoo from School B was in her early fifties and enjoyed reading, socialising, music, dancing, cooking, watching films and tidying up. Mrs Naidoo is very energetic, enthusiastic, and has a very positive approach to life. She attended school during the apartheid era and explained that her primary school teacher taught her writing in the same manner as she currently does: using key words, paragraph writing, sentence construction, incorporating language, mind maps, flashcards and spelling lists. Her high school teacher built on this foundation, but took a more creative approach to writing creative, narrative, descriptive and informative texts, using “nice” topics like ‘A day I will never forget’. Her love for English and passion for drama and acting is what led her to complete an M1, 2, 3 at a training college in KZN to become an English teacher which, she explained, is the equivalent of a diploma. She then went on to complete an Advanced Certificate in Education. At college she was trained to teach writing using multimedia texts such as pamphlets, newspapers and magazines, which were used to analyse the layout and structure. Students were also familiarised with the use of mind maps, brainstorming in groups, peer feedback and the use of rubrics for marking. She felt that there is room for improvement in her teaching of writing.

Having taught English for twenty years, her favourite aspects were teaching reading, orals and drama. When asked to describe how she taught writing, she explained that she first made her learners use a mind map to brainstorm, then she discussed the rubric with them to see where to focus attention. Next, she looked at the format and level of formality, broke the writing down into paragraphs, provided key words for the learners to use and used another text as an example. She tried to edit learners’ work individually, but the class size was too large, so she said that she did a general edit which involved her writing part of a learners’ draft on the chalkboard and then the whole class participated in correcting the errors, or she used peer or parent editing. However, she elaborated that some of the parents had language barriers, so parent editing did not always work very well. She explained that she incorporated listening and speaking into her writing lessons by giving her learners instructions to follow, she included thinking by asking learners to brainstorm and complete mind maps. Ms Naidoo stated that this was aligned with the expectations of the CAPS and felt that using the CAPS was the same as how teaching was done in the past when she was

at school.

The challenges that she said that she experienced when teaching writing included sequencing, spelling, dictionary usage, punctuation, and direct and indirect speech, and she has found that, due to the boys' shorter attention span, the girls are better at completing writing activities. In addition to this, the boys did not complete their work, struggled to sit still, and because they were writing in a second language, they often made mistakes with the use of tense and they wrote incomplete sentences.

c. Learners

Each school that participated in this study only had one class for Grade 6 learners so these two classes were used. Thus, the sample for the study consisted of 39 Grade 6 boys and two female English HL teachers. School A was a former 'Indian' school, which is now racially and linguistically mixed, accommodating 'Coloured', 'Black African' and 'Indian learners'. 21 boys: 16 'Indian' and five 'Black African' boys from this school participated in this study. The 18 boys from School B, which was categorised as a 'Coloured' school during the apartheid era, were all 'Black African', so their mother tongue was IsiZulu, but they were learning English at home language level. The mismatch between the language that learners speak at home and the language that is offered at home language level at school is discussed in Chapter 2: 2.3.1.

3.6.2 Writing development in School A

In School A, Ms Chetty began her lesson by having a whole-class oral discussion which outlined an example of the type of story that she wanted her learners to write. Thus, as a class, the learners brainstormed and created the story. The topic was 'Last night I dreamed that...', so Ms Chetty asked her learners for examples of nightmares that they had had. She picked one example, which was about being washed away by a tsunami, and together with the learners, by the use of probing, questioning and discussing, developed the story.

At the end of the discussion, the learners were told to turn to page 89 of their activity books where an outline of a mind map for the story is provided. Ms Chetty drew the

same mind map on the board and explained what the learners needed to write about under each prompt.



Image 1: Mind map in activity book

Source: DBE (2015a, p.89)

The learners were instructed to complete the mind map shown above and then, using the ideas from the mind map, begin writing their first draft about their nightmare.

Towards the end of the first lesson, Ms Chetty instructed her learners to “start planning in your English books; writing out the actual story”. The learners started writing their own nightmare stories, which Ms Chetty explained should contain three paragraphs of about 4–5 lines each. She walked around and corrected spelling errors. This lasted for only a few minutes because the lesson ended, and the learners were instructed to complete the activity for homework. She also suggested that the learners ask their parents if they had time to check their work for errors so that “it won’t be so bad tomorrow.” As the writing of the drafts was assigned for homework, the revision stage

was omitted so the learners did not critically reflect on their own writing nor was there peer or teacher feedback on the content of the drafts.

The lesson began with the teacher making a tally of those learners who had not completed their drafts for homework. Asked for a show of hands, only a few learners in School A raised theirs, while most learners in School B raised theirs. The majority of learners not completing the homework were boys. Ms Chetty instructed those who had completed their drafts to swop work with their partners and begin correcting. She thus initiated formative assessment at this editing stage. She explained that they should look for spelling and language errors such as “verbs and the tense, concord, meaning the word sounds...” She did not explain these concepts, nor did she demonstrate how they needed to edit their peers’ work (although she might have done this in previous writing cycles) and omitted telling them to make suggestions about how the content could be improved.

The learners exchanged books while Ms Chetty walked around collecting the communication books (a notebook that the teacher uses to communicate with the parents and vice versa) of those learners who had not completed their homework. One boy started crying and when she asked him why, he was at first inaudible, but after some probing she was able to determine that he had been unable to complete the homework because it was about his real nightmare. Ms Chetty was confused and tried to seek clarity, but all the boy said was that he had not been able to write because he was afraid. Another boy asked him why he had not written instead about another nightmare. This resulted in him sobbing louder, so Ms Chetty moved on while the rest of the class resumed checking their peers’ drafts. The instruction for this writing activity provided in the learners’ workbooks states: “Plan to write a description of a dream or a nightmare that you had” (DBE, 2015a, p.89). Although the learners did not necessarily have to write about a nightmare, the example that she had modelled during the class discussion was of a nightmare, a choice she had made for pedagogical reasons to provide for a more exciting, action-filled discussion. She had not explained to the learners that they had the choice of writing about a dream instead, so the learners remained unaware of other possibilities.

After she had finished making notes in the learners’ communication books, she

checked how far the learners were with editing their peers' efforts. Ms Chetty also walked around randomly checking for mostly spelling and punctuation errors and instructed the learners to enter their work neatly into their books once editing was completed. She then sat at her table and asked that any of the learners who did not understand what to do or needed help with editing should come to her desk for assistance. She thus attempted to complement the formative peer editing process with direct, one-to-one teacher assessment. As she was assisting the first boy, she asked him to bring his chair, so he could sit and then she corrected his punctuation, spelling and grammar errors. She continued in this manner, editing a few other boys' written efforts.

When the siren wailed to indicate the end of the lesson, she instructed the learners to leave their final efforts on her table before going out for break. Ms Chetty exclaimed that she was thoroughly exhausted, and that editing was really difficult because there was not enough time for her to check all the learners' drafts and at some points she felt as though she was rewriting their work. It was observed that many drafts were full of red spelling, punctuation and grammar corrections. This may have been a result of the omission of the revision stage and because they wrote their drafts for homework, but all her red corrections could have been demotivating for the boys who may have perceived them as an indication that their writing was poor and incorrect.

The learners had to complete their final, neat versions in class and submit before they could go out for break at the end of the third lesson of the writing cycle.

d. Writing development in School B

In contrast, Ms Naidoo began her lesson by reading the definition of planning provided on the cover of the same activity book that was used in School A, shown in this extract:

Plan

Decide on a topic, talk to your group to gather ideas. Use a mind map to clarify your ideas about the plot, characters and setting.

(DBE, 2015a, inside front cover)

She explained the definition, incorporated language and vocabulary development, told the learners that for planning they would use a mind map and that "the topic goes in the circle of the mind map". She asked them if they had decided on a topic, to which

they responded in the affirmative, although there was no evidence of any discussion around the selection of a topic. She spent one and a half lessons (90 minutes) explaining various aspects and processes involved in writing types of stories such as fiction and non-fiction, audience, plot, setting, and character. The boys were observed fidgeting and daydreaming during their teacher's lengthy explanations and instructions. During the first two lessons, Ms Naidoo also referred repeatedly to a story that the learners had previously read, which was titled 'The Bump'. A great deal of time during the observed writing lessons was also spent reading the story aloud, then summarising what they had read and identifying the characters and setting.

After about 30 minutes on the second day of Ms Naidoo developing her learners' writing skills, using the process genre approach as advocated by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a), she gave the learners the following instructions to indicate that they should begin planning:

Right, now what I want you to do is rule off after your last word go to a clean page. Actually, ya... go to a clean page write down today's date. Now, everything that we have learnt about planning, revising, drafting, editing and publishing, we going to put that into operation. In other words, we going to work with that, but today I only want you to do a brainstorm. Remember your brainstorm has a... oh sorry, your mind map. You going to have your topic there and I'm going to leave it as an open topic so in other words you going to choose your own topic, ok. And you going to mind map it. You are going to sort out your paragraphs but for now I only want you to work with your mind map where you going to plan using your characters. You going to brainstorm and you going to do your mind map looking at a topic and I only want you to concentrate on your first paragraph. I want to see how you do.

Remember all drawings to be done in pencil.

Ms Naidoo proceeded with the learners working on their mind maps and then to writing their first drafts. To save time, she told them to write a story that they already knew. While the learners were busy writing their drafts Ms Naidoo often interrupted to remind them about certain aspects like what to write in their introductions, not to copy and to use their imaginations: “Your introduction is where you are introducing your story and then looking at the plot and your plot is basically telling you what the story is about”; “you are also looking at your setting of your story and your characters”; “think about the mood of the story”. One female learner was still working on her mind map and Ms Naidoo found that others were copying their stories from books verbatim, so she instructed them to put those books away and “use their imaginations to write from their minds.”

She also randomly asked learners to read out loud what they had written and went around checking individual learners’ efforts. Here, her formative assessment was both written and oral, and individual and collective, in that she corrected individual learners’ spelling and punctuation errors, but she often involved the whole class in the correction process. An example of this follows: “Now Nonthando, uh, Nomfundo, now that you have written paragraph one, let’s go back and look for errors right. Give me your pen, circle that one. Right, spelling error (*reading learner’s paragraph*)... (*to the class*) right guys please stop whatever you are doing! Please spell the word ‘given’.” The lesson continued in this manner until near its end, when the learners were told to discard whatever they had completed in class and start afresh for homework because the work that they had already completed was copied and was thus “cheating”. They were told to write their own stories and not use one that they had previously read, as she had initially instructed them. Yet, earlier in the lesson when the learners had read out those efforts while she was walking around checking, she had praised them.

Editing in School B was challenging for several reasons: many learners did not complete writing their drafts (some did not even complete their mind maps); the learners did not know how to go about editing their peers’ work; as second language English speakers, the learners struggled to identify errors; and some learners’ poor

reading comprehension was a barrier to them suggesting content improvements to their peers' stories.

After asking the boys who had not completed their stories to stand up, Ms Naidoo went around the class asking the boys to read out what they had written. In all instances of the boys reading their stories, she would stop them after a few lines exclaiming that the story was not their own writing. One boy misunderstood her and insisted that the story was his writing, clearly meaning that the story was written in his handwriting, whereas his teacher meant that the story he wrote was not an original piece of work. He continued to insist that it was his writing, so Ms Naidoo asked him to stand up and disciplined him for being disrespectful. Only when she asked him if he was "100% sure that the story [was] not copied from somewhere else" did he understand what was being asked. He responded that he had indeed copied the story.

More boys were asked to read and were stopped short because they had copied the story and by this point, every time this happened the class would erupt with laughter and talking. However, as one boy started reading his story titled 'The flying horse', yet again, Ms Naidoo stopped him, asking if he had copied the story. Once the laughing had subsided, he responded that he "got the story from a book". Ms Naidoo asked him if this meant that he had read the story and summed it up. When he responded in the affirmative, she told him it was acceptable and that he could continue reading the story. His story was not actually a summary but had been copied verbatim. When he stopped suddenly, she asked him how the story ended, to which he responded that he did not know as he had not read the whole story. Here again, it can be seen that perhaps the teacher's expectations had not been very explicit and seemed to be contradictory.

In another instance, Ms Naidoo asked the class to clap for a boy. She explained to me and to the rest of the class that he was a learner who was unable to read or write very well, but he had tried to complete all three paragraphs and then had sought her assistance after class the previous day. She asked him to read his story out loud to the rest of the class. He tried to read a few words but was unable to read, so she instructed the learner sitting next to him to read the story. After the class had clapped for the boy's effort for a second time, Ms Naidoo explained that she was going to write his story on the board, but realising that it would be time consuming, she wrote the

first paragraph only and then asked the class to read it and correct any errors. There were many errors in this boy's paragraph, and while the class was identifying and correcting them, they giggled and suppressed laughter. According to Daly (2004), the misapplication of scaffolding tools during the editing process can undermine boys' confidence. To have his work praised and then have his errors publicly highlighted in this manner may have been both embarrassing and demotivating for the boy, especially considering that he was a learner with barriers to learning.

Continuing, Ms Naidoo asked the learners if the characters, setting and plot had been included in the first paragraph that she had written on the chalkboard, to which they responded, "Yes!" and were praised by her saying, "Very good!" They then continued correcting errors. It is not clear whether they were able to identify the characters and setting, and even more unclear how they could have identified the plot of the story by its introductory paragraph (perhaps she meant for them to identify the theme). Learners simply saying "Yes" is neither an indication of understanding the concepts, or of being able to identify them. However, at the end of the class editing, the learners probably had a clear idea of what their teacher expected when she asked them to peer correct, except that in this class, as in School A, the teacher's emphasis was on spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. Once their editing was complete she told the learners to "continue what you are busy with and you must hand in your story in neat tomorrow for me to mark".

The learners were told to complete the neat edited version for homework and submit this on the fourth day.

3.7 Trustworthiness

Validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of the phenomena match the realities of the world (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). In qualitative data, validity may be addressed through depth, richness and scope of the data, the selection of the participants and the objectivity of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2000). On the other hand, reliability is the degree to which similar findings might be made by other researchers given the same research framework (Merriam, 2008), and the explanations of the phenomena are aligned with the realities of the world (McMillan &

Schumacher 1997).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that the following are criteria that can be used to evaluate the trustworthiness of a qualitative study:

- Credibility
- Transferability
- Dependability
- Confirmability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility is one of the key elements in creating trustworthiness. Shenton (2004) includes the following provisions for researchers to establish credibility in their studies: adopting well-established research methods, developing early familiarity with the culture of the participating organisation, peer scrutiny of the research project, member checks, reflective commentary of the researcher and triangulation.

To establish credibility in this study as far as possible, firstly, I used interviews, observations and questionnaires, which are advocated as methods for data collection in qualitative research. This also increased the dependability of the study as it is closely linked with credibility and can be established using more than one method of data collection. Secondly, I communicated via Whatsapp with the participants to engage in conversation and develop a relationship prior to commencing the data collection. To gain further insight into the culture and day-to-day operations of the school, I visited the schools and met with the principal and teachers. Thirdly, I asked a peer to review my findings. Fourthly, I kept a reflective journal to record incidents and my feelings during the research process, which afforded me the opportunity to note any extra information and reflect on my progress during my research journey.

Fifthly, I used crystallisation to increase the credibility for this study. Crystallisation “encourages researchers to gather multiple types of data and employ various methods, multiple researchers, and numerous theoretical frameworks. However, it assumes that the goal of doing so is not to provide researchers with a more valid singular truth, but to open a more complex, in-depth, but still thoroughly partial,

understanding of the issue” (Tracy, 2010, p.844). To achieve this, the teachers were interviewed, the boys completed a questionnaire, lessons were observed, and the boys’ assessed work was collected, enabling a better understanding of the issue being researched from more than one perspective, i.e. the researcher’s, the boys’, the teacher’s and the finished products. In addition to this, the data was analysed using positioning theory, the process genre approach, content analysis and document analysis. This careful, thorough analysis was to ensure that I had an in-depth understanding of the boys’ writing development and that quality findings were attained.

Lastly, member checks were conducted with both teachers to discuss my findings and ensure that they were satisfied that these were accurate. Ms Chetty was reluctant to include the information about the boy and his parent, but I assured that it would not cast negative light on her. She was not concerned about the discussion of her omission of the revision stage and limitations of her understanding of some of the stages of the writing process as per the CAPS and her marking because she explained that she did the best with the limited training and time that they have. I expected the conversation with Ms Naidoo to be more difficult, but she is a truly remarkable teacher who wants to do what it takes to improve her teaching. She asked me to speak slowly so that she could make notes and interrupted only to ask if I would be willing to mentor her in terms of teaching writing. She explained that she tried to use the writing process but found that it was very complicated, and her learners just did not understand what to do. Upon reflection she felt that her decision to leave the topic open was a good one, had she executed the mind map correctly. She explained that she needed support with the writing cycle, especially the planning and mind map and marking, as there was no time. She also wanted to know about what could be done to make marking easier as it was very time consuming. She expressed her gratitude for this process because she now knows what she needs to focus on.

Merriam (1998) states that transferability is the degree to which the findings of a study can be applied to other situations and that it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings of qualitative studies can relate to other situations because the samples are small. However, the use of rich, thick descriptions in this study, allows the findings to be transferred to other similar cases. To further increase the trustworthiness of this study, the interviews and lessons were video recorded so that I could go back and

review my findings with a peer based on the data.

3.8 Limitations

There was always the problem of the participants displaying the Hawthorne effect (explained in 4.5.3 above), which is a limitation of the study. Thus, the data were carefully analysed and underwent three layers of analysis to ensure that there were no contradictions or inconsistencies and that I had a thorough understanding of all dimensions of the boys' writing development in these schools. The lessons were observed to discover how each teacher developed her boys' writing skills using the stages of the writing cycle and how the boys responded to her teaching methods. The teachers were interviewed to establish how they viewed their teaching of writing and the boys were given a questionnaire to complete to gain insight into how they were taught writing in the classroom. The boys' final submissions, along with their teachers' feedback, were collected and analysed to gain insight into how they responded to the methods and formative feedback that their teacher employed in the writing classroom.

Further to this, I did not have a choice in sampling schools as all the schools that I initially approached declined to participate in the study. It would have been interesting to compare the writing development of boys in a same sex school to that of a mixed sex school, or to have included how writing is developed in Ex-Model C schools, or to have included a male teacher but I was unable to gain access to those schools. I remain very grateful to the two schools who agreed to participate in the study and thus afford me the opportunity to contribute to the dearth of literature in SA pertaining to boys learning and writing development.

Another important limitation is that, as only two schools were used in this research, the results are not meant to be generalised. However, by providing thick descriptions of the context, validity is enhanced, and findings could possibly be applied to similar contexts or be used as a comparison to other contexts. Finally, as there is the potential for bias to surface in all research so being aware of this potential bias, I took care not to pass judgements based on my own experience as a teacher of writing. I also used more than one method of data collection and discussed the findings and conclusions with the supervisor. Despite the precautions that I took, mentioned above, this

research must be described as biased.

3.9 Ethical considerations

It is of utmost importance that a researcher observes the ethics of doing research (Stake, 1995). Rule and John (2011) state that ethical practice and relationships enhance the quality of research. Thus, during this research process, I took care to comply with the necessary ethical procedures so that the research will be trustworthy, and the participants will remain protected. At the official level, permission was obtained from the Department of Education (see Appendix 8) and the ethical procedures of the University of KwaZulu-Natal were complied with. The following ethical principles were followed while conducting this research. Informed consent was obtained from the teachers, boys and their parents, and letters that clearly explained the aim and purpose of the study, and their role in this study, were given to them (See Appendix 1, 2 and 3). These letters also informed the participants that their participation in this study was voluntary, their identities would remain anonymous, and that they could opt out at any time should they so need.

Rule and John (2011) name autonomy (ensuring the participants' anonymity), non-maleficence (not doing any harm) and beneficence (being beneficial) as the three standard principles from which research ethical requirements flow. With respect to these principles, the participants were assured that all data collected would be kept confidential and that they themselves would remain anonymous when this research is published. Thus, all their names were changed, and pseudonyms were used. Finally, all the participants were informed of the purpose of the research and that it could be of benefit rather than cause any harm by providing insight into how the participating teachers develop their male learners' writing skills and how they experience this teaching of writing. It must be noted that the girls could possibly have been disadvantaged by this research as the teachers may have chosen to focus on the boys for the benefit of the researcher, which was beyond the control of the researcher. However, to account for the girls possibly feeling left out while the boys were completing the questionnaires, I printed mandalas for them to colour and set up a station with colouring pencils, crayons and stickers.

3.10 Conclusion

The research methodology and design used to conduct this study was discussed in this chapter. This qualitative study was framed within the interpretivist paradigm, drawing on the exploratory and comparative case study approach. Semi-structured interviews, an activity-based questionnaire and a structured observation schedule were used to collect data and the data analysis processes were discussed in this chapter. The way validity and reliability were enhanced, ethical considerations and the limitations of this study was also discussed. The next chapter presents and discusses the findings pertaining to the boys' and teachers' and their writing lessons.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings from the data collection and thematic analysis processes described in Chapter 3 are presented and analysed. Data were collected by interviewing the teachers, boys completing an activity-based questionnaire, lesson observations, and the boys' written submissions with their teachers' feedback. The boys' written submissions in School A were evaluated using a rubric that I designed (see Chapter 6, Table 11) as the teacher did not use a rubric to evaluate them. I was thus able to categorise them in terms of good, satisfactory and those that needed much improvement. I completed the same process for School B but noticed that there was another set of commonalities. Thus, using typology sampling, the boys' submissions were grouped into the following categories: nothing to assess (meaning the boys submitted just a few words), copied with incomplete mind map and story, copied with completed mind map and story, original mind map and story incomplete, original with mind map incomplete, and original with mind map incomplete and story complete (refer to Chapter 6, Table 12).

Recordings from the lesson observations, completion of the questionnaire and interviews were transcribed and coded using axial coding. This thematic analysis allowed me to reduce the data into common themes as well as notice any counter-data. The following themes emerged from the data:

- Scaffolding learning during the stages of the writing cycle/ teaching strategies adopted
- Assessment and feedback
- Boys' perceptions of writing
- Challenges experienced by boys
- Teachers' choice of genre to develop writing skills
- Integration of vocabulary and language development into writing lessons

These themes are presented in this chapter to illuminate the key research questions which are:

- How do teachers and boys perceive the affordances of the writing cycle?
- Why do they perceive the affordances of the writing cycle the way they do?
- How do teachers develop their learners' writing skills?
- Why do they develop their learners' writing skills the way they do?
- How do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle, if at all?
- Why do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle the way they do?

4.2 Scaffolding learning during the stages of the writing cycle

Drawing from the data collected, particularly the lesson observations, boys' written submissions and teacher interviews, this theme emerged. Both teachers used scaffolding to develop their learners' writing skills but each used different tools for scaffolding. In School A, an example of the use of modelling as a strategy for scaffolding learning was evidenced. Ms Chetty began her lesson by having a whole-class oral discussion which outlined an example of the type of story that she wanted her learners to write about. Thus, as a class, the learners brainstormed and orally created a similar type of story to the one that they were expected to write. The topic was 'Last night I dreamed that...', so Ms Chetty asked her learners for examples of nightmares that they had had. She picked one example, which was about being washed away by a tsunami, and together with the learners, using probing, questioning and discussion, developed the story.

The underpinning idea of the process genre approach is that writing involves knowledge about language, the context in which the writing happens, the purpose of writing, the skills in using language and how to draw out the learners' potential by providing input to which the learners respond (Badger & White, 2000, p.157-158). During the planning stage of Ms Chetty's lesson, the features of the genre and structure and purpose of the text were not explicitly discussed but were scaffolded through modelling during the co-creation of the nightmare. Also, the writing that the learners had to complete occurred within the broad theme 'Saying how it's done', with the sub-theme being 'Telling a tale', in the learners' workbooks (DBE, 2015a, p.75). The teacher omitted to place the writing within the context of the theme and to discuss

pertinent language aspects such as sequencing and the use of tenses.

At the end of the discussion, the learners were told to turn to page 89 of their activity books where an outline of a mind map for the story is provided. Ms Chetty drew the same mind map on the board and explained what the learners needed to write about under each prompt to scaffold their planning (Refer to image 1, p100).

The learners were instructed to complete the mind map shown above and then use the ideas from the mind map as a tool to scaffold the writing of their first drafts about their nightmare. The boys' understanding of the topic and their ability to adequately complete the mind map was evidenced in their written submissions. When compared with the boys' mind maps from School B, it was clear that their teacher's scaffolding strategies were more effective because their mind maps were properly completed whereas in School B, most of the boys submitted poorly completed or incomplete mind maps, possibly because they did not know how to complete it or what to write about.

In School B, Ms Naidoo began her lesson by reading the definition of planning provided on the cover of the same activity book that was used in School A, shown in this extract:

Plan

Decide on a topic, talk to your group to gather ideas. Use a mind map to clarify your ideas about the plot, characters and setting.

(DBE, 2015a, inside front cover)

She used explanations to scaffold her learners' understanding of what the planning stage entailed. She explained the definition, incorporated language and vocabulary development, told the learners that for planning they would use a mind map and that "the topic goes in the circle of the mind map". She asked them if they had decided on a topic, to which they responded in the affirmative, although there was no evidence of any discussion around the selection of a topic. During the first two lessons, Ms Naidoo referred repeatedly to a story that the learners had previously read, which was titled 'The Bump'. A great deal of time during the observed writing lessons was spent reading the story aloud, then summarising what they had read and identifying the characters and setting. Ms Naidoo attempted to scaffold the learners writing by

modelling the story using 'The Bump' but the links between this story and the learners' stories were not made explicit indicating that the scaffolding tool was not effective.

After about 30 minutes on the second day of Ms Naidoo developing her learners' writing skills, using the process genre approach, she gave the learners the following instructions to indicate that they should begin planning:

Right, now what I want you to do is rule off after your last word go to a clean page. Actually, ya... go to a clean page write down today's date. Now, everything that we have learnt about planning, revising, drafting, editing and publishing, we going to put that into operation. In other words, we going to work with that, but today I only want you to do a brainstorm. Remember your brainstorm has a... oh sorry, your mind map. You going to have your topic there and I'm going to leave it as an open topic so in other words you going to choose your own topic, ok. And you going to mind map it. You are going to sort out your paragraphs but for now I only want you to work with your mind map where you going to plan using your characters. You going to brainstorm and you going to do your mind map looking at a topic and I only want you to concentrate on your first paragraph. I want to see how you do. Remember all drawings to be done in pencil.

Ms Naidoo left the choice of topic open for her learners, which most boys found challenging, evidenced in the quality of their written submissions and their responses in the activity-based questionnaire. When asked to reflect on her lessons during the interview, Ms Naidoo explained that she thought that leaving the topic open would make the writing task easier for the learners as they could have based it on a story that they had previously read.

During the drafting stage of the writing process learners are expected to write their first draft, keeping in mind the audience, paragraph structure, sentence structure, word choice, main and supporting ideas and features of the text (DBE, 2011a; DBE, 2015a). Towards the end of the first lesson, Ms Chetty instructed her learners to use their mind maps to “start planning in your English books; writing out the actual story”. The learners started writing their own nightmare stories, which Ms Chetty explained should contain three paragraphs of about 4–5 lines each. She walked around and corrected spelling errors. This lasted for only a few minutes because the lesson ended, and the learners were instructed to complete the activity for homework. She suggested that the learners ask their parents if they had time to check their work for errors so that “it won’t be so bad tomorrow.” The CAPS includes the revision stage of the writing cycle, where learners should read their own work critically and get feedback on the content of their stories from their teacher and peers while constructing their drafts (DBE, 2011a, p.19). As the writing of the drafts was assigned for homework, the revision stage was omitted so the learners did not critically reflect on their own writing nor was there peer or teacher feedback on the content of the drafts. Instead, by assigning the completion of the drafts for homework, the parent was expected to become the ‘more knowledgeable other’ (Vygotsky, 1978) to provide scaffolding, guide the learners and offer assistance while they wrote their drafts.

In School B, as in School A, the revision stage was omitted and the learners were expected to write their drafts at home without the guidance and assistance of their teacher. This also meant that no formative assessment would take place during these stages, so the learners would not develop in areas that needed to be identified by their teacher. However, at School A they had the direction of a topic, most had completed mind maps (during data analysis it was found that three boys had not completed their mind maps) and a coherent brainstorming process (the co-creation of the nightmare) which would have helped them with drafting. During the interviews, Mrs Naidoo explained that there was insufficient time to allocate for the revision stage, so she omitted it. This response could indicate that she did not fully understand what this stage entails as it occurs whilst learners are drafting. On the other hand, Ms Chetty explained that she did go around and check the learners work while they were completing their drafts, although this was only for a few minutes before the lesson

ended. Her focus during this part of the lesson, was on correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation errors rather than suggesting ways in which the learners could improve their content.

The CAPS states that following the drafting stage, the writing must be edited or proofread, which involves improving the content and structure of ideas, refining word choice and sentence and paragraph structure, and correcting any mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation (DBE, 2011a). However, the explanation of editing provided on the inside cover of the learners' workbook states only that spelling and punctuation ought to be checked (DBE, 2015a). Yet, editing could include feedback on the learners' ideas, suggest improvements to the story and highlight errors.

In both schools the lesson began with the teacher making a tally of those learners who had not completed their drafts for homework. Asked for a show of hands, only a few learners in School A raised theirs, while most learners in School B raised theirs. Common to both schools was that most learners not completing the homework were boys. In her school, Ms Chetty instructed those who had completed their drafts to swap work with their partners and begin correcting. She thus initiated formative assessment at this editing stage. She explained that they should look for spelling and language errors such as "verbs and the tense, concord, meaning the word sounds..." She did not explain these concepts, nor did she demonstrate how they needed to edit their peers' work (although she might have done this in previous writing cycles) and omitted telling them to make suggestions about how the content could be improved.

Ms Chetty did not really scaffold the editing stage. Instead, the learners exchanged books while she walked around collecting the communication books (a notebook that the teacher uses to communicate with the parents and vice versa) of those learners who had not completed their homework. After she had finished making notes in the learners' communication books, she checked how far the learners were with editing their peers' efforts. Ms Chetty also walked around randomly checking for mostly spelling and punctuation errors and instructed the learners to enter their work neatly into their books once editing was completed. She then sat at her table and asked that any of the learners who did not understand what to do or needed help with editing should come to her desk for assistance. She thus attempted to complement the

formative peer editing process with direct, one-to-one teacher assessment. As she was assisting the first boy, she asked him to bring his chair so he could sit and then she corrected his punctuation, spelling and grammar errors. She continued in this manner, editing a few other boys' written efforts.

When the siren wailed to indicate the end of the lesson, she instructed the learners to leave their final efforts on her table before going out for break. Ms Chetty exclaimed that she was thoroughly exhausted, and that editing was difficult because there was not enough time for her to check all the learners' drafts and at some points she felt as though she was rewriting their work. During her interview, Ms Chetty also mentioned that peer editing was very challenging as not all the learners were at an academic level to edit their peers' work, which meant that she had to edit them. When analysing their drafts, many drafts were full of red spelling, punctuation and grammar corrections. This may have been a result of the omission of the revision stage and because they wrote their drafts for homework, but all her red corrections could have been demotivating for the boys who may have perceived them as an indication that their writing was poor and incorrect.

Editing in School B, as was observed, was challenging because many learners did not complete writing their drafts (the majority did not even complete their mind maps). When asked about the editing stage during the interview, Ms Naidoo explained that the learners did not know how to go about editing their peers' work, and as second language English speakers, they struggled to identify errors; and some learners' poor reading comprehension was a barrier to them suggesting content improvements to their peers' stories. When asked if allocating enough time to ensure that the learners complete their mind maps and drafts in class could contribute to them submitting better written efforts, Ms Naidoo explained that there was much content to cover in the year so this would not be possible.

After asking the boys who had not completed their stories to stand up, Ms Naidoo went around the class asking the boys to read out what they had written. In all instances of the boys reading their stories, she would stop them after a few lines and state that the story was not their own writing. Finally, Ms Naidoo asked the class to clap for a boy. She explained that he was a learner who was unable to read or write very well, but he

had tried to complete all three paragraphs and then had sought her assistance after class the previous day. She asked him to read his story out loud to the rest of the class. He tried to read a few words but was unable to read, so she asked the learner sitting next to him to read the story.

Scaffolding of the editing phase in School B proceeded as follows. After the class had clapped for the boy's effort for a second time, Ms Naidoo explained that she was going to write his story on the board, but realising that it would be time consuming, she wrote the first paragraph only and then asked the class to read it and correct any errors. There were many errors in this boy's paragraph, and while the class was identifying and correcting them, they giggled and suppressed laughter. According to Daly (2004), the misapplication of scaffolding tools during the editing process can undermine boys' confidence. To have his work praised and then have his errors publicly highlighted in this manner may have been both embarrassing and demotivating for the boy, especially considering that he was a learner with barriers to learning. Ms Naidoo asked the learners if the characters, setting and plot had been included in the first paragraph that she had written on the chalkboard, to which they responded, "Yes!" and were praised by her saying, "Very good!" They then continued correcting errors. It is not clear whether they were able to identify the characters and setting, and even more unclear how they could have identified the plot of the story by its introductory paragraph (perhaps she meant for them to identify the theme). Learners simply saying "Yes" is neither an indication of understanding the concepts, or of being able to identify them. However, at the end of the class editing, the learners probably had a clear idea of what their teacher expected when she asked them to peer correct as she had modelled editing, except that in this class, as in School A, the teacher's emphasis was on spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

4.2.2 Using speaking and thinking to scaffold boys' writing

The CAPS states that when developing learners' writing skills, the other language skills must be integrated (DBE, 2011a). Thus, the way these teachers integrated those skills into their writing lessons was analysed. In School A, reading was integrated into the writing process by learners reading their own work and their peer's drafts. Langer and Applebee (1986) state that to achieve effective instruction literacy and thinking skills,

what the learners already have must be built on and would help the learners to complete tasks that they could not on their own. Prior to the commencement of the writing cycle, the learners in School A read and engaged with a text in their workbooks, which was designed to assist them with the completion of their essays. During the class discussion learners were given the opportunity to speak and had to think about responses to questions posed by their teacher. Later, during planning, drafting, editing and publishing stages, learners used their thought processes to make decisions about what ideas, linguistic features and choice of words to include in their essays to present their best efforts for assessment. Moreover, during these stages of the writing process they spoke to their teacher and peers to seek clarity and guidance.

The CAPS supports an integrated approach to the teaching of English, which means that no skill should be taught in isolation, but should instead be imparted within a meaningful context. Thus, it states:

We could start off with a reading piece and do a comprehension test.

Language knowledge questions could also be addressed based on the same text. Post-reading the text learners could be asked to respond to the text by, for example, writing a letter about the issues raised in the text or to write some creative response to the content of the text. To wrap up this activity, discussions could be held about the topic and in this way we address all of the language skills in one fluent, integrated activity.

(DBE, 2011a, p.88).

In this way, the teacher is the 'more knowledgeable other' who uses their knowledge to scaffold the learners to achieve what was previously beyond their grasp (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Tierney and Leys (1984), reading and writing have a reciprocal nature, as reading can be used to improve writing and vice versa (Graham & Herbert, 2010). Similarly, Grabe (2003) states that integrating the teaching of reading and writing could result in more effective learning and teaching. The CAPS (DBE, 2011a) prescribes that teachers begin with a reading or listening text, followed by

comprehension, language and vocabulary development activities, and then the writing of a similar text, which are all processes that activate the learner's thought processes. The process of writing includes planning, drafting and revision, involving new thinking, exploration and discovery. This means that the relationship between thinker and writer is essential to the process of writing, as is the complex relationship that exists between writing and speaking. Vygotsky (1978) views interactive events as being central to learning writing, wherein the child is the active learner and the adult provides systematic structure. In this regard Graves (1983) recommends that teachers ought to create a balance between talk and writing, set up and manage talk in pairs and groups, schedule individual teacher time to talk to learners about their writing and use writing for oral presentations.

During the lesson observations, Ms Naidoo in School B did a lot of speaking and used the lessons for much reading, but not much writing was achieved in class time. Yet, she began the first lesson by saying, "Our aim this morning is to practice writing skills and your writing skills are very important because there is a format or a procedure that we have to use to get our writing skills correct." She then proceeded to ask the learners the colour of the first block containing the word 'planning', on the inside cover of their activity books, made them repeat the correct pronunciation of the word purple, asked them to spell the word plan, explained capital letters, and then asked a learner to read the explanation of the plan provided in the workbook. It would be fair to conclude that most of the time spent during the observed lessons were consumed by teacher talk, learners reading and learners writing, in that order. This may have been challenging for the boys because they do not hear as well as the girls do (Sax, 2005) and have a shorter attention span (King and Gurian, 2006). Thus, the learners spent most of the time listening to their teacher, trying to process all that she was saying. It was evident that the boys were not always thinking about and following her speech because, in addition to them being inattentive and day dreaming while she was speaking, because if she posed any questions, they were not always able to answer her immediately. She would have to repeat the question or pose it in a different way before a learner would attempt a response. At other times, she would pose questions that required a 'yes' or 'no' response or speak and stop before the last word of a sentence which she expected the learners to complete. Often this was led by one or a few learners and then followed by the rest of the class, but which would not constitute speaking on the part of the

learners. The following vignette is one such example of what has been described. In the vignettes that follow T=Teacher, LB=Boy and LG=Girl.

Vignette 1: Ms Naidoo questioning her learners during the planning phase

- 1 T Right so we going to put the topic there. 'The Bump'. Now we
2 are focusing on 'The Bump' and we already know the story but
3 let's say for example you were given a topic like 'my school', I'm
4 using that cause we are all familiar with your school. Right, so
5 our topic is my school and the story that we read is 'The Bump'.
6 Now if you looking at planning again, it says decide on your
7 topic. Have we decided?
- 8 Class Yes
- 9 T Good and what is the planning stage talk to your group to gather
10 ideas to gather ideas means what?
- 11 LB1 Put ideas together.
- 12 T Right I love your response but please don't shout out, give the
13 others a chance to think as well. OK. You are correct. Alright to
14 gather information in other words now you are sitting wherever
15 you are writing and you want to put your information together.
16 That means you gather information. To put information together.
17 And remember the keyword is to brainstorm. Brainstorm means
18 using your brain and imagining and putting words into place, OK
19 so now we got our mind map which is going to help us to
20 structure our essay writing into paragraph form. Now, when you
21 get up in the morning, and you had your bath and you are now
22 dressing for school, is there an order that you dress in or you
23 just dress anyhow?
- 24 Class (mumbled) Order
- 25 T When we are talking about order what do we mean? There
26 are steps that we follow isn't it?
- 27 Class Yes
- 28 T In order means to put it in steps. For example, anybody can give
29 me an example of how you dress in the morning? Only one child

30 knows how to dress in the morning! ...

31 LB2 I put on my underwear.

32 T You put on your underwear! Very good! Can you put on your

33 school pants and then your undies?

34 C Yes.

35 T Yes?

36 Class No.

37 T No because you not going to have order and it will look clownish.

38 Imagine you coming in to school with your underwear and pants

39 underneath that! Which means you are not following a

40 sequence! Right! A sequence meaning stepwise or in order. Can

41 you come to school with your shoes on and your socks over the

42 shoe?

43 Class No

44 T You gonna look like a clown isn't it?

45 Class Yes

46 So, people in the same way your writing skills have to follow...

47 It's like putting the cart before thewhat's it? The cart before

48 the...

49 Class Horse!

50 T Yes. In other words, can the cart pull the horse?

51 Class No.

52 T Who pulls the cart?

53 Class The horse.

54 T So, the horse has to pull the cart.

As evidenced in the vignette above, Ms Naidoo engaged the learners in several concepts in this short episode, using closed-ended questions that required a 'yes' or 'no' response, and almost a "filling in the blanks" response that they thought she expected them to say. There was no room for critical thinking and this questioning technique did not allow for her to get a fair assessment of their understanding.

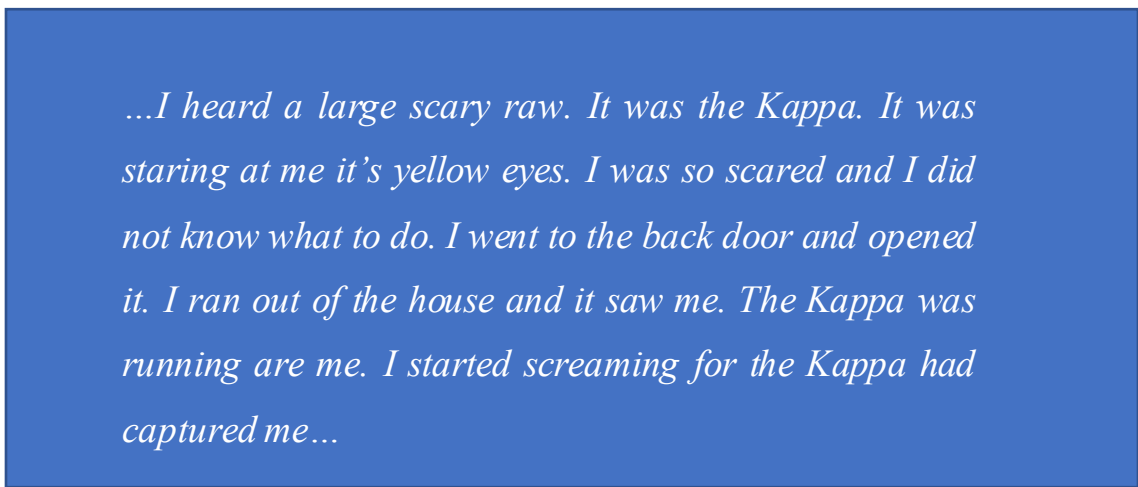
The writing which was done in this class involved the teacher giving the learners ten minutes for planning, using a mind map, and about fifteen minutes for writing their

drafts towards the end of the second lesson. It must be borne in mind that throughout this time, the teacher interrupted the writing to explain, edit and question the learners.

4.2.3 The role of scaffolding on the final written product

In School B the stages of the writing cycle were not adequately employed and practised, in other words Ms Naidoo's choice and implementation of scaffolding tools were not effective. The learners did not know how to complete a mind map, so most did not correctly complete them. Next, they began writing a draft which their teacher was unhappy with, so they had to write a new one (for which they also had no planning) for homework on any topic, but with no clear guidelines, instructions or teacher support, so many did not complete their drafts. They were thus unable to have their work teacher- or peer- edited, but they were then instructed to submit a final neat version the next day for teacher assessment.

The boys in School A who submitted their stories for marking had mind maps and completed stories. However, two boys did not complete their mind maps and another wrote only one sentence under each prompt on his mind map. Most of the boys' stories met, or sometimes exceeded, the length requirement provided by Ms Chetty, and were legible, and neatly presented. Some stories used ideas from horror movies that the boys may have watched, but their work was mostly original, creative and action-packed. For instance, one boy's story was based on the Kappa, a character from the horror series 'Teenwolf'. Although he used the character, his plot was different from the movie (see image below).



...I heard a large scary raw. It was the Kappa. It was staring at me it's yellow eyes. I was so scared and I did not know what to do. I went to the back door and opened it. I ran out of the house and it saw me. The Kappa was running are me. I started screaming for the Kappa had captured me...

Image 2: Use of characters from movies

The situation in School B was quite different. Although most of the boys submitted their books, when analysing their submissions, I found that most had incomplete mind maps, stories or both. In fact, only two boys completed both their mind maps (one of the two boys had a sentence written under the headings: plot, characters and setting) and stories, and one boy completed his story but not his mind map. Their handwriting and overall presentation was generally untidy with many spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, and their stories were copied from other texts with only three boys writing original stories. As there were no drafts submitted, I analysed the transcripts from the lesson observations and found that almost all the boys had submitted the same stories that they had read aloud to the class, which their teacher had asked them to discard. She had also instructed them to write a new, original story for homework. Many of them had not worked any further than the point that they had reached at the end of that lesson. The original stories written by two boys still lacked creativity. The excerpts below are taken from the boys' final neat drafts.

Excerpt A

*One day i take a taxi somewhere to school
we took my best friend one the way to
school on the holidays i take a taxi to Pick
n Pay to pick some clothes and some
shoes too. Then it was time to go home.*

Excerpt B

*Streaker is a mixd up kind of dog, you can
see from his thin body and powerful legs
that he's got a lot of greyhound blood in him.
Noby in the family
there was he pulls it's like he is chasing a
cat. he can run 10 mil's an hour*

Excerpt A is the first paragraph of the original story that a boy wrote. As can be seen, his story lacks depth and creativity and there are many errors, which is an indication that his work was not edited. Excerpt B is an example of a copied, incomplete story that a boy submitted, which he had read out to the class in the lesson preceding the teacher's instruction to write a new story for homework to submit for assessment. Even though he had copied the story, there are many spelling, punctuation and grammatical

errors. The original story reads as follows:

Streaker is a mixed-up kind of dog. You can see from her thin body and powerful legs that she's got a lot of greyhound blood in her, along with quite a bit of Ferrari and a large chunk of whirlwind. Nobody in our family likes walking her and this is hardly surprising. Streaker can out-accelerate a torpedo!

(Strong, 1998:1)

In Chapter 6, an analysis of the boys' written submissions is presented in greater depth.

4.3 Assessment and feedback

According to the CAPS (DBE, 2011a, p.88) when assessing learners' written work, the teacher must pay attention to language structures and use, spelling, punctuation and also how meaning is conveyed. It is further recognised that writing is a process, so all stages of the writing process should be assessed. In addition, it is mentioned that memoranda, rubrics and checklists ought to be used to observe, assess and record the learner's skill and level of understanding (DBE, 2011a). Assessment and feedback emerged as a theme during data analysis in terms of how formative assessment was conducted during each stage of the writing cycle, what tools were used to assess the learners and how the learners' final submissions were assessed.

In School A, informal assessment took place during the co-creation of the nightmare and during editing, but as drafting was assigned for homework, the revising stage and formative assessment were omitted. This was the same in School B. However, Ms Naidoo's questioning technique during the planning stage did not sufficiently assess her learners' progress. Also, as only one boy's draft was edited, the others did not receive feedback on how their stories could be improved, except to be told that their stories were copied and therefore not acceptable. Ms Chetty collected and formally assessed the learners' final submissions, as did Ms Naidoo.

Ms Chetty collected the learners' books at the end of the third lesson of developing her learners' writing skills by employing the writing process and requested that I return after five days to collect the boys' books, giving her time to mark their stories. All the

boys used the space provided in their workbooks for their mind maps and stories.

Date: _____

44 Writing my story

Let's write Plan to write a description of a dream or a nightmare that you had. Use the mind map for your planning.

Your topic is: "Last night I dreamed that ...". Fill in your main ideas on the mind map. Say what you did before you went to sleep, what happened in your dream and how it ended. Mention how you felt during the dream. Were you afraid?

After you have done this, write three or four paragraphs about your dream. Write your description on rough paper. Ask your friend to check it for you. Tomorrow you will copy your work neatly into the next worksheet.

Term 2 - Week 3-4

Let's write Rewrite your essay neatly in the space provided.

Last night I dreamed that ...

When I woke up.

What I did before I slept.

How the dream started.

How the dream ended.

Last night I dreamed...

How I felt during the dream.

TEACHER: Sign _____ Date _____ 89 90

Use a mind map to help you to plan your writing. Write a rough draft. Ask a friend to assist the draft. Revise your text and make the necessary corrections. Then write it neatly in your book.

Date: _____

45 Book review

Let's write Write a book review for the book "An unbelievable night".

Term 2 - Week 3-4

Title of the book _____

Author _____

Plot What happens in the story? _____

Setting Where and when does the story take place? _____

Characters Who are the people in the story? _____

Is the book fact or fiction? _____

Theme What is the story about? What is the message of the story? _____

What I liked What was the best part of the story? _____

Recommendation Why would you recommend the story to a friend? _____

TEACHER: Sign _____ Date _____ 91 92

Image 3 and 4: Template for learners to complete in their workbooks

Source: DBE (2015a, p.89-91)

Looking at the templates above, they are colourful and contain images and the mind map has clear prompts. On the next page (in template) space is provided for the learners to write their final versions and there is a space for the teacher to sign and

date. As mentioned previously, the mind map worked well for the boys in School A, as the prompts were clear, helped to direct their thinking and most boys completed their mind maps. However, in both schools, there was no feedback provided on the learners' mind maps. Both teachers walked around during this stage, to maintain discipline and to check if the learners were working on task, but they did not comment on what the learners were doing in terms of the organisation of their ideas.

Ms Chetty (School A) asked the learners to write three paragraphs of only four to five lines each, but the space provided for them to write their neat final stories allowed for the writing a longer story. Furthermore, no template was provided in the workbook for learners to write their drafts, which could also have included guidelines and space for editing. This may have been viewed by the learners as something separate or extra that their teacher expected them to do. The teacher is only expected to sign and date the final story. There is neither a space for the teacher to provide meaningful feedback, nor is there a rubric for marking the essay.

Thus, when I analysed the boys' submitted efforts with their teacher's assessment, I observed that Ms Chetty corrected all the spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, at the end of a few essays wrote comments like "good", "scary", "please check your work", or "good account", and signed in the space provided. These comments were not a clear indication of what was good, what ought to be checked, why the story was a good account or how the boy managed to achieve the scary element. The boys did not receive effective feedback but, they could still benefit from the teacher's spelling, punctuation and grammatical corrections to avoid making the same mistakes in different contexts in future, assuming they went back and read their essays with her corrections and that they were able to understand why she had made them.

Formative assessment in School B was both written and oral, and individual and collective, in that Ms Naidoo corrected individual learners' spelling and punctuation errors, but she often involved the whole class in the correction process. An example of this follows: "Now Nonthando, uh, Nomfundo, now that you have written paragraph one let's go back and look for errors right. Give me your pen, circle that one. Right, spelling error (*reading learners paragraph*)... (*to the class*) right guys please stop whatever you are doing! Please spell the word 'given'." Summative assessment in

School B was similar to School A. Ms Naidoo corrected all the boys' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. The emphasis placed on correcting these aspects could be based on the teachers' own schooling experiences. Both teachers explained that when they were at school, when marking their writing efforts, their teachers corrected all their errors in red pen and gave them a mark. Ms Chetty said that her teacher used codes like 'sp' to indicate spelling errors and when they received their work back from their teacher they had to write any words that were incorrectly spelt three times in their spelling books. When asked if their teachers used rubrics and provided written feedback about their strengths and areas of development, both teachers said that their teacher wrote comments like 'excellent' or 'poor spelling' and no rubrics were used. Interesting to note in that this boy's final submission was the same draft without any corrections made as per the whole class editing.

As their work had not been edited in School B, there were many errors. It is interesting to note that the boy whose work Ms Naidoo had edited on the chalkboard with the class had submitted the story with the same errors that the class had corrected. In other words, the boy simply submitted his draft instead of writing a neat, final version with the suggested necessary corrections. Despite this, she signed the books, dated some, wrote "well done" on one boy's story and "very good" on his mind map, and used question marks to indicate that work was incomplete. Here again, the boys did not receive effective feedback that could have helped to improve their writing in the future. While analysing the boys' books, I noticed that when writing on previous occasions, the boys were given a typed template to write their stories, together with a marking rubric, illustrated in the figure below:

This template rubric includes, “Planning and use of the writing process” and awards three marks for this aspect. It is therefore surprising that the learners did not seem familiar with the stages of the writing cycle. It is unclear why Ms Naidoo deviated from this regular process for the piece of writing that was completed during the class observations, but it was clear that the boys in this class were not very familiar with using a mind map to plan their writing (only one had successfully completed his mind map), writing and editing drafts, and submitting a neat, final draft—all the boys submitted unedited drafts. Yet, when asked about her views on the use of the writing cycle to develop her boys’ writing skills, she said that it was time consuming, but she felt it worked well because “it shows them exactly what to do so that they can complete their stories properly, and they enjoy it.” However, the data from the boys’ books reveal that the way Ms Naidoo approached the observed writing lessons did not necessarily work well as the boys were unable to meet her expectations. Adding to this, their lack of concentration during the lessons and the haphazard way they approached the written work (mind maps, drafts and final submissions) could indicate that they did not enjoy the writing as much as their teacher thought they had.

Ms Chetty also found using the writing cycle time consuming but added that it was demanding on her in terms of the marking load as she had to edit their draft and then mark their final submissions. However, she explained that she used it because it was a “department requirement” and felt that “with practice the learners will get used to what they need to do.” She further stated that it really helped her boys because they “battled to express themselves and made a lot of mistakes, so at least I can correct the mistakes when I am editing and when their work comes for marking, it is not too bad.” In classes with large numbers, providing feedback at each stage and then marking all the final submissions may be overwhelming for the teacher, especially if learners do not have the academic competence required for peer editing.

4.4 Boys’ perceptions of writing


4.4.1 Boys’ response to the questionnaire

This section gives voice to the boys who participated in this study in terms of how they perceived and experienced their writing lessons. Thus, I will discuss how the boys in each school perceived their writing lessons and activities. The discussion presented


here is based on the boys' interactions and responses during the lesson observations, questionnaires and their written submissions. Their teachers' responses during the interviews were also considered to obtain a holistic picture of how these boys viewed and approached writing.

The final activity-based questionnaire was broken down into four sections (See Appendix 5). In both schools, once the excitement over the stations, colours and stickers died down, the boys in both schools managed most of the first General section with ease. They were unsure of what to do at first but, after reading and following the instructions, they managed fairly independently. However, all the boys in School B and one IsiZulu speaking boy in School A came to the Help Desk needing assistance with writing their address, because in many of the outlying areas where they live there are no street names or house numbers. They were told to write down the area where they lived. The boys were asked where they live to assist with determining their cultural and socio-economic status. Some boys also came to the Help Desk to ask what they should do if no one helped them at home with their homework, so "No-one" should have been included as an option on the questionnaire.

The second section titled "School" dealt with aspects like the part of school that they enjoyed most and least, their favourite and least favourite subjects and who their best friend was. Seven boys chose English as their favourite subject and four boys indicated that it was their least favourite subject. On the other hand, eleven boys selected IsiZulu as their favourite subject and none said that it was their least favourite. This section of the questionnaire was also accomplished with ease by the boys, but in both schools when I was walking around to check, I noticed that many had put a sticker by their favourite subject but omitted the green star on their least favourite subject. A possible reason for this was that the instruction was too long and, after engaging with the first part, the boys forgot to go back to complete the second part. Perhaps this question should have been split into two questions as follows:


5.  Pick your favourite sticker and stick it on your favourite subject.

ENG	AFRIK	ZULU	MATHS	LIFESKILLS	SS	NS
-----	-------	------	-------	------------	----	----

6.  Stick a green star on your least favourite subject.

ENG	AFRIK	ZULU	MATHS	LIFESKILLS	SS	NS
-----	-------	------	-------	------------	----	----

The next section titled “English” asked for their favourite and least favourite aspect of learning English and the genre that they most and least enjoyed reading. Here again, the question should have been split, as some boys omitted the second part of the instruction. Orals and listening to stories were the least favourite of most boys, with only five boys choosing writing, whereas reading was a favourite for most boys while six boys chose writing as a favourite. In contrast to this, in School A, four boys chose all the aspects as their favourite. This could be because they did indeed enjoy all aspects of learning English or that they enjoyed sticking the stickers, because in the second section of the questionnaire, these same boys did not select English as their favourite subject. The effects of socialisation and issues of masculinity were evident in the second question of this section because most boys chose action, adventure and comics as their favourites, with only two boys from School A and seven boys from School B choosing fairy tales and romance. Two boys from School B picked “other” as an option, but did not name the genre that they instead enjoyed reading. This was because there was no instruction or space provided on the questionnaire for them to write other genres. Instead, this part could have been designed as follows:

2.  Stick a heart sticker on the type of story you enjoy reading the most and two green stars on the type of story you enjoy reading the least.

Adventure	Action	Fairy tales	Folk tales	Romance	Comics	Other: _____ _____
-----------	--------	-------------	------------	---------	--------	--------------------------



3. Stick two green stars on the type of story you enjoy reading the least.

Adventure	Action	Fairy tales	Folk tales	Romance	Comics	Other: _____ _____
-----------	--------	-------------	------------	---------	--------	--------------------------

Finally, the boys had to provide information about their writing experiences. They were asked about the types of writing that they did in class, their favourite and least favourite type and the part of writing that they found most difficult. In addition, they had to draw a picture reflecting their teacher teaching them writing and write a paragraph to explain what was happening in the picture. The answers they gave for the types of writing that they did in class were not consistent, considering they were all in the same class taught by the same teacher. For instance, in School A, most boys selected almost all the genres provided, but three selected only stories, letters and adverts. In School B, all the boys selected stories, plays and poems, but each had a different variation of the other genres. A possible reason for this is that the boys coloured in the ones that stood out in their minds and that they remembered having written, so this was not necessarily an accurate indication of the genres that they learnt how to write in class. Adding to this, some picked favourite and least favourite types of writing that were not compatible with the list that they provided for the types of writing that they did in class. An example of this is boy G from School A tabulated below.

Table 8: Boy G's response to "Writing" 1, 2 and 3		
Types of writing done in class	Favourite types of writing	Least favourite types of writing
stories descriptions plays letters poems posters	stories descriptions plays letters poems news reports	cards invitations

adverts	posters adverts	
---------	--------------------	--

As can be seen in the table above, news reports, cards and invitations are given as his favourite and least favourite genres, but they do not form part of the list provided for the genres that they learnt in class. Thus, triangulation was important. For this purpose, teachers were asked about the types of writing that they had taught and the boys' books were analysed to see the writing that they had completed during previous writing lessons. Their responses to these questions were important, as they indicated the writing types that the boys were most familiar with.

4.4.2 Using an interactive questionnaire with boys: what are the lessons?

This section discusses four key areas of learning that arose from the use of the interactive questionnaire, which are the importance of affect; supporting and scaffolding the process; multimodality; and using incentives.

a. Participant affective responses to the questionnaire

During the research process, it became apparent that how the boys felt about doing the questionnaire was important for its effectiveness as a research instrument. A non-threatening, non-intimidating, enjoyable environment was created to ensure that the boys were comfortable and at ease, so they would have no reason to invent responses or to not respond. In both schools the boys' reactions indicated that they really enjoyed choosing and using the stickers the most, as they spent the most time at this station. Interesting to note was that all the boys picked the car and motorbike stickers as their favourite. In School A, the boys and girls took out their sticker albums to show me their collections and asked if they could share the leftover stickers.

Illeris (2009) argues that all learning involves not only a "content" dimension, but also an "incentive" dimension, the latter being concerned with motivation, emotions and volition. Both these dimensions are informed by an "interaction" dimension, which concerns the relation between participants. This theory of learning pointed towards the importance of considering the relation among content, incentive and interaction in using the questionnaire. The study found that an environment conducive to and supportive of interactions contributed to creating appropriate feelings towards the task.

b. Supporting and scaffolding the process

Scaffolding and support are key considerations for effective language teaching (Rose, 2004) and these proved as important in administering the questionnaire. In School A, the boys came to the Help Desk to ask many questions pertaining to the purpose of the questionnaire and to find out more about who I was and what I was doing. Thus, at School B, I spent more time talking about myself, and the questionnaire and its purpose. Some boys in this school needed more assistance with understanding the instructions, but by the end of the first section most were able to follow them independently. A few boys in this school were unable to read the instructions, so I assisted some with completing the whole questionnaire, while others asked their peers for assistance. The presence of their teacher did not hinder the process. Instead, she was a great help in maintaining order and seeing to the girls in the class. She also constantly reminded the boys of the importance of being honest and taking their time to think about their responses to provide accurate information. In both schools the girls were very disappointed that they were not a part of the process but enjoyed colouring in the mandalas that I provided to keep them occupied. I also found that walking around providing assistance was helpful, as opposed to waiting for the boys to come to me at the Help Desk. Although boys did come to the Help Desk to ask questions, going to them was particularly beneficial for the boys who were shy or afraid of seeming unintelligent for not knowing what to do.

c. Using appropriate multimodality

Multimodality played an important role in the design and administration of the interactive questionnaire. Fleming (1995) cites four learning styles, commonly known as VARK: visual, auditory, read/write and kinaesthetic. The questionnaire used multiple modes of communication and interaction to account for individual learning styles. These included written, visual, kinaesthetic, interpersonal and interactional. These varied modes not only accommodated the boys' different learning styles, but also helped to keep the boys engaged so that they completed the questionnaire and produced rich data. Symbols and pictures were used, and the boys were expected to read and follow the instructions, provide written responses, colour in some responses, draw pictures and stick stickers on others. The questionnaire also allowed for the boys

to move around to the different stations, to the Help Desk, and while moving around there was animated interaction amongst the boys about which section they were at, which stickers they chose, which boy picked the best sticker and so on, which again foregrounded the competitive nature of the boys. The girls were also interested in what the boys were doing and were called to their desks to have a look and chat about the different parts of the questionnaire.

Using a multimodal approach recognises that children operate in a multimodal culture in which they are used to interacting with various media, particularly through cell phones, gaming and other audio-visual technologies (Tan & Guo, 2009). As Vincent (2006, p.51) argues, "Some children need multimodal scaffolding in order to communicate ideas effectively." However, in the South African context, access to multimodal technologies is uneven, especially regarding computer-based technologies. With this in mind, the use of multimodality has to be contextually appropriate and a text-based but interactive and visually rich format was selected so as not to exclude learners.

d. Using incentives to engage participants

Promoting healthy competition, as suggested by King and Gurian (2006) and drawing on Illeris' (2009) "incentive" dimension of learning, by using the unexpected instructions for prizes, was particularly beneficial because it broke the ice in getting boys to come to the Help Desk. In School A, the boys were very competitive and, once they saw that there were instructions to claim prizes, they all started skimming through the questionnaire to find more such instructions. Fortunately, all the prizes were found in the first few minutes, so they went on, paying more attention to completing the questionnaire. The opposite was evident in School B, as the boys missed the first incentive instruction. Only after about 20 minutes did one boy come to the Help Desk to ask what he was supposed to do with the instruction: "find a pink pen and bring it to the help desk to claim your reward". Once I explained what it meant, he brought the pink pen and received his prize. I then explained the instructions to claim prizes to the rest of the class. Surprisingly, they did not all run to the stations to find the objects, but carried on working through the questionnaire and, as they came to an incentive, went to look for the object and brought it to receive the reward. An important consideration

arising from the study is that incentives should stimulate engagement, but not become ends in themselves which detract from the primary purpose of data collection.

4.5 Challenges experienced by boys

In this section I will illuminate the challenges that the boys experienced during their writing lessons and during the completion of their writing activities. In School A, Ms Chetty secured her learners' attention by engaging them in a stimulating discussion about nightmares. Wood et al. (1976) state that during an instructional education exchange, the teacher must recruit the interest of the learners and demonstrate the task by completing it or explaining a solution so that the learner can imitate it in a more suitable form. Ms Chetty also first modelled the type of writing that she wanted her learners to do through an in-depth discussion with them. This strategy seemed to work well, as the learners actively participated by answering questions and contributing to the discussion. At relevant points, the boys even made sound effects to describe the actions that the teacher was describing. It was clear that the boys enjoyed the discussion and her multimodal approach, which drew on their various sense experience such as sight and hearing. They produced original responses to questions posed, and at times, competed to provide the best response. Furthermore, the responses given by the learners demonstrated a good command of spoken English, and creative and imaginative thinking. Once the discussion ended, the class was silent as they began individual planning, using the mind map with prompts provided in their workbooks.

Ms Naidoo's technique during the planning stage may not have been as successful, because the learners had not understood her instructions. After receiving the instruction to begin planning from their teacher, one learner had asked "So mam, we must write the story?" Another had been confused by the word *plot*, and yet another learner had asked "How?" after Ms Naidoo had explained that they should begin their planning on the mind map for the first paragraph, using the headings: setting, characters and plot. The learners should have been familiar with the writing process and completing mind maps because during the interview, Ms Naidoo stated that when teaching writing, she used the process and always used mind maps for planning. Contrary to this was the lack of those mind maps and drafts in the boys' books for their

previous writing tasks. Their unfamiliarity and uncertainty surrounding the writing process and the mind map could imply that these are not regular occurrences during their writing lessons.

It is possible that the learners had experienced listening fatigue at the point when they had to commence their mind maps, because their teacher spent a great deal of time talking and explaining, which may have resulted in information overload and uncertainty of what was relevant to complete the task at hand. Ms Naidoo gave her learners ten minutes to complete their mind maps. During this time, the boys were rowdy and fidgety and most were clearly not working on the task. At one point Ms Naidoo had asked her learners to stop writing, saying, “I can see you are battling, you are having a problem even thinking of a topic...” So, she told them to write a story that they already knew. By the end of the first lesson on the second day the learners were unsuccessful in completing a mind map to reflect the planning stage of the writing process.



Figure 11: Sequence of teaching: Ms Chetty

Source: own



Figure 12: Sequence of teaching: Ms Naidoo

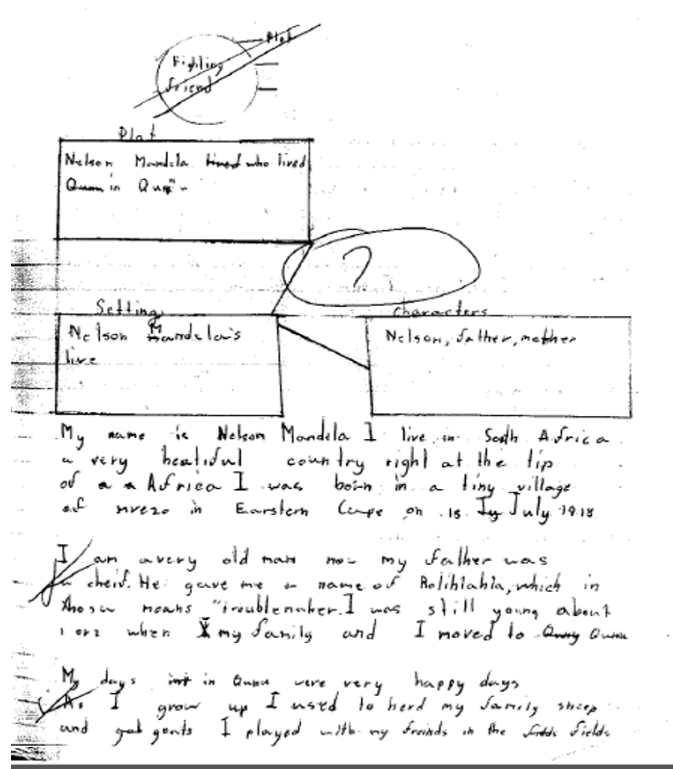
Source: own

Figures 11 and 12 above diagrammatically define the sequence of the writing lessons in the two classrooms. In Figure 11, Ms Chetty began her lesson by providing an interesting stimulus to get the learners thinking about the topic and the writing. Next, the learners brainstormed on their own and then started writing their drafts. In contrast, Ms Naidoo began with a lecture on planning and on aspects of written texts (Figure 12). It would seem that she taught the writing process rather than following the writing process. There was little stimulus for the learners and they were not given a topic or choice of topics to write about.

The learners in School B began brainstorming but had trouble and were confused about what to do with their mind maps, as they were given three headings, but no prompts which could have guided their thinking and provided an outline for their stories, which may account for the poor quality of mind maps that they submitted. Nevertheless, they produced the beginnings of a draft which their teacher was not happy with. Many boys copied stories that they had previously engaged with rather than producing original pieces of writing. Thus, they had to go back, choose a new topic and start writing a draft. This meant that the planning stage was skipped. The process resulted in many boys submitting incomplete or poorly complete efforts.

Significantly, when providing a response to the question: "What do you find most difficult about writing?" in the activity-based questionnaire, a few boys wrote planning, writing your own story and writing without knowing what to write about. According to Daly (2004), boys may view planning for writing as a waste of time, which can be attributed to the teacher's insufficient knowledge about how to teach their learners how to plan. Instead, they would be more motivated and successful at completing the task, if their planning had clear aims (Barrs and Pidgeon, 2002). By planning an introduction that captures the boys' attention (Wood et al., 1976), with clear, explicit and achievable outcomes (Daly, 2004), the teacher can motivate them to complete the writing. During the completion of the questionnaire in School A, I asked a boy why he did not enjoy planning. He responded that he wanted to write the actual story because he knew the story that he wanted to tell, but he did not know how to answer the questions. This is interesting as it shows that this boy preferred engaging with sequence of the story rather than first compartmentalising it under the prompts, possibly because his teacher had led him through the sequence of the story during the class discussion. In School

B, a pair of boys explained that they did not enjoy the planning stage because they did not know what to write about. This may be because he could not decide on a topic or because the type of story that he needed to write had not been adequately scaffolded. Another boy said that he did not know where to write it which could indicate that he was not familiar with how to structure a mind map. This is supported by his (and most of the other boys in the class) poorly incomplete mind map (see example below).



Exemplar 4.2: Poorly incomplete mind map from School B

Other writing challenges that the boys from both schools conveyed in the activity-based questionnaire are as follows: most indicated spelling, followed by punctuation, and then correct grammar. Drawing on the boys' responses of difficulty experienced when trying to think of a topic, it would seem that, although boys enjoy choice (King & Gurian, 2006), they need options with clear, explicit instructions to select from. Another point is that learners are more likely to succeed during the planning phase if they are given prompts on their mind maps and model a text that they have previously engaged with, as was done in School A during the whole-class co-creation of the nightmare. According to Badger and White (2000), modelling entails the teacher introducing a model of the genre, according to what they consider the purpose of the text to be and discussing its structure and how its purpose is realised. Daly (2004, p.17) makes an

important point that “emotionally powerful texts with engaging narratives are a prime factor in the development of writing for all pupils”.

During the planning stage, when modelling the text, the teacher has the opportunity to assess what her learners know about the topic and type of text, so she can then develop the areas that she finds lacking. The CAPS states that assessment should be integrated into teaching and learning, as opposed to assessment being a separate, isolated activity (DBE, 2011a, p.88). An illustration is Ms Chetty’s questioning techniques during the co-creation of the nightmare, which enabled her to assess how much her learners already knew about the topic, the areas for their development and their readiness to write their own stories. An example of this can be seen in Chapter 5, Vignette 2, where Ms Chetty questioned the learners about their feelings after being knocked over by a wave. In this way she was able to assess their ability to use adjectives that were appropriate to the situation, as they were required to do when writing their own stories. This formative assessment did not really happen in School B, because Ms Naidoo did not actually discuss the content of the stories and her questions were mostly closed-ended. For instance, after explaining a concept she would ask the learners if they had understood, to which they would respond “Yes” in chorus. This response was not an indication of whether they really had understood anything and did not tell the teacher what they had understood. An affirmative response is possibly a case of supplying the answer that they think their teacher expects.

Although not much class time had been allocated to writing their drafts, the boys in School A quite confidently commenced writing them toward the end of the lesson, as they seemed to have a clear understanding of what was expected of them and many used their mind maps to assist with this task. Most of the spelling errors that Ms Chetty corrected while she was walking around the classroom checking the odd learners’ progress were the boys. She did not really correct any of the girls which may be because she stated that the boys made more spelling errors, so she used her knowledge of her learners and focussed on the boys, or she might have paid more attention to the boys because they were the focus of this research.

In School B the boys did not seem to have a clear idea of what they were expected to

do, because after the teacher gave them an instruction, they asked many questions and then did not immediately commence with writing. While the learners were writing their drafts, Ms Naidoo asked me to walk around and have a look at what they were doing. Many were writing stories like 'Little Red Riding Hood' and other familiar stories, which they may have read or listened to on previous occasions. However, in the row at the far end of the classroom, those boys had barely written a sentence and had been observed talking, digging in their bags, playing with pens and rulers or staring out of the window. As they saw me approaching they attempted to start writing, but the quality of the few sentences that they wrote was not at the required level.

Towards the end of the lesson, Ms Naidoo asked one of the boys to read a definition of a plot. While the boy was reading, another boy got into an altercation with the learner next to him, so the teacher had to intervene. For the remainder of the lesson (about 20 minutes) the teacher explained what she wanted the learners to do for homework, often digressing to explain concepts, discipline learners or impart moral values. According to Sax (2005), young boys have a short attention span, so these boys would have found paying attention and listening to this long oral instruction challenging. Indeed, most of the boys that I observed were not paying attention, thus they would not have heard their teacher's instructions and would therefore not be able to successfully complete the homework. However, it is uncertain whether those who were trying to listen could understand what their teacher was saying, because she spoke for such a lengthy period about such a range of topics, often using language that seemed to be beyond the learners' level of understanding. When she eventually asked if they had understood what to do, most mumbled, "Yes", but one boy said, "No" so she tried to explain again, thereafter again asking the learners if they had understood, to which they all replied, "Yes" When she offered to explain it again, they said "No". However, the learners' assent did not necessarily mean that they had understood the instructions or that they would have remembered what to do by the time they reached home.

Due to the seating arrangement in both schools, most boys swapped their books with girls to have their drafts peer edited. However, in School A, some learners had to walk around the class trying to find someone to edit their work, as their desk partner had not completed their draft for homework. The girls clearly dominated the editing process

and took editing their peers' work very seriously, often calling on Ms Chetty to assist. If a girl found that the work required too much editing, she would take the boy's book to Ms Chetty for her to work one-on-one with the boy. It seemed that the girls received less editing and assistance than the boys from both their teacher and peers.


During the editing process a few minor arguments broke out between the boys and their female peers over corrections that were made. One altercation involving a boy and his female peer arose from the fact that the girl felt that he did not want to listen to her and make her suggested corrections. He responded by saying he was tired of her always checking his work and telling him what to do. Daly (2004) states that over interference in how boys structure their writing and the imposition of another's language and ideas can lead to feelings of resentment, which was evident in this instance. Ms Chetty had to intervene and check the boy's work herself. A few girls also requested that Ms Chetty, or someone other than their desk partner, edit their work, because they stated that the boys who sit next to them were unable to identify errors. This can be expected where an academically advanced learner is seated next to a learner who experiences difficulties with reading and writing; the former is able to edit the latter's draft, but the latter is unable to edit the former's. When asked about this, those boys explained that they could not see anything wrong. This is not surprising because their drafts had many errors and needed much editing. Ms Chetty also told the learners to read through and check their own work before writing their final drafts.

Peer editing in School B was not possible because most learners, especially most of the boys, had not completed their drafts. Instead, they read out what they had written, were stopped short while reading because their work was copied from another text, and they then worked as a class to correct each boy's draft. During this time, the teacher had to discipline several boys because they had not completed the work, were being disrespectful, laughing and chatting or not paying attention. As in the previous two lessons (during the planning stage), one boy tried to dominate by yelling out unsolicited answers to questions, so he was disciplined and told to give others a chance to think and give answers.

4.6 Choice of genre to develop writing skills

The process genre approach to writing foregrounds the importance of understanding the purpose for writing the genre, the language associated with the genre and the context in which the writing happens (Badger & White, 2000). The CAPS (DBE, 2011a) states that Grade 6 learners must be able to produce different types of texts for different purposes. The boys in both schools had to produce narrative stories during the lessons that were observed. It is interesting that both teachers selected the narrative genre as it was one that they both indicated, during the interviews, they had learnt to write when they were at school. Having attended school during the apartheid era, Ms Chetty recalled writing many “stories”, sometimes about topics that she was unable to relate to, such as ‘My first train ride’. “None of the learners in my class had ever been on a train ride.” She said that they did other types of writing such as “descriptive, expository, narrative, uhm, there are five types, but I can’t remember all now.” She turned to a colleague who was sitting on the far end of the staff room where the interview was being conducted to ask if she could remember the others. Ms Naidoo’s response was the same in terms of writing stories about unfamiliar topics, but she felt that those helped to develop her imagination. She said that they also learnt to write letters and poems and upon analysing her boys’ books, I noticed that the text types that they had engaged with earlier in the year were stories, letters and poems.

To determine what other genres they had previously written, the boys were given the following instruction in the activity-based questionnaire:

1.  Stick green stars on all the types of writing you do in class

Stories	Descriptions	Plays/ dialogues	Letters	Cards	Poems	News reports
Posters	Invitations	Adverts	Other (write in these blocks)->			

In both schools, almost all the boys stuck green stars on most of the types of writing, and during the interviews their teachers also indicated that they taught their learners how to write a variety of texts. Although this suggests that they had been exposed to writing for different purposes as prescribed by the CAPS, Daly (2004) states that boys

prefer reading and writing action stories, and when completing the activity-based questionnaire, the genres that most boys in both schools indicated they enjoyed were action, adventure and comics.

The CAPS provides a summary of text types that must be covered across the IP (DBE, 2011a, p.27). This tabulated list is divided into essays and transactional texts, and indicates the text type, purpose, text structure and language features (Refer to Chapter 2, Table 3). This table is a valuable resource for teachers to familiarise themselves and their learners with the purpose, language features and structure of different genres. When used, learners will not only understand what is expected when they encounter the same genre in future grades but understanding these aspects of the genre will also contribute to the learners' comprehension process when reading a text of the same genre (Mather, 2012). In addition to this summary of text types, there is a table that details the length of text for learners in each Grade in the IP (DBE, 2011a, p.32).

The instruction in the workbooks provided for learners in School A was to write a description of a dream. During the class discussion and when their teacher was explaining the activity, she did not explain that the type of text they were expected to produce was a description of a dream, as stated in their workbooks, which would entail a vivid description of the features or characteristics of their dreams, using adjectives, adverbs, figurative language and, in this instance, the past tense for an event has already occurred (DBE, 2011a). These salient language features help the reader to distinguish a descriptive essay from other types of essays. Adding to these instructions, the prompts on the mind map are:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What I did before I slept.2. How the dream started.3. How I felt during the dream.4. How the dream ended. |
|---|

Following these prompts could also lead the learners more towards writing a narrative essay, as they would be writing in the first person, sequentially using connectives that signal time, which are all language features of the narrative essay. Moreover, if one

considers the structure that the learners' stories followed, it was more of a narrative text structure orientation to introduce the characters and setting (prompt 1), events leading to a complication (prompt 2) and the resolution (prompt 4 and 5). In contrast, the descriptive text structure begins with a general orientation of the subject, followed by a description of the features or characteristics of the subject (DBE, 2011a). Therefore, the learners are expected to write a story (narrative essay) in which they describe a dream or nightmare. Highlighted here is the importance of topic choice and wording, especially at the IP level where learners are still new to many genres and could become easily confused and unable to distinguish between the different types of texts.

However, the topic and type of text are appropriate for the age and level of the learners and cater for different interests, as the learners can base their dreams on anything that they might enjoy writing about. This is particularly advantageous for boys, as it allows for them to write action and adventure stories. The workbook is also colourful and has pictures, which King and Gurian (2006) state is helpful when teaching boys writing because they respond well to visual stimuli. In the observed lesson in School A, that the teacher limited the dream to a nightmare may have been a disadvantage, especially for sensitive learners. This choice was probably made for pedagogical reasons, as Ms Chetty explained that co-creating a nightmare during the whole-class discussion was fun and stimulated the boys' interest with action and sounds. The length of the essay that Ms Chetty asked the learners to produce was not in keeping with the expectations of the CAPS (although, most boys wrote more than the three paragraphs of 4–5 lines that the teacher requested).

In School B, the learners were asked to write a story on a topic of their choice. The word *story* was used to indicate the type of text, but both teachers did not use the word *narrative*, so later in their schooling careers when the learners are asked to write a narrative, they will be unfamiliar with the word. Ms Naidoo did, however, try to explain narrative genre concepts such as plot, mood, setting and character, using a narrative text, titled 'The Bump', that the class had read the previous week. The learners seemed to struggle to grasp these concepts and determine how to integrate them into the story. At one point in her lesson Ms Naidoo also tried to explain what the climax of the story was, but the lesson was not well structured and sequential, so the learners

may have been unsure of how that element fitted into the writing of their stories. Eventually, most girls who read their work aloud in the class chose to write fairy tales that they were familiar with, and the boys chose adventure stories like 'The ten mile an hour dog', 'The fierce storm', 'The flying horse', and 'The taxi ride to town'.

The story length that Ms Naidoo asked for was the same as Ms Chetty's and did not accord with the expectations of the CAPS. Perhaps she prescribed this length because all her learners were second language English speakers thus, using her knowledge of her learners, she anticipated their limitations. South African schools often elect to offer English at HL level even though most of the learners are second language speakers, as was explained in Chapter 2. Thus, learners fall further and further behind because, as they progress to a higher grade, each teacher has the challenge of trying to develop the concepts that the learners were unable to grasp at the prescribed time in the previous grades (Mather, 2012). Unfamiliarity with concepts was evident in School B, as Ms Naidoo tried to accustom the learners to aspects that ought to have been covered in earlier grades such as the writing process, elements of a narrative essay and different linguistic aspects. These were not easily grasped by the learners and resulted in the production of incomplete, poorly constructed stories by many of them. Another possible reason for Ms Naidoo's learners struggling to write a well organised, grammatically correct narrative text may be the existing gap created by the fact that they were learning English at HL level which was too high for them.

4.7 Integration of language and vocabulary development into writing lessons

The data from the lesson observations and the boys' final submissions revealed that during the development of the learners' writing skills in the writing process, much emphasis was placed on spelling and the correct use of grammar and punctuation. This was particularly the case during the editing stage and when the teachers were assessing the learners' final stories. The CAPS allocates an hour for the formal practice of language structures and conventions, but states that these must be taught in context (DBE, 2011a). Examples of language structures and conventions are specified in the CAPS, which include the teaching of spelling patterns, rules and conventions, abbreviations and dictionary usage (DBE, 2011a, p.20-24), and a list of

the language structures and conventions to be taught in each grade are contained in the teaching plan for each grade. When teachers select listening or reading texts, they are required to ensure that these include specific language items that the teacher wants to cover, and activities related to the text must be created to enable learners to practice those items in context (DBE, 2011a, p.12). Additionally, when learners write their own texts, some of those language aspects must be included (DBE, 2011a).

An instance of this requirement was in School B where the learners had to produce a narrative text which contained the following language features: writing in the first or third person, writing in the past tense, describing events in sequence, using connectives, dialogue, and lexical items such as adjectives and adverbs to create an impact on the reader (DBE, 2011a, p.27). For this task, Ms Naidoo selected a reading text titled 'The Bump'. From her learners' books it was ascertained that the activity the learners were given after reading 'The Bump' was to rewrite the entire text in their books. There was no evidence of comprehension activities, language development or vocabulary extension in the learners' books. Ms Naidoo did, however, read, explain and summarise the story orally during her writing lessons, focusing on aspects in the story such as the plot, setting and characters, which she thought were relevant and would assist the learners with their writing. She also asked a few boys to dramatise a incident from the story during one of the lesson observations, which they enjoyed, probably because it broke the momentum of the lesson and allowed for physical movement (King & Gurian, 2006). Although this dramatisation was well executed and may have facilitated the learners' understanding of the text, it was not really related to the completion of their writing activity, which was the purpose of the lesson.

When asked about the inclusion of the dramatization and the purpose that it was meant to play in developing the learners' writing skills, Ms Naidoo explained that she felt that the learners were not understanding the story so showing them an incident from the story may have assisted. She further said that it was not planned, she was improvising to ensure that they understood the story so that they would be able to write their own stories. It would seem that she used the 'The Bump' to model a story as a strategy to scaffold the learners to write their own stories.

On the other hand, in School A, the relevant language structures and conventions

were practiced through meaningful activities, using previous sections of the broader theme from their workbooks titled 'Theme 3: Saying how it's done'. For example, the learners read a text titled 'An unbelievable night' (DBE, 2015a, p.84-85). The instruction for the activity that followed the reading of the text was, "These sentences are about what happened in Lindiwe's story. They are in the wrong sequence. Number them so that you have the correct sequence. We have numbered a few to help you." (DBE, 2015a, p.85). Thereafter, there is a comprehension activity followed by another on finite verbs and then adjectives, after which learners are instructed to write the description of their own dream (DBE, 2015a, p.86-89). Thus, these language aspects, along with those stipulated by the CAPS as being the language features relevant to the narrative essay, needed to be foregrounded when the learners were writing their essays (DBE, 2011a, p.27). Instead, Ms Chetty asked her learners to look at verbs, tense and concord (which she explained was the "meaning of the words"), when editing their peers' essays.

Furthermore, for vocabulary acquisition the CAPS prescribes that learners achieve a vocabulary of common spoken words of 3700–5250 and a reading vocabulary of new words of 2400–4200 by the end of the second term in Grade 6 (DBE, 2011a, p.33). To achieve this, teachers are expected to use every opportunity to extend their learners' vocabulary such as highlighting unfamiliar words within a new theme, reading or listening to text or providing word lists for writing activities. Learners can also keep a personal dictionary to keep track of the words learnt and also to use when writing or planning an oral presentation. In both School A and B, it was noticed that most of the boys experienced challenges with spelling. Also, in the activity-based questionnaire it emerged that many boys found spelling to be the most difficult part of writing and some boys indicated that their least favourite aspect of English was learning new words, punctuation and language.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented and elaborated on the findings from the thematic analysis of the data collected during the interviews, observations and boys' written submissions to determine how their writing skills were developed, how the teachers and boys perceived the writing process, the challenges they experienced during the teaching

and learning of writing and the assessment of the boys' final written submissions.

The difference between teaching writing using the writing process and teaching the writing process was highlighted. In School A, Ms Chetty developed her learners writing skills by introducing the topic through an entertaining and stimulating discussion. In this way, she modelled the sequential nature of the narrative genre and familiarised her learners with the vocabulary related to the topic. Ms Naidoo's perception of how she develops her learners' writing skills and the way she does this were not the same, because during the interview she said that she makes her learners use a mind map to brainstorm, then discusses the rubric with them to see where to focus attention. However, she did not use a rubric and began her lesson by explaining the steps of the writing process and then read a story, but she did not make the link between the structures and conventions of the story that they read to the story that they were going to write. After the introduction, the learners understood what was required of them and completed their mind maps successfully. This was because they had experienced the topic through the whole-class discussion and their mind maps had prompts to guide their thinking.

However, in School B, although Ms Naidoo tried to explain what the learners needed to do, they were unsuccessful. This may be attributed to the fact that their mind maps had vague headings and no prompts, their teacher's instructions were not clear, and they did not have a topic. Regarding the teacher's instructions, even though she acknowledged during the interview that boys have a short attention span, Ms Naidoo tended to speak for very long periods of time, so the boys may have become restless and stopped listening, possibly resulting in their missing out on important information. With respect to the learners having the option to choose any topic, this was problematic. The chosen topic was therefore not placed within the context of the broader theme and related to the reading comprehension, language and vocabulary activities that had already been completed within this theme to support the learners' own writing. It was stated in the activity-based questionnaire that one of the challenges when writing was trying to think of what to write, so expecting them to think of their own topic could make the exercise even more challenging for the boys.

In both schools the revision stage was omitted, and learners were instructed to write

their first drafts for homework as the lesson came to an end. This meant that they were expected to use their ideas from their mind maps to write a draft of a story on their own or perhaps under parental or guardian supervision. This expectation raises the concern that not all parents or guardians would be in a position to assist. A further complication could arise if the learners had not understood instructions or misunderstood the task itself, or the instruction had not been given to the learners in writing, the person at home would be unable to assist. Also, in School B, none of the boys adequately completed the mind map, so they had no guide to draw from when writing the draft at home. This should have been checked by their teacher.

During the editing phase of the writing cycle, there were challenges noted in both schools and both teachers asked their learners to pay attention to language, spelling and grammatical errors. In School B, learners had not completed writing their drafts at home, so not much editing could be done until the drafts had been completed. However, Ms Naidoo did not give them time to do this, instead asking the boys to read what they had written, which she discarded as not original stories. She then commenced with whole-class editing of a boy's draft, putting his work on the chalkboard for all to critique. This method was not very effective, because it took time for her to re-write his first paragraph while the learners sat waiting; and the boy, as she explained, was a learner with academic challenges and correcting his work publically would not have been beneficial to his confidence. Adding to this, the learners were second language speakers, so they may have found it difficult to identify errors in each other's work. This highlights a criticism of peer editing, as learners can only identify errors if they know what to look for.

In School A, Ms Chetty edited some of the boys' drafts and at the end of the lesson stated that it was an exhausting task. She had not had time to edit more examples as the lesson had ended. The importance of writing the draft in class and selecting a few language aspects to focus on when editing is foregrounded because the teacher is able to make corrections and provide suggestions while the learners are writing the draft. Then, when it comes to editing there are not as many errors to correct and the editor can focus more on improvements to the story and providing positive reinforcement to motivate and encourage the writer.

If the teacher wants to save time, then once the draft is carefully edited, she can assign the writing of the final draft for homework, as this does not require a great deal of supervision as was the case in School B. It must be borne in mind that most of the learners had not completed the mind map, draft or had their drafts edited. In fact, most of the boys who had read their drafts had them rejected as they were copied from other sources. What they were in fact writing was a draft, although it was presented as a final version and even these were handed in incomplete. It was noticed that most of the boys did not start a new story or attempt to even complete what they had started, but submitted their incomplete, copied drafts.

The feedback that both the teachers provided was limited to remarks such as “good”, “scary”, “please check your work”, or “good account”, and they corrected all the spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. The lack of detailed, meaningful feedback also excluded positive remarks and ways in which they could have improved the story. The teacher marking the learners’ submissions seemed to be the final stage of the writing cycle, so the learners did not have the opportunity to discuss the feedback with the teacher or their peers; nor did they do any form of remediation to ensure that they learnt something from the writing task.

The chapter that follows provides the analysis and findings of the data using the positioning theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 5

POSITIONING IN TWO WRITING CLASSROOMS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on the findings from the data collection process and positioning analysis. These findings are based specifically on the classroom observations to analyse the positions adopted by the teachers and boys during the writing process to better understand how positioning could contribute to learners' writing development. The discussion includes data from the interviews, questionnaires and final submissions for the purpose of triangulation.

5.2 Positioning as an analytical framework

The chapter begins by using the categories of dialogue, position and cognition to analyse episodes during the planning stage of the writing process. This is followed by a positioning analysis of the drafting, editing and publishing/presenting phases. Vignettes and quotations are used to show the different episodes discussed here. Lastly, an analysis of the influence that the CAPS curriculum had on the dialogue, positioning and cognition activities in the classrooms is provided.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework for this study was set out. What follows is a recapitulation of some of the key features of positioning theory (Harre, 2004; Rule, 2015) that have been used in the analysis of teachers' and learners' positioning in the writing classroom. Notions of dialogue, position and cognition are revisited. According to Rule (2015, p.xvii), "dialogue refers to a conversation between two or more people". In the classroom this would involve how the teacher and learners use dialogue (interpersonal, intrapersonal and transpersonal), and position themselves and each other, to reach the point where the learners know or are able to do what their teacher wants them to know or do. In other words, the learners can acquire the object of cognition, that is, skill, meanings or content (Rule, 2015, p.146). In this chapter, I add the notion of "miscognition" to refer to episodes where learners do not successfully cognise the skill, content or meanings which are instigated by their teacher.

Rule (2015, p.146) states that during the process of instigating the learners' cognition, the teacher needs to know, not only what she is teaching, but also whom she is teaching. The question that the teacher needs to ask is, "How can I get my learners to know this object of cognition?" To answer this question, she needs to know her learners and their level of understanding to instigate learning and get them to embrace the position that she creates for them. Thus, she needs to know the learners so that they can know the object of cognition. Grossman (1990) builds on Shulman's (1986) theory of teacher knowledge and states that the teacher needs to have context knowledge, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge; and subject pedagogical knowledge. This implies that she must have knowledge of how to adapt her general teaching to the school setting and individual learners. She also needs to have knowledge of the main concepts and facts of the subject and their relationships within that subject area and general knowledge, skills and beliefs associated with teaching, principles of instruction, and the aims and purposes of education. Finally, she should have the ability to draw upon knowledge that is specific to teaching that subject.

Further to this knowing how she can get her learners to cognise the object of cognition, she needs to know "what and whom will inform how she decides to teach it, all of which are underpinned by why she teaches" (Rule, 2015, p.146). Intercognition refers to what the learners and teacher cognise together. It is the intersection that the learners and teacher come to during the teaching process and involves the teacher knowing what she is teaching, learning what the learners know about what she is teaching and modifying her teaching methods to accommodate what the learners do or do not understand (Rule, 2015, p.151). By the end of the process, if it is successful, the learners can cognise the object of cognition and the teacher might also learn something new about the object of cognition, her teaching methods and her learners (Rule, 2016, p.151). Rule (2015) states that within the discursive role, temporary positions (positions are dynamic) are adopted in the classroom and these positions are expressed in the speaking-acting-believing-reading-writing discourse of the classroom. For example, during the writing process the learners and teacher might position each other as listeners, speakers, readers, writers, editors, assessors and so on. Position might also involve affective states, such as 'I-as-anxious' or 'I-as-excited' (Hermans & Hermans-Kanopka, 2010).

5.3 Teacher positioning of learners during the planning stage

In the vignette that follows, Ms Chetty from School A was conducting the planning stage of the writing process to introduce her learners to the topic and type of text that they had to write. To prepare her learners to plan their own stories about nightmares using a mind map and then develop these stories, she modelled the text by engaging them in a discussion in which they co-created an imaginary nightmare. What follows is the beginning of the discussion. In this vignette we see how Ms Chetty takes up 'scenario-creator' and 'animator' positions, and in turn positions learners as 'co-creators', to help them cognise 'the nightmare' as the object of cognition.

Vignette 2: Ms Chetty positioning her learners during the planning phase

- 1 T Alright. Hmmm, let's create the nightmare. You are standing at the beach.
2 You are dreaming, right? You are standing at the beach, right? Okay,
3 standing at the beach, mother called you and gave you ice cream, then
4 there was KFC, you went and you had lunch. Right, very happy, the
5 waves were so calm. Suddenly you heard this thunderous sound.
6 LBs Xai booom booom bah bah bah!
7 T Good like that, a thunderous sound and what do you do when you hear
8 the sound? What do you do, Diana? You get scared, you get shocked,
9 you jump, you turn around, you want to see where the sound is coming
10 from. Then what did you see? You saw this...
11 LB Wave
12 T Wave! You saw this wave coming towards you. You saw this huge wave
13 coming towards you and then what happened? First let's talk about the
14 motion.
15 LB Mam, it's making a big noise.
16 T It's making big noise and coming. Then what happened? Mr Osman?
17 LB Mam they were screaming.
18 T The wave knocked you over, you so thin.
19 All *(laughing)*
20 T The wave knocked you over. It carried you away. And then how do you
21 feel? How are you feeling when that wave took you away? How do you

- 22 feel? Let's talk about your feelings. How are you feeling, Lushen?
- 23 LB Scared.
- 24 T Feeling scared, try to think of more.
- 25 LG Frightened.
- 26 T Frightened, you are frightened. Someone else. You are?
- 27 LG Feeling suffocated.
- 28 T Ok feeling suffocated. Ok.
- 29 LG You are panicking and running.
- 30 T You are panicking, what else? Darian, how are you feeling in this
- 31 nightmare. Darian? You supposed to be in this nightmare with me Darian.
- 32 What's wrong with you? Are you sleeping?
- 33 LB No mam.
- 34 LG Full of tears.
- 35 T Full of tears.
- 36 LB Terrified.
- 37 T Terrified.
- 38 LG You dunno what horrible thing is coming next.
- 39 T You dunno what horrible thing is coming next. Right. Ok so all your
- 40 feelings ok. Feelings right. Then suddenly now you see the shark fin
- 41 coming towards you.
- 42 All Ooooooh! Aaaaah!
- 43 T What you gonna do? Njabulo? What you gonna do, the shark is coming
- 44 for you, Njabulo?
- 45 LG Mam, mam, mam?
- 46 LB Start running.
- 47 T Now you can't run in the water!

a. Dialogue

In Vignette 2, Ms Chetty positioned her learners, using her knowledge of the topic and pedagogical knowledge of discussion techniques to get them excited and interested and start thinking about the topic. She began by using the word “let's” (let us) (see line 1) which positioned her as part of the class (Let you and me together..). In so doing, the teacher assumed the position of discussion-guide to facilitate her learners’

understanding of the topic and how to approach the writing so that they could successfully and independently complete their own writing. It was found that the purpose of the lesson was achieved, as an analysis of the boys' stories showed that they all had understood what the teacher expected them to do and were able to complete the writing activity.

Ms Chetty set up an interpersonal dialogue with the whole class of learners to try and create a mind picture to stimulate the learners' imagination and thoughts to enable them to write their own stories. She used the plural *you* (see lines 1 and 2) unless she was speaking directly to a learner (see line 8). Although the setting was the classroom, the dialogue took the learners to another setting, the beach, by tapping into their imaginations. Ms Chetty took them out of the classroom setting and into their imaginations by stating: "Hmmm, let's create the nightmare. You are standing at the beach. You are dreaming this right. You are standing at the beach right." (see lines 1 and 2). Occasionally, they were brought back to the classroom setting if their teacher needed to regulate their behaviour or, for example, when she said things like: "Now you can't run on water" (see line 46).

During this interpersonal dialogue (communication between two or more people), the learners created an intrapersonal dialogue (communication within oneself) to negotiate how to respond and contribute to the interpersonal dialogue; an intrapersonal dialogue was created between the learners' writing and imagination—the role that imagination plays in writing. For example, when the teacher asked Njabulo what he would do as the shark was after him, Njabulo would have had an intrapersonal dialogue wherein he would have considered a few options, such as trying to fight the shark or swim as fast as he could, and then he would have evaluated which answer would be most suitable to provide a response to the interpersonal dialogue taking place between the teacher and the class (see lines 43 to 47). Njabulo said that he would have run away, to which the teacher responded that he could not run on water. Perhaps in his haste to provide a response to the interpersonal dialogue, he had not carefully engaged in his intrapersonal dialogue. Another possibility could be that there was an interlanguage conflict in Njabulo's dialogue, as English is his second language, so he would also have had an inter-language dialogue between English and IsiZulu before he was able to provide a response to his teacher's question in English.

b. Positioning

Ms Chetty, in this episode, positioned the learners as co-creators of the story by saying “let’s” and did not just facilitate but also participated in the discussion by offering her ideas to further stimulate the learners. She positioned them in a new place, at the beach (“You are standing at the beach right.”). The learners embraced and accepted this positioning by enthusiastically listening and contributing to the discussion. Next, she positioned them as listeners when she said, “Suddenly you heard this thunderous sound.” Again, they accepted this position, as we can see in the vignette above, when the boys made sound effects that they imagined to be appropriate to the situation being described by their teacher (see line 6). Ms Chetty appealed to different senses like hearing, feeling and seeing to engage and position her learners in a dream about an incident that occurred at the beach. She solicited sights (“wave”), sounds (“boom”) and feelings (“terrified”, “suffocated”) from them as they constructed this imaginary object together. The learners, in turn, adopted, inhabited and responded to those positions, which she confirmed and responded to, so further developing the story.

Humour was also used to engage the learners and keep them actively interested in the progression of the nightmare, as when she said, “The wave knocked you over, you so thin.” and the learners responded by laughing. This also made the story real because she used a fact about the physical appearance of the boy as part of the imaginative story. However, even though the learners were laughing and excited and speaking, it was clear that there were boundaries set which all contributed to the success of this classroom discussion. Ms Chetty maintained the dominant position of teacher of writing, with multiple auxiliary positions, and maintained control of the interpersonal dialogue, and to a large extent guided the learners’ intrapersonal dialogues.

c. Cognition

This vignette is an example of successful intercognition if one considers the purpose of this episode, which was to carry the learners over the boundary to her expectation of the story that they needed to write. The object of cognition was “trying to know the nightmare”, where the teacher and learners co-created this imaginary object. In this

instance, the teacher herself did not know what the outcome would be, as she led the interpersonal dialogue while at the same time following their lead. The intercognition happened in stages to build up the object of cognition: standing at the beach, hearing the thunderous sound, seeing the wave, feelings experienced. Ms Chetty used “intercognitive markers” to check if the children were apprehending “the object” that she positioned them to apprehend: “right”; “okay”.

By the end of the dialogue, a very vivid imaginary experience full of sense perceptions was created, which the learners took with them to complete the writing process. Thus, being positioned as co-creators of the imaginary object became a springboard for their own writing, so they moved from the interpersonal dialogue of the discussion during the planning phase to the intrapersonal dialogue of writing their own stories during the drafting phase.

The vignette that follows occurred during the planning phase in School B. Ms Naidoo was meant to be instigating the learners’ cognition to enable them to understand the object of cognition, which in these lessons was to know how to write a story using the writing process. After reading a definition of planning from their activity books, Ms Naidoo explained the definition to the learners, then proceeded to explain what a mind map was used for, and then continued into a lengthy discussion about a story called ‘The Bump’ that the learners had read the previous Friday. Although not made explicit, her intention seemed to be to use this story to familiarise her learners with the structures and conventions of the narrative genre such as the setting and characters to model what she wanted her learners to write.

In School B there appeared to be little intercognition, as most learners seemed not to grasp Ms Naidoo’s expectations and instructions in most instances. This was evident in stories that the boys submitted for marking (see Chapter 6) and in the responses that they provided to questions posed during discussions (see Vignette 3 below, line 5). In the vignette that follows we see Ms Naidoo’s use of questioning to position her learners to provide the expected response.

Vignette 3: Ms Naidoo positioning her learners during the planning phase

- 1 T We do know that it's a group of boys deliberately bumping into children. Where?
- 2 All Rosewood School
- 3 T Ahh very good now can anybody tell me why Rosewood School is written in
4 capital letters or begins with capital letters? Yes Mthokozisi?
- 5 LB1 It's a pronoun (class chuckles)
- 6 T No such! Think again, think again!
- 7 LG It's a proper noun
- 8 T A proper noun. Please don't get confused they very close so I don't blame you
9 but you need to also think before you answer. And you are not wrong by trying
10 and by trying you will not make that mistake again, alright! So it is good that you
11 are trying, alright! It is a PROPER?
- 12 All NOUN!
- 13 T And we know that proper nouns are always written in?
- 14 All CAPITAL LETTERS!
- 15 T The whole word?
- 16 All No
- 17 T Is the whole word written in capital letters?
- 18 LB2 The first letter
- 19 T The first letter. Ok so coming to our characters and our setting. Where would
20 the name of the school fall into?
- 21 LB2 Setting
- 22 T Very good the SETTING cause now we know that we not just talking about my
23 school we are talking about?
- 24 All Rosewood School
- 25 T Rosewood School (*writes on board*) Rosewood School!
- 26 All Rosewood School.
- 27 T So 'The Bump' is taking place at the Rosewood School. Now remember we said
28 we had a?
- 29 All Gang of boys
- 30 T Gang of boys then we had a...a...a the student or the learner that had been
31 bumped into so we know it's got to do [with] students and it's got to do with a
32 gang of boys. Where?

This vignette is an example of how the teacher positioned the learners to respond to questions in the manner that she expected, as when she said “Proper” and the class responded by saying “noun”. They knew that she expected them to say noun because she had just told them that Rosewood School was a proper noun, so it was almost as if they were expected to fill in the blank using the answer that she had just told them. Thus, questioning was not used effectively as a scaffolding and assessment tool, and could be an indication that Ms Naidoo’s general pedagogical knowledge in this regard is an area for development.

a. Dialogue

In this interpersonal dialogue between Ms Naidoo and the class the discussion was limited to the teacher posing closed-ended questions and the learners responding with one-word answers that their teacher expected them to say (see lines 11 and 12), “It is a PROPER? NOUN”). Thus, their intrapersonal dialogues would involve them in decisions about what their teacher wanted them to say rather than them evaluating what the response should be. According to Bakhtin (as cited in Rule, 2014, p.105), “all of each individual’s words are divided into categories of his own and others’, but the boundaries between them can change, and a tense dialogic struggle takes place within the boundaries”. This dialogue between Ms Naidoo and her learners was more like a monologue as it involved the learners incorporating the words of “the other”, in this case, the teacher, into their own voices rather than contributing their own words in the responses. Thus, Ms Naidoo was almost saying, “you must learn my words and repeat them”, so the learners were essentially “filling in the blanks” using words provided. At times the learners guessed the incorrect word (Vignette 1), some of the learners saying “Yes”, while some said “No” because they were not sure which response she expected. By comparison, in School A, Ms Chetty encouraged her learners to use her words and their own words and combine them to create an imaginative story, perhaps an indication that active learning was taking place. In School B, the learners were expected to passively accept their teacher’s words and then repeat them to her. Learning was reduced to guessing the correct response.

b. Positioning

Ms Naidoo began her lesson by saying: “Our aim this morning is to practice your writing skills...there is a format or procedure that we have to use...to get our writing skills correct.” In Vignette 3 above, she positioned the learners from readers (they read the story ‘The Bump’), to thinkers (they thought about answers to the questions posed), and to listeners (they listened to their teachers’ instructions, explanations and questions), to respondents (they answered questions posed by their teacher) all in one short episode. More than being positioned as respondents, this vignette shows that the learners in School B seem to be conformers as they are positioned by their teacher to say what she expected them to say. Ms Naidoo positioned herself as listener (she listened to the learners’ responses), instructor (she corrected mistakes in grammatical knowledge), and leader (she led the discussion) of the interpersonal dialogue.

Although this lesson was the planning phase of the writing cycle, Ms Naidoo deviated, going back to reading a comprehension passage that they had read the previous week. In her interview, Ms Naidoo said that she kept referring to this story because she wanted her learners to understand how a story is written. However, it may be that she did so because it was something familiar for her to fall back to, instead of trying to figure out how to progress through the writing cycle. She then began an interpersonal dialogue, questioning the learners, focusing particularly on the boys, about vocabulary, language elements, structural conventions and comprehension aspects of the text, so the focus of the lesson almost completely shifted from planning to write a story, to reading a previous story. Thus, she repositioned the learners from planners of a story to readers of a story. At one point in this planning lesson she even positioned the boys as actors when she asked them to dramatise an incident from the excerpt of the story. Shifting between multiple positions during short episodes within the lesson, occurred quite frequently, often not giving the learners sufficient time to make the transition between positions and not giving them the opportunity to find a position to connect to. King and Gurian (2006) state that boys take more time to transition between tasks and become irritable when teachers continually move them from task to task, so the frequent transitioning between positions may result in them eventually rejecting the position and not benefitting from the episode.

She also positioned herself as a regulator at various points of the lessons, as can be

seen below in Excerpt A (This is Chapter 4,p138). In Excerpt B, the same positioning happened in School A, where Ms Chetty made a point, reprimanded the learner and immediately moved back to the task at hand. However, in School B, Ms Naidoo interrupted her interpersonal dialogue by going into detail about inappropriate behaviour and used the opportunity to teach classroom etiquette, morals and values.

Excerpt C: Ms Naidoo

Here Ms Naidoo positioned herself as regulator of learners' behaviour and spoke to them about proper behaviour.

*Son please don't shout out I know you are excited I know you want to answer and I know you are correct. But please give the others a chance. I don't want to talk to you, I don't want to talk to you, I don't want to talk to you. HELLO! The others haven't said a word to me from the morning, it's either you are not thinking or you are not following! Now I am going to ask a question those of you have answered me already, I know you are following I know you are paying attention, I want to chat to the children that are quiet. Now my question again! Can you very simply describe Jamal to me?
Yes Mfundo?*

Excerpt D: Ms Chetty

In this excerpt, Ms Chetty positioned herself as regulator of the learners' behaviour but immediately repositioned herself to co-creator of the nightmare so as not to break the momentum of the discussion.

You trying, you trying, you trying to get away from this. Saleem, keep quiet, I told you keep quiet! So you are trying to get a way. That's your nightmare. Suddenly...what happens next? You don't know if you made pee in the bed or if you were fighting with the blanket.

In these excerpts, both Ms Chetty ("Saleem, keep quiet") and Ms Naidoo ("Son, please don't shout out") regulated the interaction. However, the regulatory discourse dominates the excerpt with Ms Naidoo, whereas it is an interpellation in Ms Chetty's. Thus, by the

time Ms Naidoo resumed her position as facilitator of the discussion, the direction of the discussion would have been broken and learners would then need to be brought back to it. In Ms Chetty's excerpt, the dominant discourse remained the imaginary co-construction of the nightmare situation, with her only briefly switching to the position of disciplinarian to bring back a stray learner, and then she immediately returned to her position of facilitator of the discussion and co-creator of the story.

c. Cognition

By the end of the planning phase (half way through the second lesson) it was clear that intercognition had not occurred. Instead, the result was miscognition because the learners were unable to successfully complete any sort of planning. The object of cognition was supposed to be knowing how to plan to write a story, but if the vignette below is considered, it is evident that the learners did not know what to do. Having spent the previous lesson and a half (90 minutes) discussing terms related to the writing process and the narrative genre, and reading and discussing a story, Ms Naidoo then reached the point in the lesson where learners needed to start planning their stories using a mind map.

Vignette 4: Miscognition in School B during the planning phase

1 T Alright! So now you have put your ideas on paper you have done your draft,
2 you have done your revising, you have done your editing by correcting all the
3 things that were wrong including your punctuation your spelling etc. etc. and
4 the final one is where you will now either type it out or write it out in your best
5 hand writing and that becomes your final copy. Your final VERSION! The...the
6 book says version I call it a copy right cause you already have pages where
7 you scratched on where you deleted where you added on sentences etc. etc.
8 now this becomes your final version where it is now ready for printing, ok boys
9 and girls, ready for publishing. Right, now what I want you to do is rule off after
10 your last word go to a clean page, actually ya go to a clean page write down
11 today's date. Now everything that we have learnt about planning, revising,
12 drafting, editing and...and publishing we going to put that into operation, in
13 other words we going to work with that but today I only want you to do a
14 brainstorm, remember your brainstorm has a...or sorry your mind map, you

15 going to have your topic there and I'm going to leave it as an open topic so in
16 other words you going to choose your own topic ok. And you going to mind map
17 it. You are going to sort out your paragraphs but for now I only want you to work
18 with your mind map where it where you going to plan using your characters you
19 going to brainstorm and you going to do your mind map looking at a topic and
20 I only want you to concentrate on your first paragraph, I want to see how you
21 do. Remember all drawings to be done in...?

22 AI Pencil

23 T Pencil. I am giving you...yes?

24 LB1 Yes mam what can we do?

25 T Any story, I, I just said that I am giving you an open topic, in other words you
26 are going to choose your own topic and people, if I were you, choose a story
27 that you know so that you can get going quicker and you will be able to put your
28 ideas on paper and it will also flow. Right I just want you to do, find a topic or a
29 story and then you are going to do your planning now. Remember what it says
30 about planning, decide on your topic. You are not going to talk to your group,
31 you are going to do this as an individual activity using a mind map to clarify your
32 ideas about the plot the characters and the setting. All of that should go in your
33 first paragraph. (*silence*) (*learners working*). I said planning individually and I'm
34 only giving you 10 minutes.

35 LB1 So mam we must write a story?

36 T I just explained to you but yes you gonna find a story a title put it in as your
37 mind map in the centre. And then you going to look at the plot, the characters
38 and the setting, that's all. In your first paragraph.

39 LB1 Plot?

40 T Yes your plot (*writing on board*) in other words what is your story all about, your
41 plot your setting and the characters. Only paragraph one. What you got in your
42 mind map you going to put it in writing as your first paragraph. Ok come you
43 are working for a newspaper now and you are writing up a story that you want
44 published so you are doing your planning first do not look into the book and
45 take a story think about something on your own.

46 LB2 How?

47 T How! By using your imagination. And please don't twist the book like that you

48 are damaging it. (*learners working*). People while I am busy here does anybody
 49 else have money for photos Zama? I am giving you 10 minutes! In the 10
 50 minutes you should sort out your plot the characters and your setting. Anybody
 51 else with photo money? Anybody else? No. Your 10 minutes is precious you
 52 should not waste it chatting to somebody else and guys don't let your neighbour
 53 take your work. You know what I'm saying?

54 All Yes (*learners working*)

55 T Uh people please open one window on this side and that side I'm not going to
 56 say that again. Open one window here and that one there. Right which children
 57 gave me photo money very quickly? (*some learners talking*). Haai, haai you
 58 supposed to be brainstorming! Uh Zama R40 Nadia and who was the last one
 59 Nthando? (*some learners talking*).

60 Hey, hey you supposed to be brainstorming in your head! (*rowdy class*) (*phone*
 61 *rings*), hello ok goodbye! (*class laughs*). The call came again I wonder whose
 62 that. Uh people does anyone change two 10's hello? Anybody with two 10's?
 63 Right come, come 10 minutes!

64 Now remember people, when you are writing your plot you know the writing
 65 pattern right you get your introduction your body and the conclusion. Right now
 66 we not looking at the body and we not looking at the conclusion. We only
 67 looking at how you are introducing your topic or your story or the plot. Alright?
 68 (*learners shuffling*)

69 (*2 minutes later*) Right is everybody ready for me?

70 All No

71 T As I was saying earlier, stop writing! Cause I can see you are battling, you are
 72 having a problem even thinking of a topic, how many of you started? (*6 hands*
 73 *go up*) Read what you wrote for me.

74 LB3 You said 10 minutes

From the vignette, it can be seen that Ms Naidoo began the episode by recapping the stages of the process approach to writing, but did so by positioning the learners as having already been through the process when she said, "Alright so now you have put your ideas." This may have been confusing because the learners had only been made familiar with the terms relating to the writing process and the writing of the narrative genre and were only at the planning stage. These second language English learners

might have had the impression that the discussion they had engaged in during the previous lesson and a half was the actual draft, revising, editing and final copy that their teacher had described as already completed by saying, “So now you have”.

It is evident in the above vignette that the teacher did not clearly communicate what she wanted her learners to do because, after she had given them the instruction, one learner asked “How?” She simply responded by saying “By using your imagination!” (see lines 46-47). In addition, she did not demonstrate a knowledge of her individual learners because she used terms like “plot”, assuming they understood the meaning, which they clearly did not. The result was that the learners did not know what to do and they asked her questions about the instructions. After a few minutes she had to stop them because they had not succeeded in completing the assigned task. It was also evident that Ms Naidoo herself was not familiar with the terms associated with the writing process, as she confused the word *mind map* with *brainstorm*, and *copy* was used for *version* (see lines 5 and 14). Being consistent with the terminology associated with the writing process is important, particularly for second language speakers who may not be familiar with the synonyms that their teacher uses, and their inter-language dialogue between IsiZulu and English may be conflicted.

Adding to the problem of lack of clarity in the instructions, she told the learners that they had an “open topic”, meaning that they could choose any topic to write about. This created a vacant space in the object of cognition and did not instigate the learners’ cognitive processes. She also told them to write a story that they already knew to expedite the process, so the object of cognition seemed to be learning the writing process to write a story that the learners had read previously. However, later in the lesson, she reprimanded them for copying stories and instructed them to put “a nice neat line” through their work (Vignette 6, lines 23-24) and start afresh, writing original stories instead. It was apparent that Ms Naidoo herself was not clear about what the object of cognition was.

There was a strong emphasis on writing procedure in School B. The object of cognition seemed to be to know how to master the steps (planning, editing, etc.), with nothing on knowing the actual content of the story as an object of cognition (“Think about something on your own”; “How?”; “How? By using your imagination”). In School A,

during the discussion, Ms Chetty engaged their imaginations to develop an intercognition of the “nightmare” whereas Ms Naidoo simply told the learners to use their imaginations. The learners could not understand the procedure in the absence of content in School B, whereas Ms Chetty scaffolded the process of imaginary co-creation, and so started with the content. Her object of cognition was clear, which was for the learners to write a story about a nightmare. She did not teach learners directly the steps in the process, but instead developed her learners’ writing skills using the process approach to writing, whereas Ms Naidoo had no clear object of cognition. The aim was supposed to be writing a narrative, but her focus seemed to be more on teaching learners the process approach to writing, rather than using the approach to develop their writing skills, that is writing a story about a topic. It must also be mentioned that the learners ought to have been familiar with the positions involved in this process, as the CAPS prescribes that it should be used for writing from Grade 4 and was included as part of the assessment criteria used to assess writing that they had completed previously.

Excerpt E

In this excerpt, Ms Naidoo gave her learners three different instructions for the same task, which resulted in the learners not being able to successfully complete the task.

You are going to sort out your paragraphs, but for now I only want you to work with your mind map, where you going to plan using your characters. You going to brainstorm and you going to do your mind map looking at a topic and I only want you to concentrate on your first paragraph.

First, she told them to sort out their paragraphs in their mind maps. Next, she told them to plan their characters and, finally she told them to concentrate only on their first paragraphs. Consequently, the learners did not know what to do. She also used rather long sentences with multiple instructions and provided no prompts for the mind maps (she gave them three headings: characters, plot, setting) which may have contributed further to the learners’ confusion.

With respect to positioning in Vignette 4, Ms Naidoo again adopted multiple positions and positioned her learners in multiple positions during this episode. She began by

positioning herself as the 'more knowledgeable other', explaining what the learners needed to do, and positioned them as the listeners of her instructions. She assumed that her learners understood words such as *editing*, *revising*, *plot*, *characters* and *setting*. A learner interrupted her monologue to seek clarity and she was positioned again as the 'more knowledgeable other' as she attempted to provide a response to his question. In her response she positioned them as selectors of a topic or story. By suggesting that they choose a story that they already know, she took away the original, creative element of story writing and positioned them as paraphrasers rather than imaginative, creative writers.

According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010, p.151), generally there are dominant and auxiliary positions within a coalition of positions. These positions should not occur in isolation, instead they should work collaboratively. When positions do not collate, the result could be a conflict of positions. It would seem that Ms Naidoo's positions were in conflict as there was little coherence among and between positions. During the observed cycle of her teaching, when developing her learners' writing skills, the dominant position was supposed to be the 'more knowledgeable other' as the teacher of writing using the writing process, but it seemed that her dominant position was teacher of the writing cycle, thus positioning her learners as learners of the writing cycle and writers of a story. Her auxiliary positions shifted to regulator, teacher of reading and drama, vocabulary, correct pronunciation of words, language structures and conventions, money collector, ventilation monitor and time keeper, which did not always support her dominant position. For instance, in the vignette above her dominant position was supposedly one of facilitator of the planning stage of the writing process. When she shifted into the positions of money collector and ventilation monitor she disrupted the learners and changed their positions from planners of a story to debtors and window openers. Those positions did not support the dominant position, but conflicted with it, so the objective of the lesson was not achieved. This "cacophony" of positions disoriented her learners and made it difficult for them to identify their own dominant and auxiliary positions and may have contributed to their lack of understanding and incompleteness of the task.

In contrast, Ms Chetty managed to create a coalition of positions. Her dominant position was the 'more knowledgeable other' (Vygotsky, 1978) as teacher of writing an

imaginative story using the writing cycle and her auxiliary positions included inspirer, co-creator, facilitator, editor and regulator. These positions worked in harmony and enabled her to position her learners coherently in relation to knowing the object of cognition. Most of her learners were thus able to complete their mind maps, write and edit a draft and present a final version for marking.

As verified in the interview with her, Ms Naidoo was struggling to understand the writing process and, as is evident in this vignette, the planning stage using a mind map. She was not explicit as to the purpose of the mind map, what the learners needed to include in them, and did not provide cues which would have assisted the learners to a large extent. This lack of subject matter knowledge on her part implies that she would find it difficult to position herself in the stages of the writing process and would thus not be able to position the learners accordingly. The learners positioned her as the MKO when they asked her questions in the vignette above, expecting her to lead them through the 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky, 1978) and explain how they ought to go about planning the story. However, she did not always accept this position; instead, she disciplined them for twisting a book, possibly as a means of not having to elaborate further by answering the question.

The learners were supposed to be positioned as planners and creative writers, but she kept interrupting the position to collect money, open windows, among other activities. She also left her position as the 'more knowledgeable other' to shift into a position that she was more familiar and comfortable with: that of regulator. Within this position she was the authority figure and could not be questioned or challenged, so may have used this position to dominate the episode and reaffirm her authority status, and possibly to avoid responding to a question for which she may not have had the subject matter knowledge. Miscognition is evident in Vignette 4 above, where the learners were not able to complete the task (most did not even know where to begin), the object of cognition was not clear and shifted somewhat, and when a learner asked her if they must write a story, she responded, "I just explained to you," (see line 36), but she actually had not explained, thus highlighting her limited subject pedagogical knowledge.

5.4 Assigning of drafting for homework

In both schools the teachers omitted the revision stage of the writing process prescribed by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a) and the completion of the first draft was assigned as homework, thus not much can be said about classroom activity, interpersonal dialogue or positioning. When the learners returned to school the next day, most in School A had completed their stories, while most in School B had not. The following vignettes (5 and 6) show the teachers giving instructions to their learners to complete their drafts for homework.

In vignette 5 (taken from School A at the end of the first lesson), the learners had completed their mind maps and are starting to write their drafts, using their mind maps to guide them. Ms Chetty used the word *planning* but actually meant *drafting* when she told the learners, “Do your planning today. Tomorrow we will check on the planning, correct all our mistakes, and your partners’, to check each other’s work.” Evidenced in this vignette is the contribution that Ms Chetty’s instructions and correct use of positioning for herself and the learners made toward her learners cognising the object of cognition.

Vignette 5: School A: Instruction for completion of draft for homework

- 1 LB Mam, must we write your nightmare?
- 2 T No, no, no! Decide on your own. You must write your own nightmare. (to
- 3 LB..) Saleem move, start! Think about your nightmare first then start to
- 4 write... anyone not sure what to do... (to Saleem) watch your spelling, watch
- 5 your spelling, find a dictionary. Saleem, find a dictionary (shows him correct
- 6 spelling in dictionary)...Anyone requires any help, tell me, pick your hand
- 7 up... How you spelling that Saleem? See your spelling. Write four to five
- 8 lines for each paragraph okay. Write four to five lines for each
- 9 paragraph...(softly corrects Saleem’s work). The mind map is a guide for
- 10 you so that you write in order. Okay everyone, finish your preparation at
- 11 home. I see you in the last lesson but I want to do spelling.
- 12 LG Mam must we enter?
- 13 T No! Please don’t enter anything today. Don’t jump the gun. Do your planning
- 14 today. Tomorrow we will check on the planning, correct all our mistakes,

15 and your partners' to check each other's work. Check for mistakes. If you
16 can, if your parents have the time today, ask them to check your work, you
17 know look for errors and that so that it won't be so bad tomorrow. Right,
18 tomorrow we will enter. We have a double lesson again tomorrow isn't it?
19 All Yes mam.
20 T So, we will enter. I shall see you later for spelling.

a. Dialogue

The dialogue in this excerpt took the form of a series of alternating rejoinders between: the learners' questions and the teacher's responses, the learners' action (writing) and the teacher's corrections and instructions. The vignette began with a learner asking if he should write the nightmare that the class co-created. Ms Chetty responded with haste with a clear "No" and emphasised that the learners must write their own stories. She did this so that any other learner who had the same misconception would know not to do so even if they had not heard the learner's question. Another learner asked if they should enter their stories into their workbooks (they were writing their drafts in their jotters) and again Ms Chetty did not simply say no. She went on to explicitly explain what the learners needed to do for homework to ensure that they were all able to complete the homework task.

b. Positioning

The learners were expected to assume the positions of writers and imaginative thinkers when completing their drafts. To assist them with their spelling, Ms Chetty encouraged them to use dictionaries and verbally co-created with them an example of the type of story that they should write. During the episode, highlighted in the vignette above, she transitioned through the positions of listener and respondent (she listened and responded to the learners' questions), guide ("watch your spelling"), editor ("How you spelling that Saleem?") and instructor ("write four to five lines for each paragraph"). She used these positions to fill the silence that ensued as the learners began thinking and writing. This may have distracted the learners so perhaps she could have done all this before they started writing and, while they were writing, focused solely on answering individual learner's questions and editing individual learner's work.

c. Cognition

Through Ms Chetty's clear, explicit responses to questions posed by her learners the learners were able to cognise the object of cognition, which was to know how to write a draft of a story about a nightmare, which was found while analysing their submissions. During the planning stage, Ms Chetty had explored the extent of her learners' imaginations and had been able to evaluate their readiness to write the story on their own. Through this dialogic exchange, Ms Chetty scaffolded the writing exercise at a number of levels: content ("write your own nightmare"); process ("Think about your nightmare first and then start to write"); format ("Write four to five lines for each paragraph"); and time frames ("Do your planning today. Tomorrow..."). Through dialogue, a coalition of dominant and auxiliary positions (Hermans and Hermans-Konopa, 2010), she was able to direct all her scaffolding moves towards assisting the learners to achieve the object of cognition.

In School B, the learners were also instructed to complete their drafts for homework. The following vignette took place after Ms Naidoo had walked around the classroom checking her learners' mind maps and, realising that the learners were unable to complete them, she had skipped their completion and told the learners to use them (even though most learners had not completed theirs) to start writing a draft. The learners started writing stories and after about ten minutes, Ms Naidoo stopped them and asked random learners to read what they had written to the class. She discovered that their stories were unoriginal and were copied directly from other books. Thus, she told them to cancel whatever they had done and to start again, writing their own, original stories. She went on to try to explain how they should go about composing those drafts. In this vignette the role that the categories of teacher knowledge, dialogue and positioning play in attaining the object of cognition is highlighted.

Vignette 6: School B: Instruction for completion of draft for homework

- 1 T Right people now here again, if you look at the board very quickly! We are
- 2 looking at the introduction of the story which means it includes your, your
- 3 plot...uh... your setting and your characters. Then we look at the body of
- 4 the letter where you give in the punch line or that is the most interesting
- 5 part of your story, that is where we talk about the climax. Climax is

6 the... That should be your bulk of your story, your body. That should have
7 the punch line, the climax of your story and then gradually you bring your
8 story to a conclusion. You are concluding you are summing up your story
9 and you are basically ending it. Now you've done this kind of thing before,
10 I can't be telling you this all the time. What you learn you need to remember
11 and you need to practice. You've been writing your stories from Grade 4,
12 and some of you were unable to write even one line. That's not on guys,
13 that's really not on its saying that your memory is not working fast enough.
14 Ok our reason for being here is to learn! But what you've learnt from Grade
15 4 you got to bring it up to Grade 5 and you gotta bring it up to Grade 6 and
16 what you learn here you got to take it up till the day you die, that's what
17 learning is all about. Now from what I am seeing here it disappointing,
18 cause what we been talking about you haven't been practicing. And it
19 seems like you writing these things for the first time. Now! Your task for
20 today, as homework you are going to go home, I don't mind put a line
21 across what you have written, a nice neat line and then you are going to
22 remember all the things we spoke about but this time you going to go full
23 bore with your introduction, your body and your conclusion. So basically, I
24 want a full story. Some of you are cheating cause you are taking out words
25 from the book, which is not on as well. You have a mind don't steal
26 somebody else's work and put it on your page, to impress me cause at the
27 end of the day boys and girls you are lying to yourself. I said use your
28 imagination and lots of you are stuck because you are not prepared to let
29 your ideas flow. So, when you go home today I don't want to see stories
30 that are in the blue book, I want you to basically make up your own
31 story... You are going to sit and write out your own story. Whether it was an
32 incident that happened on the playground whether it happened in the taxi,
33 whether it happened in the cinema or whether it happened at your home,
34 wherever you choose your plot, which means your setting, your characters
35 and your uh introduction. Your introduction is going to be four to five lines,
36 what was also disappointing when I walked around I found that you people
37 were not using your paragraph writing skills correctly. You were leaving too
38 much of space between your words... *(a learner knocks on the door to call*

39 *another learner*). Two minutes! I just want you to listen to this very quickly
40 'cause I don't want you to make the same mistake. Are you still chewing
41 gum Buhle?
42 LB No mam.
43 T Now! People this is not on, that's not paragraph writing... Can you see what
44 I am saying Miss Mather? Writing skills again, right...I'm very disappointed
45 with you. I'm very, very disappointed. So, I want you to prove me wrong
46 when I look at your work tomorrow. Do you understand what I said? Is
47 somebody confused or you want me to resay what I just said? Oh heavens
48 no!
49 Class No.
50 T In other words, I must repeat it?
51 Class Yes/no
52 T Who is saying yes? Samkelo! Alright! Samkelo what I want your'll to do is
53 choose your OWN story... in other words not choose, it's an incorrect word,
54 make up your own story. Something that we have not heard before. You
55 are going to make up your own story and you are going to write an
56 introduction by brainstorming firstly and using a mind map, I want to see
57 the mind map I want to see your mind map with your plot your setting your
58 characters basically this is all part of your introduction! Then your next
59 should be about your body, and the last should be your conclusion. I'm only
60 asking for three paragraphs, and I'm asking you to start your story
61 introducing your setting your characters etc. etc. And then I want you to
62 move on to the body of your story which is the, the most funniest part or
63 the most important part or the most happiest or saddest part of your story
64 and then I want you go down and you remember you were leaving lines
65 between your paragraphs, right remember that? And then you go onto your
66 conclusion. Your conclusion is where you summing up your story and you
67 are giving it a nice close off. Did you understand me Samkelo?
68 Samk- Yes mam.
 elo

In the above vignette, again it can be noted that there is not much of a dialogue; it is a monologue with learners only being given the opportunity to respond with "Yes" or

“No”. For instance, she asked the learners “Do you understand what I said? Is somebody confused or you want me to resay what I just said? Oh heavens no!” and they all responded “No” (see lines 46-49). When she said “Oh heavens no!” they all knew to respond with “No”, but when she rephrased and said, “In other words must I repeat it?” some learners did not know what she expected them to say and said “Yes!” Only after she explained again and asked the learner if he had understood, he knew that he was expected to say “Yes!”

Here the learners are positioned as being deficient as learners who cannot write and cannot remember. Ms Naidoo said, “That’s not on guys, that’s really not on its saying that your memory is not working fast enough. Ok our reason for being here is to learn! ...Now from what I am seeing here it disappointing, cause what we been talking about you haven’t been practicing” (see lines 12-19). She also instructed them to cross out their own writing (“I don’t mind put a line across what you have written, a nice neat line” see lines 20-23), which implied that what they had written was of no value and one wonders why it was important that the line made to cross out their work had to be neat. In addition to them being positioned negatively as unimaginative, useless writers, they were positioned negatively as liars, cheats and thieves (“Some of you are cheating ‘cause you are taking out words from the book, which is not on as well. You have a mind. Don’t steal somebody else’s work and put it on your page, to impress me cause at the end of the day boys and girls you are lying to yourself. I said use your imagination and lots of you are stuck because you are not prepared to let your ideas flow.”). Thus, the learners may view themselves as being unimaginative, liars, cheats and failures, as they were told they would be if they copied other stories—upon analysing these boys’ submissions, most had indeed copied other stories. As a result, the learners might position themselves as failures and give up, thus not completing the work. Furthermore, this could affect their self-esteem and they could view writing negatively in the future.

In this single episode the learners were shifted between many powerful negative positions. Here was a class of English second language learners who were trying to determine what to do but could not, because their teacher was unable to successfully instigate their learning to help them achieve the object of cognition. It is likely that she did not have a clear idea of some of the categories of teacher knowledge:

- what the object of cognition was: In this vignette the teacher said, “Then we look at the body of the letter where you give in the punch line or that is the most interesting part of your story.” This may have confused the learners, as they may not have known whether she wanted them to write a letter or a story;
- how to teach the object of cognition: The teacher focused on the metalanguage of the narrative such as plot, characters, and climax, and the stages of the writing process, but did not provide much support with the actual topic or content of the learners’ stories;
- why she was teaching it: It is evident that she may not have been clear about the rationale behind stages of the writing process and it would seem that this was the first time that she had attempted to use it; and
- how to make it accessible to those learners: She did not provide necessary cues to assist them with completing their mind maps and assumed that they had grasped concepts associated with the narrative genre and writing process.

To instigate learning and enable learners to cognise the object of cognition, a teacher needs to have subject matter knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of the context (Grossman, 1990). Thus, if the teacher’s knowledge of these (the content, the learners, general teaching methods and teaching methods related to the content) is inadequate she will be unable to teach them effectively.

In considering School A, Ms Chetty used her knowledge to represent and formulate the teaching of writing using the process approach to make it understandable for her learners. Thus, they were able to cognise the object of cognition. In School B, Ms Naidoo displayed a limited understanding of the structures and conventions of the narrative essay and did not have the subject pedagogical knowledge to guide her learners through the writing process to help them know how to write an imaginative story using the writing cycle.

In addition, the school setting and learners’ individual contexts were not really considered when she planned her lessons. For instance, the learners were all second language English speakers attending a school in a city and being taught by an English

home language speaker. Thus, the level of her language should be adjusted and the explanations and engagement with new concepts would have to be thorough with examples that are relevant to the learners' lives to ensure that they understand her. This was not always the case, as her learners did not know how to brainstorm using a mind map and did not demonstrate a working understanding of the steps of the writing cycle nor of the metalanguage associated with the narrative genre: plot, setting, climax and characters. Furthermore, Ms Naidoo's questioning technique did not provide the learners with the opportunity to express themselves so that she could assess their understanding of the concepts; instead, they merely repeated what their teacher said or provided short answers that they thought she wanted to hear.

5.5 The editing phase

At the beginning of the editing stage of the writing process, it was interesting to note how both teachers used sarcasm to position themselves when disciplining their learners for not completing their drafts for homework. The word *right* was used in both cases to either alert the learners to the folly in their ways, command their attention or indicate that the teacher was talking about something serious.

The following excerpts show the teachers disciplining the learners who did not complete their drafts as they were instructed to do at the end of the previous lesson.

In the excerpt that follows immediately, Ms Chetty disciplined her learners for incomplete homework. She began by using the word "right" to get the learners' attention and signal to them that she was unhappy at them for having not complete the assigned homework. She then used sarcasm when she said, "don't worry about it, relax, take it easy, don't do your homework, come to school and look at my face whole day okay, don't worry, almost to show them how ridiculous the alternative to not completing their schoolwork was.

Excerpt F:

Right, change your books with each other. Those of you who haven't finished it at home, in other words you did not follow instructions right, which is not acceptable, don't worry about it, you don't have to do it, relax, take it easy, don't do your work, come to school and sit and look at my face whole day okay, don't worry. (Walks around, checking and collecting communication books of those who did not complete.)

Excerpt G shows Ms Naidoo disciplining her learners for incomplete homework. She also started with the word “right” and then disciplined her learners using sarcasm when she said, “I cannot force you to do your work. I’ve given you the instruction, you did not follow it. Reason? I don’t know, and I really don’t want to know.” In this way she was informing her learners that the responsibility of completing their work was their own.

Excerpt G:

Right, I cannot force you to do your work. I’ve given you the instruction, you did not follow it. Reason? I don’t know, and I really don’t want to know. Right boys and girls let’s begin with our lesson.

In School A, Ms Chetty walked around the class, writing comments in the communication books of the learners who did not complete their homework. When she reached the boy, Leroy, in the vignette that follows, he began crying immediately and resisted the position of the “good learner” who completes his homework. Instead, he positioned the teacher by making himself the victim of the teacher who gave them a task that caused trauma to his state of mind. Here we see an incident of Ms Chetty gaining context knowledge, more specifically, her knowledge of her learners, through the positioning of one of the boys, Leroy, in her class.

Vignette 7: Episode with boy who did not complete his homework

- 1 LG Mam, Leroy didn’t complete.
- 2 Leroy *(crying and speaking...inaudible)*
- 3 T What? What happened to you last night? You couldn’t sleep?
- 4 Leroy It’s about my real nightmare.
- 5 T Your real nightmare? Then why you didn’t do it then?
- 6 Leroy I asked my parents to help me. I told my parents to help me write this thing.
- 7 T Don’t speak lies. I saw your father just now. He didn’t tell me anything of the sort.
- 8 Leroy Mam you can ask my brother mam.
- 9 T I am not asking your brother. Why you making nonsense for nothing?
- 10 Leroy Mam it’s my real nightmare.
- 11 T You telling me it’s your real nightmare?

- 12 Leroy Yes, it's my real nightmare.
- 13 T Then why didn't you do the work then?
- 14 Leroy (*crying, speaking inaudibly*)
- 15 LB Then why you didn't write about something else Leroy?
- 16 T Yes, then why you didn't write about something else. Right, those of you who
17 haven't done it, I don't know huh. This is the first time we are experiencing some
18 people haven't done the work. Right, those of you who have done it, please
19 change with your partner because we plan to edit it today. Right, get your partner
20 to check your work, check those errors (*points to the board*) we have and then
21 just enter it. Enter it into your books. Read it again one more time to check that it
22 is correct and then enter it. (*learners working silently*) You supposed to be busy,
23 what's going on? You supposed to be busy, what's going on? What you doing?

Leroy's father came to the school the next day to discuss the way the teacher had spoken to his son. Ms Chetty was upset by the incident and discussed her response to the boy's crying and not completing his homework with me; she explained that the father was unhappy with the way in which she spoke to the boy. Highlighted here is the importance of the teacher's knowledge of her learners to help them successfully apprehend the object of cognition, which in this case (according to the learners' activity books that they were using for this activity) was to know how to write a story about a dream, not necessarily a nightmare, using the writing process. However, for most learners, Ms Chetty's stimulation of their imaginations around a nightmare seemed to work well as they actively participated in the discussion and completed all the tasks associated with writing the story such as the mind map, writing the draft and writing the final text (see Chapter 6 where examples of boys' submissions from School A are presented). Perhaps she reinterpreted "dream" as "nightmare" for pedagogical purposes, as she had more ideas about how she could teach that topic effectively. Through this episode, Ms Chetty learnt something new about her boys' need for choice which would have meant that Leroy could have written about a dream and might have completed his homework.

Another instance of the teacher learning something new about her learners is presented in the vignette below. As can be understood in this vignette, there was a clear disconnect between Mrs Naidoo's intended meaning of the word *write* and what

the boy understood her to mean. She had completed determining which of the learners, particularly the boys, had not completed the assigned homework and was now asking individual boys to read out what they had written to the class. The first few boys who had commenced reading their stories aloud when instructed to do so, but each one was stopped by Ms Naidoo after a few lines because she accused them of copying another story.

Vignette 8: Miscognition in School B during the editing stage

- | | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 1 | LB | Naughty little boy. |
| 2 | T | Sorry what's that? |
| 3 | LB | The naughty little boy. There once was a leetle... |
| 4 | T | That's not your writing. |
| 5 | LB | How, this is mine Meees. |
| 6 | T | I know the story. |
| 7 | LB | How Meees, it is mine, I write the story. |
| 8 | T | Carry on. |
| 9 | LB | There once was a little boy. He was very naughty and he went to |
| 10 | | the shop and he... |
| 11 | T | That is not your writing. |
| 12 | LB | Is mine Miss. |
| 13 | T | Next. Stand up for being disrespectful. |
| 14 | LB | <i>(inaudible)</i> |
| 15 | T | That's not your writing. |
| 16 | LB | I wrote it. |
| 17 | T | What's that? |
| 18 | LB | I write it. |
| 19 | T | Are you 100% sure? You did not copy it from a book? |
| 20 | LB | I copy it. |
| 21 | Class | <i>(Laughing)</i> |
| 22 | T | Thank you for your honesty. Thank you for being honest. Next child? |

The boy understood the word *write* to mean “use his own handwriting”, thus using the definition of *write* as being the “action of forming letters and characters” (Harper,

2014), so when Ms Naidoo asked him if he had written the story he says that he had. For her, the word means to create an original story using imagination, thus using the definition of *write* as “the activity or occupation of composing a text...” (Oxford dictionaries online, 2010).

There is a continuing struggle within language, even within words, and the way different people understand words (Bakhtin, 1986, as cited in Rule, 2014). The confusion surrounding the word *write* is surprising if one considers that the object of cognition should have been knowing how to write a story using the stages of the process approach to writing. Yet, this learner did not even understand *write* in this context, which means that there is no intercognition around the word. If this learner had not understood his teacher’s meaning of “write a story”, then he would not have been able to successfully complete the assigned homework to write a draft of an original, creative story using his imagination.

Through the process of dialogue, Ms Naidoo was able to cross the boundary and determine that the learner had miscognised her meaning of the word, and through the teaching process she had enabled him to cross the boundary and understand her meaning of “that’s not your own writing” when she asked him if he had copied the story from a book. However, instead of adopting the position of editor or corrector and clearly explaining the miscognition of the word *write*, she concluded her dialogue with the boy by praising him for his honesty. Thus, by the end of this vignette, Ms Naidoo had praised the boy for being honest that she had a moment earlier punished for being disrespectful. In so doing, she re-positioned him from a being reader to a respondent to a disrespectful boy to an honest boy all in this short dialogue. The next boy who was instructed to read appeared to deliberately attempt to use the same misinterpretation to position Ms Naidoo, but this time she was aware and immediately corrected him.

Vignette 9: Teacher learning something about her learners in School B during the editing phase

1 LB (inaudible)

2 T Sorry I can't hear you.

3 LB The ... stone.

4 T The what stone? Free? The freestone? What's a freestone? I

5 never heard that word before. Can I see it? (*goes to LB to check*)

6 A fierce storm. A fierce storm! And even before you read it, the

7 fact that you don't even know the word, tells me that. Yes or no?

8 LB Yes.

9 T Carry on reading.

10 LB (*inaudible*)

11 T Sorry.. (*walking*) Put your chair in and sit up straight. (*all learners*

12 *scrape chairs*)

13 T That is definitely not your writing.

14 LB How miss I wrote it.

15 T I don't mean your writing, I mean your work. You definitely copied

16 it from somewhere. Read.

In both Vignettes 8 and 9 above, Ms Naidoo interrupted the dialogue to assume the position of regulator when she told the first boy to stand up for being disrespectful and the second boy to put his chair in and sit up. What is interesting to note here is that her positioning of the boys becomes a physical positioning ("Stand up!") which takes them out of their regular position of being seated at their desks. In the first instance, this implies that she may have suspected that he was intentionally confusing her meaning of the word *write*, and possibly to avoid further embarrassment in the presence of the researcher, she did not address this matter but instead simply told him to stand up as a form of punishment, again reaffirming her position as the authority figure in the classroom. In the second instance in her position as regulator, the entire class pulled their chairs in, which resulted in disruptive shuffling and scraping of chairs. Thus, the momentum and natural flow of the lesson was again broken. The end of this vignette when she immediately explains what she meant by "write" is indicative of her having learnt from the first incident that her learners may not share her meaning of the word in that context.

In the episode below, we see a learner who was positioned by her teacher as editor/teacher, but this position is rejected by her partner, thus the peer editing step of

the process approach is not successful here.

Vignette 10: Learner positioning other learners in School A during the editing phase

- 1 LB Mam this girl is annoying.
- 2 T Who?
- 3 LG Mam, every time I help him, he says, "Leave me alone, leave me alone. I don't want you to help me."
- 4 T I don't know about Tahir. (*walks to LB*) He don't like to listen. (*checks Tahir's work at his desk; goes back to desk, Saleem comes with chair*). Capital letter
- 5 J, capital letter. (*checking Saleem's work inaudible*). I "noticed" not "noted".
- 6 Must use proper English when you are writing. Please, some of you are coming
- 7 with your things for me to check and I am actually rewriting the entire thing for
- 8 you. (*LB standing and waiting*) Please check your work before coming to me.
- 9 Only those people who cannot understand it, come to me. Some of you are
- 10 bringing your books and I am rewriting the entire thing for you. (*answers LB question, to LB partner*) You check his work. (*next LB comes*) How, where's
- 11 your chair? You gonna bend over me or what? (*Checks LB, inaudible*). (*Siren wails, learners start moving around*).
- 12 You do not leave the classroom, the
- 13 buzzer is for me. Only after you left your book here on the table can you leave.
- 14 (*Assists LB; most learners leave book and leave, some still writing*).
- 15
- 16

The boy, Tahir, refused the positioning of a girl as editor who has power to correct his work. It can be stated that positioning is largely about power; authority figures position those without authority to do things that they want them to do in the way that they want them to. This is particularly evident in the classroom situation, where teachers are the authority figures and use their power to position their learners through dialogue during the learning and teaching process to instigate their learners' cognitive processes to help them achieve the object of cognition. Because the teacher is accepted as the authority figure and 'more knowledgeable other', the learners easily accept her position of editor to correct their work (as can be seen with Saleem in Vignette 10 above). Yet when the teacher positions the learners as peer editors to correct each other's work, because they are usually equals in the classroom situation, they may not easily accept this shift in power, as can be seen with the boy in this vignette. This may

be a limitation of the peer editing stage of the writing process and could also be a reflection of the boy's socialisation regarding power relations and gender, as here we see him not wanting to accept a girl as an authority figure. The diagram below illustrates the positioning in the episode with Tahir in the above vignette.

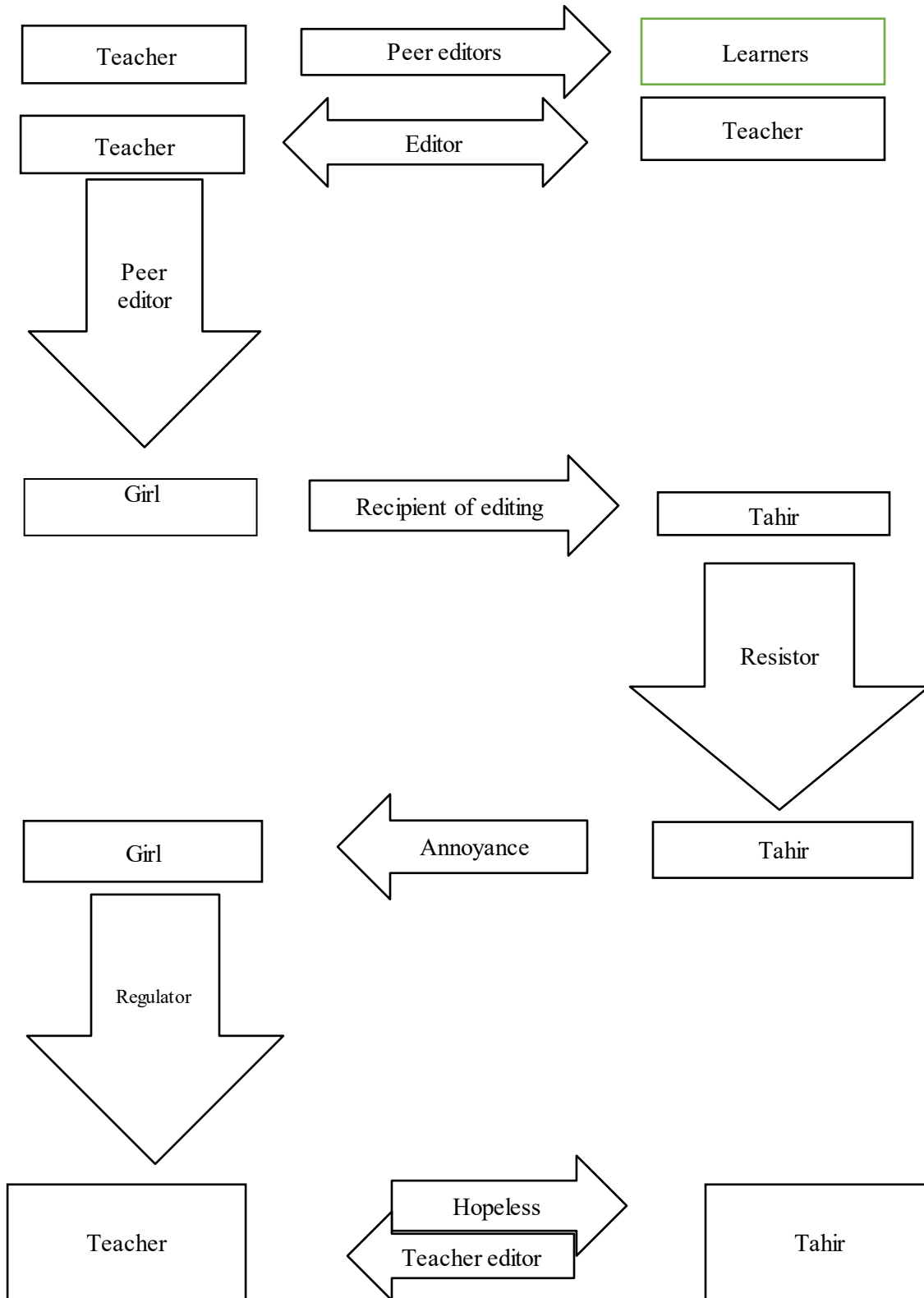


Figure 13: Resistance of positioning in School A

Source: Own

Illustrated in Figure 13 is the positioning during the episode where Tahir resisted his teacher's positioning of his female peer as an editor, thus rejecting the position of recipient of the editing. The teacher positioned the learners as peer editors and herself as an editor; thus the girl was positioned as Tahir's editor. At this time, Ms Chetty was editing Sameer's draft, as his work required considerable attention. Tahir resisted the girl's position as editor and positioned her as an annoyance for telling him what to do. Ms Chetty had to leave editing Sameer's work and intervene to regulate the interaction between Tahir and his peer. When she said, "I don't know about Tahir. He don't [sic] like to listen", she positioned him as being unmanageable and unresponsive. She then had to check his work, so he imposed the position of teacher editor on her.

The teacher need the learners to accept the positions of editor and being edited because if they do not, then she must edit all their work to ensure that they present a polished final draft to her. Even though the other learners accepted these positions and edited each other's work, Ms Chetty still had to edit a few learners' drafts because they either made too many errors or their peers were not at the level to edit effectively. This teacher editing turned out to be time consuming and Ms Chetty expressed her exhaustion at the end of the lesson. She also did not have sufficient time to edit all the drafts that needed her specific attention, so this might be a limitation of the editing stage of the writing process. Also, Ms Chetty positioned the learners as self-editors when she said, "Please check your work before coming to me." Some learners may find it difficult to accept this position because of their limited knowledge of grammatical or spelling errors in need of correcting. Moreover, they also may not necessarily be capable of critically reading their own stories to make improvements to either the structure or the creativity of their stories.

5.6 Publishing/presenting

During this phase of the writing cycle, learners were positioned as thinkers and writers. They had to think about the corrections made during the editing stage of the writing cycle and then write a neat, final version of their stories to submit to their teacher for

marking. The teacher, during this phase, should position herself as facilitator, and walk around to ensure that the learners are working towards submitting their best efforts. In School A, the learners wrote their final drafts as soon as they were satisfied that their work had been edited either by their peer or teacher. At this point Ms Chetty was still editing some boys' drafts and as the learners completed writing their final drafts, they left their books on the teachers table and then went out to break.

In School B, the teacher did not complete the whole-class editing process by the time the lesson had ended, so learners were asked to complete their stories for homework and submit for marking the next day. Consequently, these second language English speaking learners wrote their drafts and final versions at home in the absence of the 'more knowledgeable other' (teacher) to facilitate their writing. When assigning a task for homework, a teacher may presume the presence of someone at home who can assume the position of the 'more knowledgeable other'. It is also quite likely that the School B learners did not have anyone with the knowledge or linguistic ability to assist them with their writing and editing, but assuming they had, if the learners themselves did not understand their homework task instructions, as is evident in Vignette 6, they would not have been able to explain them to the 'more knowledgeable other' at home. Whatever the circumstances in this instance, the result was many poorly completed or incomplete drafts and final submissions. Perhaps, if the learners had been given a written instruction detailing their homework task and if this had been explained clearly at a level appropriate to these learners (which would require the teacher to know her learners), the outcome may have been different.

5.7 Discussion: what light does positioning theory shed on writing?

The data obtained from Grade 6 boys and their teacher regarding their experiences of a cycle of the writing process as prescribed by the CAPS, using a positioning perspective, was discussed in this chapter. Following from the foregoing discussion on positioning through the different stages of the process genre approach to writing, the two diagrams below have been developed. These diagrams illustrate the link between writing and teachers' and boys' positioning in the Grade 6 classroom.

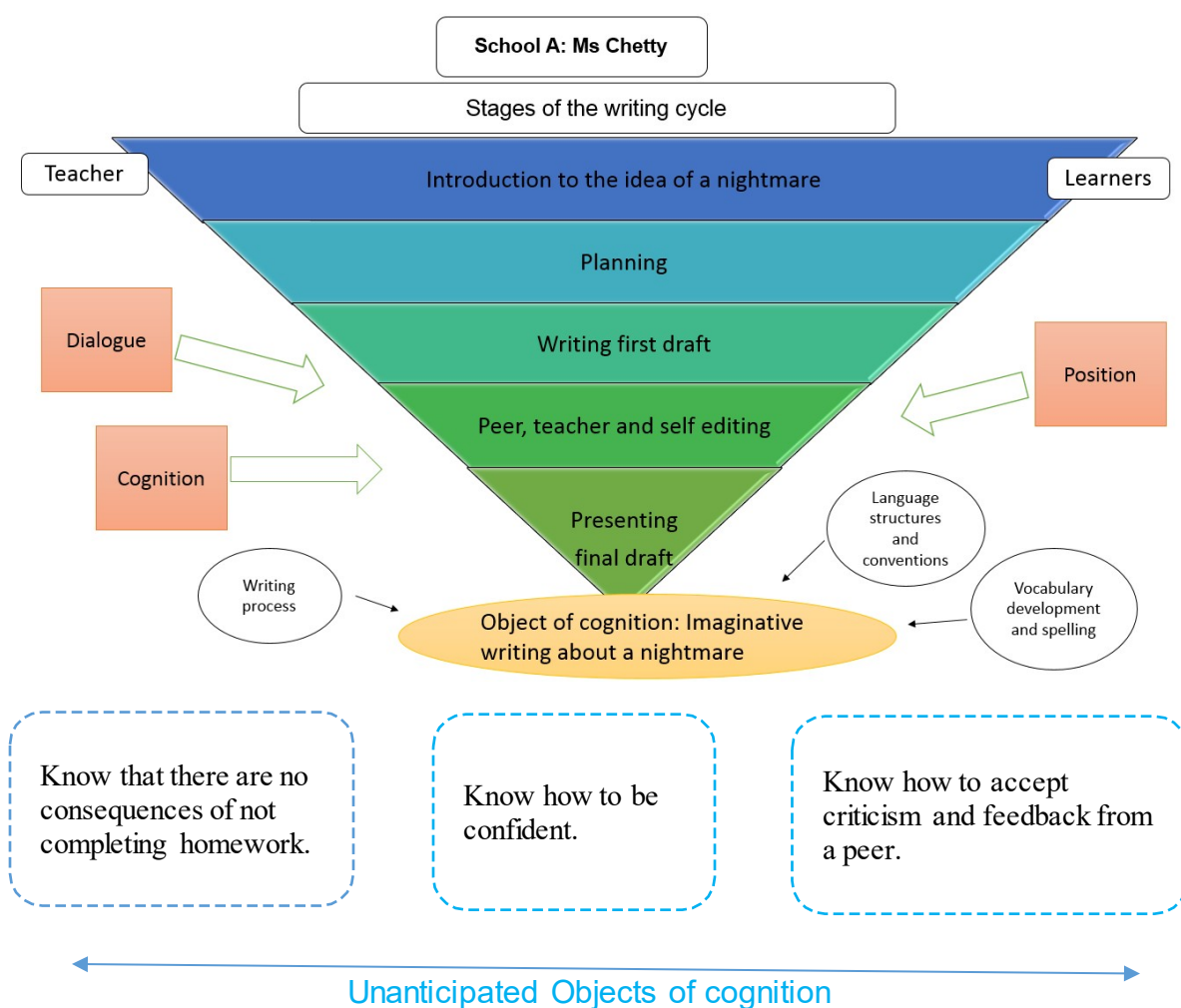


Figure 14: Positioning in School A

Source: Own

Figure 14 represents positioning in School A during the different stages of the writing cycle. Each of these steps is linked to a stage of intercognition to cognise the object of cognition. The following table illustrates the stages of the writing cycle and phases of intercognition in School A:

Table 9: Stages of the writing cycle and phases of intercognition in School A	
Stages of the writing cycle	Phases of intercognition
Introduction to the topic: group discussion	Knowing the 'nightmare' and its characteristics
Planning	Knowing how to plan a story using a mind map
Writing the first draft	Knowing how to use the mind map to write a draft for homework of an

	imaginative story about a nightmare
Editing	Knowing how to edit each other's work for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors
Presenting the final draft	Knowing how to use the suggestion made by the teacher or peer to write a final draft to submit for assessment

The teacher used her subject matter knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of context (Grossman, 1990) to position her learners to cognise the object of cognition which was to know how to write an imaginative story about a nightmare using the stages of the writing cycle. As the lesson progressed through the different stages, Ms Chetty positioned her learners using different techniques and methods to instigate their learning. To begin the planning stage and introduce the learners to the topic, she engaged them in a whole-class discussion in which she positioned herself and the learners to co-create an imaginative nightmare. Next, she positioned them as planners to complete a mind map, using the prompts provided, to put down ideas toward creating their own imaginative nightmares. They were then positioned as imaginative thinkers and writers to write their first drafts for homework. The next day the learners were positioned as editors as they became involved with peer, teacher and self-editing and, using the spelling, grammar and punctuation corrections, wrote the final version to submit to Ms Chetty for grading.

As with any teaching, while working with the learners to achieve the object of cognition, certain messages are conveyed which result in the learners cognising unanticipated objects of cognition. In School A these unanticipated objects included knowing that there are no consequences in school for not completing homework, as Ms Chetty told them that if they had not completed writing their drafts at home, although unacceptable, they should not "worry" and they could relax and "take it easy". She then proceeded to make a note in their communication books to inform their parents that they had not completed their homework, which was actually a consequence of them not completing their homework. Although Ms Chetty was being sarcastic when she told them, "don't worry about it, you don't have to do it, relax, take it easy, don't do your work, come to school and sit and look at my face whole day okay, don't worry", perhaps some learners had not understood the sarcasm, and may think that it is

indeed acceptable not to complete assigned homework.

A second unanticipated object of cognition could be knowing how to be confident, because to participate in the whole-class discussion and provide responses to questions in class requires the learner to be confident and unafraid to make mistakes. The safe environment created in this classroom resulted in the learners openly and actively participating in the lesson. In addition to participation, editing another learner's work also requires a learner to be confident in their own knowledge and understanding, and in this class all the learners who completed their drafts participated in the peer editing stage. A third unanticipated, or perhaps implicit, object of cognition follows on from the peer editing stage. This is knowing how to accept feedback and criticism from a peer and, here again, the learners (except the pair where the boy did not want to accept his peer's editing) were able to use their peer's comments to help them present a more polished story to submit for marking.

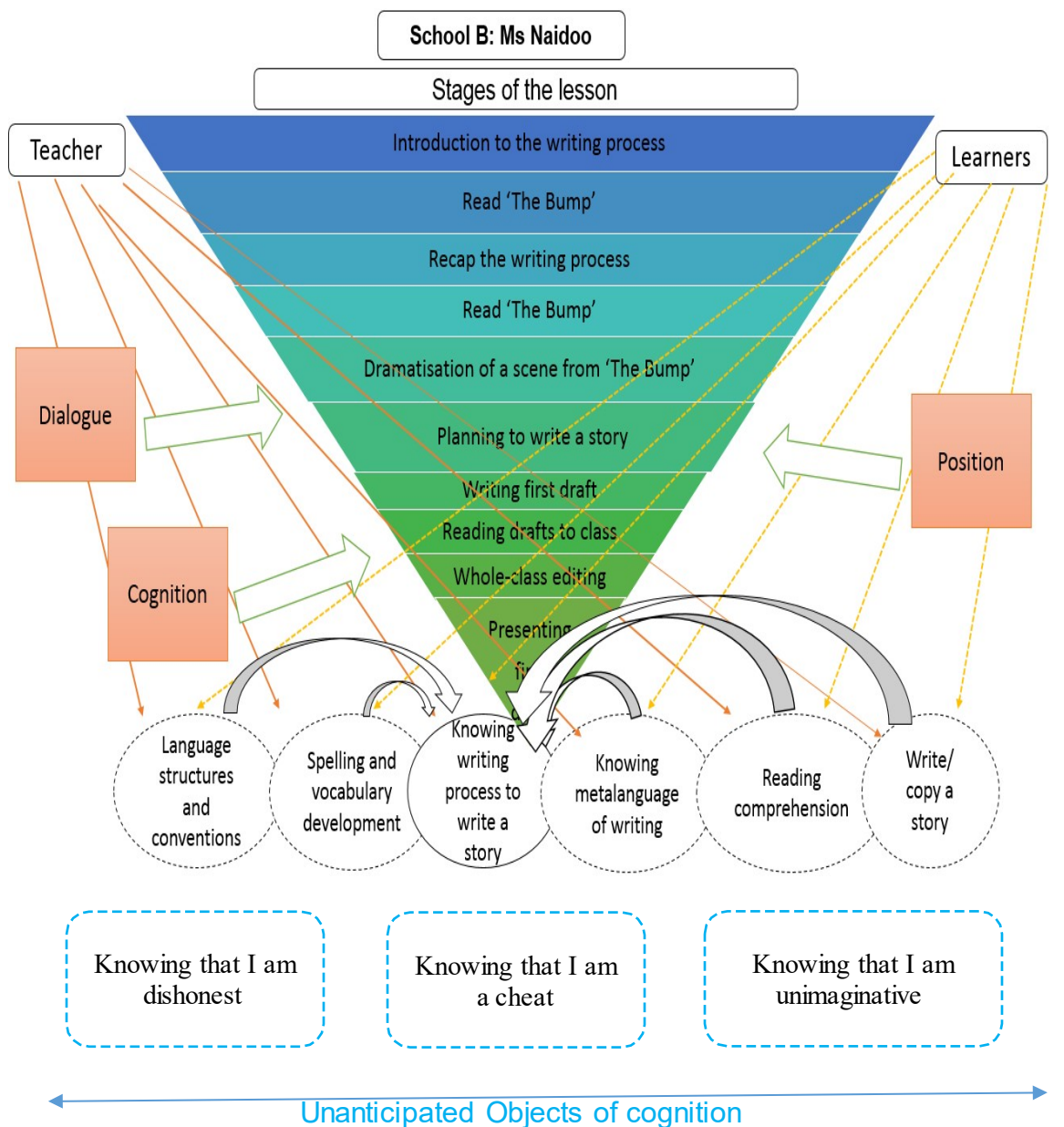


Figure 15 Positioning in School B

Source: own

During the member checks conducted with Ms Naidoo, the above figure and findings that follow were discussed. I expected this to be a difficult conversation, but Ms Naidoo is a truly remarkable teacher who was very open to my comments as she stated that she was very keen to improve her teaching. After I presented my findings to her, she explained that she tried to use the writing process, but it was complicated, and her learners just could not understand what to do. Ms Naidoo added that stemming from this research, she noticed that her learners were not familiar with the writing cycle or narrative genre, which they were supposed to have engaged with in previous grades.

She raised the matter with the School Management Team who were in the process of designing interventions regarding the teaching and learning of writing. Upon reflection she felt that her decision to leave the topic open was a good one and would have worked better had she executed the mind map correctly. Lastly, she was concerned by the mention of her positioning her learners as ‘liars’ and ‘cheats’ and the impact that this negative positioning could have on their future writing. She explained, “I was trying to motivate them, to make them write creative stories, using their imaginations, to encourage them. Oh my, no, I did not want to make them feel bad and will be careful in future. I think as teachers sometimes we say what we think is right, but now I realise that we need to make sure.”

If one considers the figures above, Figure 14 above differs from Figure 15 for several reasons. In School B the object of cognition seemed to be knowing the writing process to write a story, so it is in a solid line. At times other language aspects like reading comprehension and vocabulary development seemed to be the object of cognition because Ms Naidoo placed a lot of emphasis on them during the teaching of writing. Thus, there was a range of objects of cognition (knowing language structures and conventions, spelling and vocabulary, the writing process, metalanguage of writing, comprehension, how to write a story using one’s imagination). Ms Naidoo shifted between many positions and focused on all these aspects in the hope that the result would be her learners’ ability to produce an imaginative story using the writing process. In the diagram, broken lines are used to connect the learners to the different objects of cognition, because after analysing the video recordings and boys’ written efforts, it was clear that not all of them had cognised all those objects of cognition. For instance, during the planning stage of the writing process, they did not know how to position themselves as planners and complete their mind maps, and most of them did not know how to write an imaginative story by the end of the last lesson. Many submitted incomplete or poorly completed efforts (see Chapter 6, Table 12). A successful teacher’s positioning and positioning of the learners should enable them to cognise the object of cognition, which did not happen in this instance.

Adding to this, in addition to the stages of the writing cycle, Ms Naidoo also included reading and dramatisation. Table 10 below shows the different stages of the lesson and phases of intercognition in School B.

Table 10: Stages of the writing cycle and intended phases of intercognition in School B	
Stages of the writing cycle	Intended phases of intercognition
Introduction to the writing cycle	Knowing the writing cycle and the metalanguage of the writing cycle
Reading 'The Bump'	Comprehending 'The Bump' and knowing language structures and conventions and vocabulary, and the structures and conventions of the narrative genre
Recapping the writing cycle	Knowing the writing cycle and the metalanguage of the writing cycle
Reading 'The Bump'	Comprehending 'The Bump' and knowing the language structures and conventions and vocabulary, and the structures and conventions of the narrative genre
Dramatisation of an episode from 'The Bump'	The boys selected knowing how to act out an episode from a story and the rest of the learners knowing how to watch and appreciate a dramatization
Planning to write	Knowing how to plan a story using a mind map
Writing the first draft	Knowing how to write a draft of a story and rewrite a draft of an original story for homework
Reading drafts to the rest of the class	Knowing how to read aloud
Whole-class editing	Knowing how to identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in a fellow learner's work
Writing the final draft	Knowing how to write a final draft to present for assessment

The inclusion of the reading comprehension and dramatisation did not really assist the learners to cognise the object of cognition because the link between them and writing was not made explicit. Ms Naidoo explained that she had not planned to do this but thought that it could be a good way to help the learners understand the story and make the lesson more exciting. However, the dramatisation of a part of the story 'The Bump' and positioning those boys as actors had little significance for what the learners had to write about and was more suited to helping them understand what the story was about. Thus, positioning seems crucial to the learners knowing the object of cognition. On the other hand, using the story as a model to illustrate the structures and

conventions of narrative writing might have been effective, but Ms Naidoo was unable to make the link, so the learners could not see the relevance. Her content knowledge of those structures and conventions such as characters, settings and plot were good, but she did not fully understand the steps of the writing process and did not have a clear idea of what she wanted her learners to do, why they needed to do so and how they should do so.

Teachers cannot teach what they do not know, they need to cognise the object of cognition to recognise it to instigate learning by using their pedagogical knowledge to choose fitting teaching methods and techniques. It could also be stated that the data in this study reveal that a good writing teacher is able to instigate dialogue that positions herself and her learners in a way that enables them to achieve intercognition in the process of attaining the object of cognition, depending on what this might be at the moment in the writing cycle. Following this, the teacher can build on this intercognition to achieve the next moment of intercognition in the writing process. A good writing cycle offers opportunities for appropriate dialogue and positioning that will enable learners to achieve the objects of cognition related to the writing. The writing learner is one who can take up the positions offered to him by his teacher and use those positions achieve cognition.

However, these positions need to be appropriate for the learner and his prior knowledge and stage of development, as was seen in most instances in School A, where Ms Chetty was generally able to offer and support appropriate positions. For instance, during the planning stage, she positioned her learners as co-creators of the story to scaffold their understanding of the types of story she wanted them to create. She then repositioned them as planners, critical thinkers, spellers to complete their mind maps, which was used a tool to scaffold their drafts. Ms Naidoo first positioned her learners as listeners, readers, respondents and actors to introduce her learners to the stages of the writing cycle and the task. She then positioned them as planners, window openers, debtors, time wasters, chatters, strugglers, journalists and respondents while they were completing their mind maps. Most of these positions were not appropriate in supporting the learners to attain the object of cognition, possibly because Ms Naidoo was unclear as to what the object of cognition at that stage was.

5.7. Discussion of positioning theory and the writing process

In this chapter it was found that using positioning theory as a lens illuminated several aspects of teaching and learning during a cycle of the writing process in the Grade 6 classroom. If one were to summarise the relations between dialogue and position, dialogue and cognition and position and cognition for each classroom is represented by the diagram that follows:

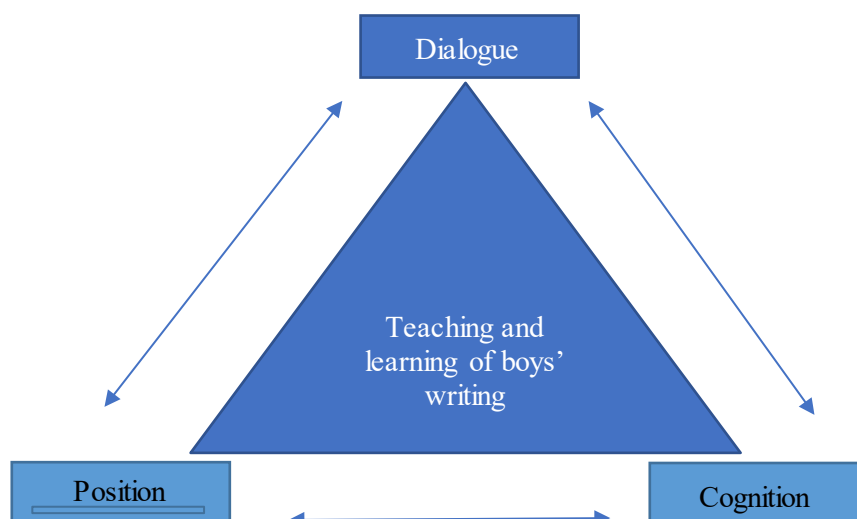


Figure 16: Relations between position, dialogue and cognition when developing boys' writing skills.

Source: own

The relations between these elements are quite different in the two classrooms. In School A Mrs Chetty instigates dialogue that positions learners as co-creators and writers whereas in School B Mrs Naidoo instigates dialogue that places them in multiple positions, some confusing and unrelated to task. This links to the relations between position and cognition. Mrs Chetty takes up positions and positions learners in ways that lead them to cognition. Mrs Naidoo, however, does not which results in unanticipated cognitions as shown in Figure 16 above.

The difference between “getting writing right” and “getting the writing cycle right” was highlighted through positioning, dialogue and cognition in these two schools. In School A, the teacher positioned herself (leader of the whole-class discussion, facilitator

during the planning phase, editor and assessor) and correspondingly so did the learners (co-creators of an imaginative story, planners and critical thinkers, writers and editors) through the process of the writing cycle to scaffold their writing skills, while in School B, the teacher foregrounded the stages of the writing cycle instead of using the writing cycle to position herself and her learners to scaffold their writing skills. This indicates that the teacher needs to know the object of cognition and have a clear idea of what the object of cognition is to guide learners effectively in cognising this object. Her subject matter knowledge must be sound so that she can “re-cognise” the object of cognition to enable her learners to know it.

Adding to this knowledge, she needs to choose the most appropriate teaching technique to instigate learning and enable the learners to know the object of cognition. Appropriate techniques must be selected by using her knowledge of her learners. There must be a fit between the learners, the teaching technique, the level of the language and the positioning. Ms Chetty chose a whole-class discussion to introduce the topic and get her learners excited about their writing. Her level of language was appropriate to engage the learners in the interpersonal dialogue, as they were able to understand her questions and respond accordingly. However, she neither considered that the topic might upset some learners nor that they reject certain positions, as was seen in the vignette with the boy refusing to accept his partner’s editing of his work. Ms Naidoo’s language was, at times, above her learners, as they were unable to fully understand her, and she had to repeat or rephrase questions and often give them the answer but rephrase this as a question for them to provide the answer that she had just given to them. Thus, their intrapersonal dialogue shifted from thinking about the most appropriate response to evaluating which response their teacher most wanted.

With respect to positioning the learners appropriately, the teacher must choose positions for herself and her learners that will be best suited to helping them know the object of cognition. To do this, she needs to maintain her dominant position, which will be linked to the object of cognition; if this is knowing how to write an imaginative story, her dominant position would be teacher of the story using the writing cycle. Her auxiliary positions should be used to support the dominant position and position her learners appropriately. Their dominant position would be writers of an imaginative story using the writing cycle, and auxiliary positions would include planners, drafters,

editors, critical thinkers, speakers and listeners. If one compares the acts of teacher positioning in School A to those in School B, one can see how positioning has enabled the achievement, and has not enabled the achievement of pedagogical goals, respectively. In School A, Ms Chetty's dominant positions were appropriate to helping her learners cognise the object of cognition and the auxiliary positions that she chose supported the dominant positions. However, in School B, Ms Naidoo did not always choose positions that were linked to the object of cognition, nor were they always in support of the dominant position. Her frequent position transitions of both herself and the learners disrupted and confused them. This may have been because of her not really having a clear understanding of what her object of cognition was supposed to be, not fully knowing the writing cycle and not fully knowing how to develop her learners' writing skills using the writing cycle.

When taking into consideration the identities as teacher and language learners in the context they situate themselves in, particularly to the public discourse that boys are known as poor achievers in literacy, the following was noted. Mrs Chetty seemed to read the context of the boys' well by recognizing their need for stimulation that focuses on action, movement, excitement and by drawing on what they already knew (imagining the nightmare activity). Mrs Naidoo did not really engage with the boys' context and needs. Mainly she treated them as passive recipients of knowledge, but she misjudged what they knew. Although she did try to link to their prior knowledge of stories, this backfired when they reproduced the stories rather than developing their own imaginative writing.

5.8. Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from the positioning analysis. It was found that positioning plays a key role during the stages of the writing process, and that if the teacher and learners are not correctly positioned, the quality of their learners' written submissions will be compromised. Further to this, it can be said that if the teacher's subject matter, pedagogical, subject pedagogical and context knowledge is lacking, she will not be able to position her learners appropriately and the result may be them not apprehending the object of cognition. The chapter that follows provides an analysis of the boys' written submissions with their teachers' feedback using thematic and

content analysis.

CHAPTER 6:

LINKING PEDAGOGY, POSITIONING AND THE WRITTEN

PRODUCT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth analysis and findings from the boys' written submissions and their teachers' feedback, by examining their ability to apply the stages of the process genre approach and their positioning when writing and completing a piece of writing using the structures and conventions of the genre selected by their teacher. Thus, I provide insights into the relationship between the acts of positioning in the sequence of writing events, teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, scaffolding strategies and the quality of the boys' writing. The analysis of the boys' mind maps, drafts and written submissions employed document analysis, which involved skimming, intensive reading and interpreting the document and then analysing it using both content and thematic analysis (Bowen, 2009), as described in Chapter 3.

The boys submitted their mind maps and final versions of their stories to their teachers for marking after going through the stages of the writing cycle as prescribed by the CAPS. Ms Naidoo and Ms Chetty used different scaffolding strategies to enable their learners to cognise the object of cognition, which was knowing how to write a story. In both schools the learners had to write a story within the narrative genre. In School A they went through the stages of planning, drafting, editing and presenting, while in School B, they were taught these stages as learning content rather than going through them as a process. What follows in this chapter is an analysis of a sample of the boys' written submissions which includes their mind map and drafts. The following is discussed in this chapter: a summary of the teachers' approaches to writing development; a rationale for the sampling of the boys' written submissions; and what the boys' written submissions indicate about the scaffolding strategies that their teachers chose.

6.2 Teachers' approaches to developing the boys' writing skills

In this section, I summarise the process followed by the two teachers to provide a context for the written submissions that the boys produced. In School A, it was found that Ms Chetty foregrounded the content of the story and used the writing cycle as a process to develop her learners' writing of the narrative genre. She did not explicitly teach them the writing cycle, nor the structures and conventions associated with the narrative genre, but rather modelled the type of story that she wanted them to write by positioning them as co-creators of a story about a nightmare during a whole-class discussion. Her topic was taken from the learner workbook under the broad theme: 'Saying how it's done', sub-theme: 'Telling a story'. The instruction for the writing task in the activity was for the learners to write a description of a dream or nightmare that they had had (DBE, 2015a, p.89).

Ms Chetty introduced the topic to the learners by engaging them in a whole-class discussion to instigate their learning. Next, they completed the mind maps provided in the workbook which had prompts to guide them. They were then instructed to complete writing their drafts for homework, so the revision stage was omitted. The next day they began peer editing and Ms Chetty also edited some of the boys' drafts. As soon as they had completed editing, they wrote their final versions in the space provided in their workbooks and submitted them for marking. The learners who did not complete their drafts for homework completed them in class while the other learners were editing.

Ms Naidoo began the process by reading and explaining the stages of the writing cycle. She then proceeded with the reading of a text called 'The Bump', which the learners had been busy reading the previous week. During the discussion of this text she discussed language structures and conventions such as sequencing, punctuation such as inverted commas and capital letters, and structures and conventions associated with the narrative genre such as characters, plot and setting. She then asked some boys to dramatise an episode from the 'The Bump'.

To commence the next lesson, Ms Naidoo recapped all the stages of the writing cycle and then began discussing what 'The Bump' was about and discussed vocabulary and language elements. The learners were then instructed to start working on their mind maps about any topic that they liked. When she noticed that they were struggling to

get started she suggested that they write a story they already knew. She stopped the learners after a few minutes because she could see that they were struggling and asked a few learners to tell the class their topics. She realised that the learners were copying from other texts, so she explained the stages of the writing cycle again and instructed them to start their drafts again and to write original stories using their imaginations. The learners did not seem to understand her instructions, because they were fidgeting, and one row of boys did not write anything. She stopped them again and asked a few learners to read what they had written. Although they had written very little and the stories were copied, she praised the learners for the work they had done. She then asked a learner to read a definition of the word *plot*, and she explained what the introduction, climax and conclusion were, and the homework task, which was to discard the copied stories that they had written and write fresh drafts of any original story. She also omitted the revision stage of the writing cycle.

The next lesson began with the boys reading their drafts to the class. All were stopped and rejected for being copied after a few lines were read. Ms Naidoo selected one boy's work, as it was original, and she wrote the introduction on the chalkboard for the class to edit together as peer editing was not possible because most learners had not completed writing their drafts. The learners completed their final versions for homework and submitted to Ms Naidoo for marking.

6.3 Rationale for sampling

During the thematic and positioning analysis, I noticed that the boys in School A had followed a very similar format for writing their stories (only one boy deviated from this sequence). They structured their stories in the same way that their teacher had modelled during the whole-class discussion. Thus, to provide a fair account of the boys' writing, and to show the link between their teacher's pedagogical choices and their writing, three types of exemplars were sampled for presentation and analysis here: the best, the average and those submitted efforts that needed most development. The exemplars were selected using stratified, purposive typology sampling. Ms Chetty did not award marks, nor did she use a rubric to assess the boys' submission, she only wrote words like 'good' etc at the end. Thus, I designed a rubric to determine which category each submission fitted into (Table 11), using the text

structure and language features, provided by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a, p.27), and target audience and process genre approach.

Table 11: Rubric used to assess boys' stories in School A			
Assessment criteria	Achieved	Partially achieved	Needs development
Entertaining content written for a specific target audience			
Sequencing (equilibrium, disequilibrium, restoration of equilibrium)			
Format (intro, body, conclusion)			
Written in first or third person			
Past tense usage			
Connectives to signal time			
Imagery (adjectives, adverbs and other figurative devices)			
Sentence construction			
Punctuation			
Spelling			
Final submission reflects adequate engagement with stages of the writing cycle			

Using this rubric, I assessed all the boys' submissions. I found that a few boys from School A did not put much effort into the completion of their mind maps, but 19 boys had submitted completed stories with the exception of one boy who had a broken arm, and another who was absent from school. Once I had completed categorising the boys' submissions using the above rubric, I asked a peer to assess the submissions using the rubric that I had designed. In this way I was able to determine the reliability of my assessment and categorisation of the submissions as well as enhance the trustworthiness of my analysis. My peer's assessment was the same as mine with only two variations. She agreed with Ms Chetty's comment and found that one submission fitted into the good category, but when we discussed it in more detail, she agreed that it was actually an average story but had few errors, whereas another that she had categorised as average was indeed a good story but had more errors (see exemplar

6.1 and 6.2 below).

In School B, the use of this rubric was not possible as the submissions varied greatly. I noticed that some boys wrote original stories, but most were copied and had incomplete mind maps and stories. Some completed their stories, but not their mind maps, and four boys did not submit anything. The table below illustrates this.

Table 12: Completion of boys' submitted efforts in School B						
Only mind map completed	Mind map incomplete	Story completed	Story incomplete	Story and mind map incomplete	Story and mind map complete	
01	06	01	05	08	02	

*the figures above add up to more than the total sample because of the different combinations.

Story copied	Original Story	Not submitted
11	03	04

Thus, I used typology sampling to group the boys' submissions into the following categories: nothing to assess (meaning the boys submitted just a few words), copied with incomplete mind map and story, copied with completed mind map and story, original mind map and story incomplete, original with mind map incomplete, and original with mind map incomplete and story complete.

After I had completed categorising the boys' submissions, I analysed the submissions with the questionnaires, and transcripts from the interviews and lesson observations using axial coding. This process involved looking for connections or contradictions among my codes (Charmaz, 2006). Thus, my data was subjected to a second phase of constant, comparative analysis so that the data could be synthesised and organised into more structured categories and subcategories, and thus illuminate the relationship between positioning, the writing process and the boys' final submitted product.

6.4 Linking teachers' pedagogical choices to boys' written submissions

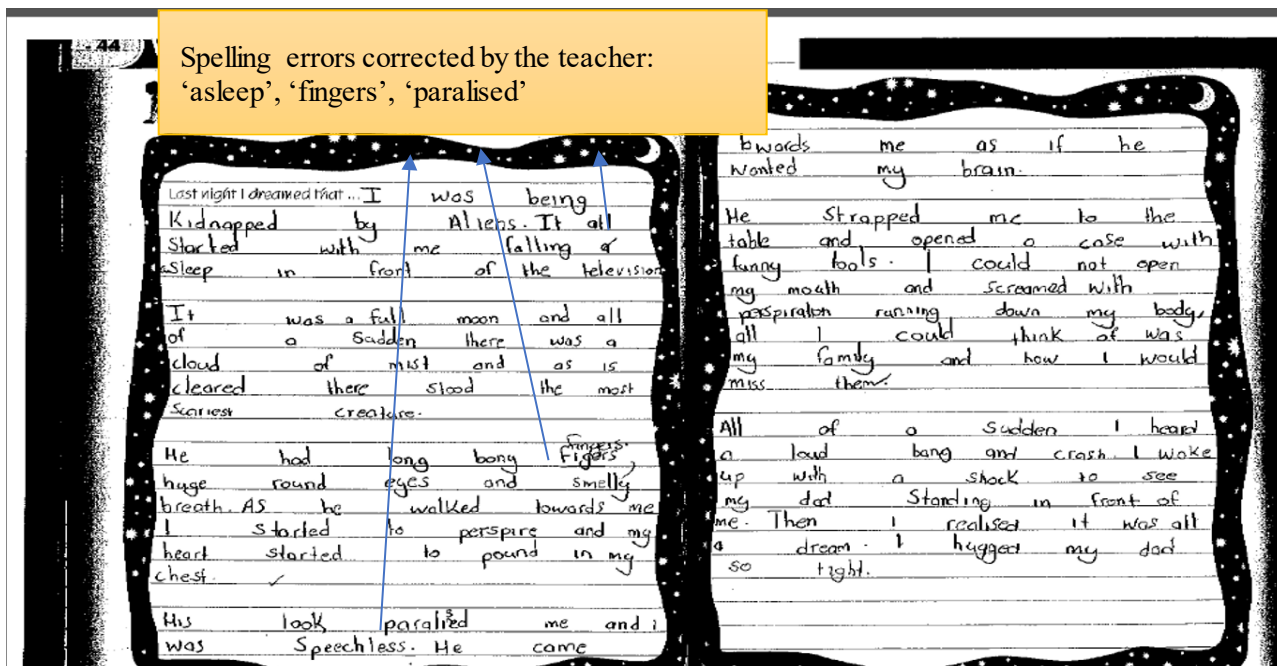
a. School A

All the boys who submitted from School A submitted completed stories and most followed a similar pattern in the content of their stories. This pattern involved introducing the story by describing what they were doing before they went to sleep (equilibrium), how the nightmare began, how they felt during the nightmare (disequilibrium), how the nightmare ended and what they did when they woke up (equilibrium restored). They also positioned themselves as the victims in the story. This was the same pattern and positioning that Ms Chetty modelled when she positioned the learners to co-create a story about a nightmare during the whole-class discussion, which was supported by the sequencing of the prompts on the mind maps. Even though three boys did not adequately complete their mind maps, they were able to complete stories that were entertaining and well sequenced with an impact created on the reader using imagery. One such submission can be seen below:

Nothing for the 3rd and 4th prompt

3 points written under the first prompt

Only one sentence under the second prompt



Exemplar 6.1. Incomplete mind map and final version

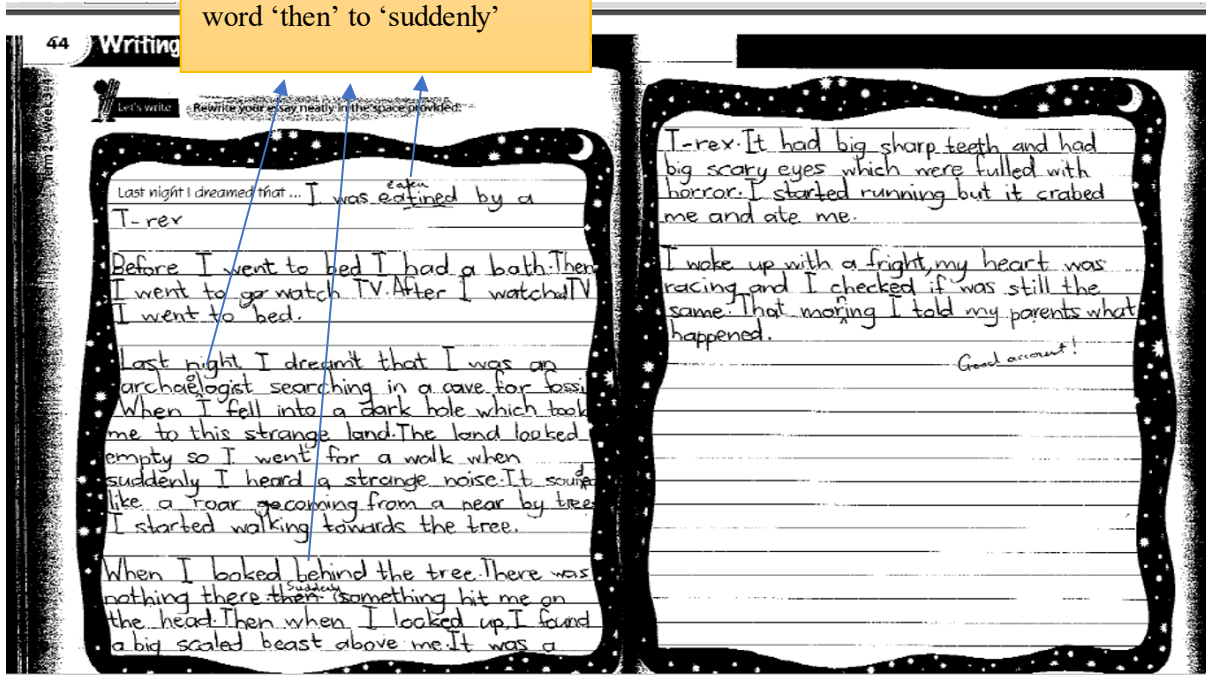
As can be seen, Kiran’s mind map is incomplete and suggests that he did not actually know how to complete it. Yet, during the lesson, Ms Chetty repeatedly asked if everyone knew what to do and all responded in the affirmative. However, using her knowledge of her learners, she should know which learners would require additional support with completing their mind maps without them explicitly asking. During her interview, Ms Chetty stated that she always used mind maps as part of the planning stage, so Kiran should have been familiar with what to do. Had she been walking around providing formative assessment on their mind maps during the lesson, she may have picked up that Kiran did not know what to do, as he only wrote a few points under the first prompt and one sentence under the second. Kiran managed to complete a good story even though his mind map was incomplete which may have been possible for this writing activity, possibly because of his teacher’s scaffolding strategy of modelling the story as a class discussion. However, if faced with a different type of writing and a different teacher, Kiran might find writing challenging because his mind mapping skills were not adequately developed.

When I assessed the stories using the rubric that was designed for sampling purposes, Kiran’s story emerged as one of the best, as it had few spelling, punctuation and

grammar errors, was well sequenced, entertaining and created vivid images in the reader's mind ("there was a cloud of mist, long bony fingers, smelly breath, perspire and my heart started to pound in my chest, bang and crash"). He had managed to create this imaginative story even though his planning was incomplete and what he had written in his mind map was not related to his final story. In fact, some boys in this study indicated that they found planning and thinking about what to write most difficult in the activity-based questionnaire. Ms Chetty used her pedagogical content knowledge and engaged her learners in a double layer of planning, with the first layer being oral and collective, and the second individual and written. She first introduced the topic to them by co-creating the type of story that she wanted them to produce and then she asked them to complete mind maps to outline their own, similar stories. This indicates that Ms Chetty's approach to scaffolding the planning stage of the writing process was effective as Kiran was able to use the model of the story that was co-created in a stimulating, exciting manner to create his own story without using the mind map.

Also, interesting to note was that other than correcting three spelling errors and putting two ticks at the end of paragraphs, Ms Chetty did not write any comments. In other's she wrote "good", "good account", but no comment to highlight the many positive aspects of Kiran's writing and thus motivate him to write further and develop a positive attitude toward writing. This possibly meant that Ms Chetty's knowledge of marking and providing feedback on writing activities was limited or that, as she stated in her interview, she did not have time to provide detailed feedback due to the large number of learners in her class or a combination of both. Below is a screenshot taken of a boy's story with Ms Chetty's positive comment ("Good account") at the end.

Corrections made by Ms Chetty: 'eaten', 'archaeologist', changed the word 'then' to 'suddenly'



Exemplar 6.2. Pravesh's "Good account"

Pravesh separated his introductory sentence from the rest of his introduction, putting it as a stand-alone sentence and then started his body paragraph with the same phrase as the first sentence: "Last night I dreamed (dream't) that...". He had a few spelling and grammatical errors and, although he used adjectives, the use of the rubric made evaluating the stories more objective and it was found that Kiran's was more entertaining than Pravesh's, created more vivid images in the mind of the reader and concluded the story with the restoration of equilibrium more successfully.

During her modelling of the story in the first lesson, Ms Chetty was observed asking the learners to provide words describing how they felt, which provided them with the vocabulary to include in their stories. Research suggests that boys have trouble with the writing of certain genres because they do not like to write about their feelings (Sax, 1995). However, most boys from School A described that they felt scared, afraid, terrified and frightened. Ms Chetty also asked them what sounds they heard and to describe the actions as they unfolded, which was also evident in their stories. Although Ms Chetty did not formally develop her learners' vocabulary for this writing activity by providing them with a list of words, the above approach provided scaffolding to assist the boys with vocabulary to describe their feelings.

Even though the boys' stories were modelled on the one that they co-created as a class, their own voices were evident in their stories. For instance, all the stories that were selected for analysis were action-filled and each one described something different in his nightmare. One boy wrote about being swallowed by quicksand and others wrote about being attacked by a T-Rex, snakes, Freddy Kruger and being eaten by a crocodile. Most of the stories started with the boys explaining that they were watching a film about something and the dream was linked to the film. One boy wrote, "The Boogie Man put worms into my mouth and Freddy Kruger started slicing me up slowly...". The other stories were also full of action and contained gun-fight incidents, blood, perspiration and weapons such as shields, grenades and knives. It is interesting to note that the boys sampled selected the action genre when asked about their favourite genre in the activity-based questionnaire. That their own voices could be heard in their stories indicates that, even though their teacher took them through the stages within the genre and gave them an example of the content that was expected, she did not impose her ideas or voice on them, so they still had the freedom to make their own choices and express their individuality while writing.

Ms Chetty's pedagogical choice to limit the topic to the writing of a nightmare certainly accommodated the boys' need for action, because within this topic they were given the freedom to describe as much action in as much detail as they liked. During the interview Ms Chetty mentioned that her boys enjoyed writing about action and adventure. Contrary to this, some boys from this school indicated that they enjoyed romance and fairy tales more than action and adventure novels in their questionnaires. It was an unforeseen consequence of her choice that one boy found the experience traumatic, yet he submitted a complete, action-packed story about a "child-eating demon". The following is an excerpt from his story:

Excerpt H: The boy who cried because of his nightmare

...I heard a large scary raw. It was the Kappa. It was staring at me it's yellow eyes. I was so scared and I did not know what to do. I went to the back door and opened it. I ran out of the house and it saw me. The Kappa was running are me. I started screaming for the Kappa had captured me...

As can be seen from this piece of his writing, once he overcame his fear that he displayed in class, he was able to embrace the task and create an imaginative story. In his questionnaire, he indicated that he did not enjoy planning and struggled with spelling when writing. That his work was not edited is also evidenced, as he was completing his draft which was not completed for homework while the others were busy with peer and teacher editing. However, even though the other boys' drafts were edited for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, these errors were still present in some. The excerpt that follows shows these errors in a boy's final submission:

Excerpt 1: Errors in Saleem's final submission

*I was in school an my mum comes to school my sister and I
take leave my mum says she got promoted to principale
therefor we are going on holiday to an island*

During the planning and peer editing phase, Ms Chetty paid much attention to Saleem's writing and edited his work herself. Yet, his final submission still contained many spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, as is evidenced in the excerpt above. An instance of her editing Saleem's work can be seen in Chapter 5, Vignette 10. The presence of these errors in the boys' final submissions could be an indication that their peers were unable to identify these errors or that the boys did not consider the corrections made by their peers or teacher when writing their final versions for submission. In either event, the presence of these errors in their final versions could reflect the need for the revising stage and modification of how the drafting and editing phases were approached. Instead of assuming that the learners knew what editing entailed, perhaps the editing stage could have been scaffolded by Ms Chetty using her knowledge of her learners and modelling the correction of exemplar of a draft with deliberate errors that they would also have made in their own drafts.

Using the rubric that I designed, Saleem's writing was categorised as one that needed most development, as it contained the most spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors and his use of past tense and imagery also needed some attention. Further to these problems, his content was not very entertaining, as the climax of the story was too short and lacked depth and detail to enhance the horror and entertainment factor. Another boy who fitted into this category was Lushen, whose work had very few errors

in spelling, punctuation and grammar, but his story also lacked the entertaining element of the narrative genre and had no sequence.

Excerpt J: Lushen's sequencing

Last night I dreamed that...I was beying eaten by a crocodile. My dream started nice then it got scary when I was walking but then I started running from the crocodile. I felt afraid that my sister would get hurt very badly.

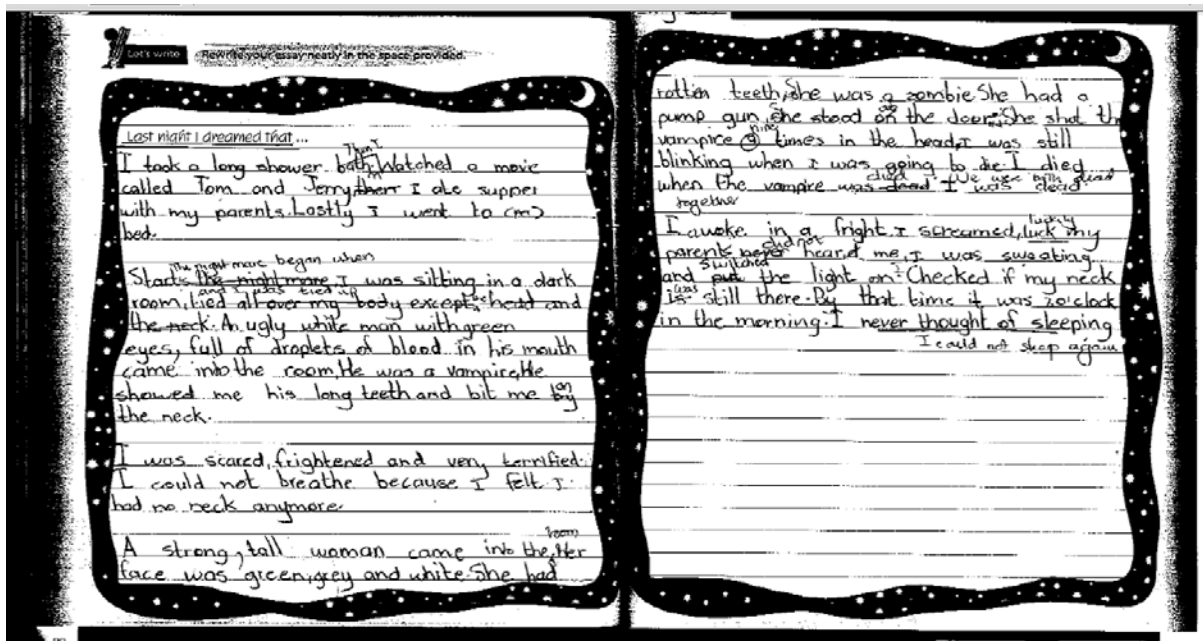
When I had this dream I through I would loose my family from me but the I was also afraid to die as well. So then I was running in my sleep to get a way from the crocodile. My dream was scary but luckily I was not eaten by the crocodile.

Lushen's story was not well formatted and did not have a clear introduction, body and conclusion. This lack of sequencing was not corrected during the drafting, revising and editing phases. The CAPS (DBE, 2011a) makes it explicit that during drafting the writer must focus on word choice, sentence structure, main and supporting ideas, the specific features of the text, and get feedback from the teacher or peers. Using this feedback, the writer must revise the work to improve content and structure of ideas. Next, the writing must be edited or proofread, which involves refining word choice, and sentence and paragraph structure and correcting any mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation before a neat, legible final version is presented. During the interviews, both teachers stated that they were familiar with these expectations as they attended the CAPS training workshops and followed the process as prescribed by the CAPS. However, the data from the classroom observations and the boys' final submissions in School B reveal that even for these two trained, tenured, English home language speaking teachers, the CAPS is not clear and explicit. It could also be stated that the CAPS places high demands on teachers and instruction time in its expectations of the conflated process genre approach.

The completion of the drafts for homework, in both School A and B, meant that the revision stage was omitted and in both schools the focus of the editing was on mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Had Lushen's work been checked for specific features of the narrative genre, his lack of sequencing may have been

corrected before the final submission. Ms Chetty corrected his spelling and grammatical errors and wrote the following comment about his story, "Please check your work. It is not in the correct sequence!!" Whether Lushen would have gone back and checked his work as per his teacher's comment is unknown, as the process ended with the teacher assessing and handing back the stories. What is known is that it is unlikely that Lushen would be able to check his sequencing, because if he had understood how to sequence his work, he would probably have done so in his final version. Thus, the feedback was not useful and did not contribute to Lushen's understanding of his mistakes and writing development, so he is likely to make the same mistakes in the future.

At first glance, Wandile's story could also have fitted into the category that needed most development, as there were spelling, punctuation and many grammatical errors.



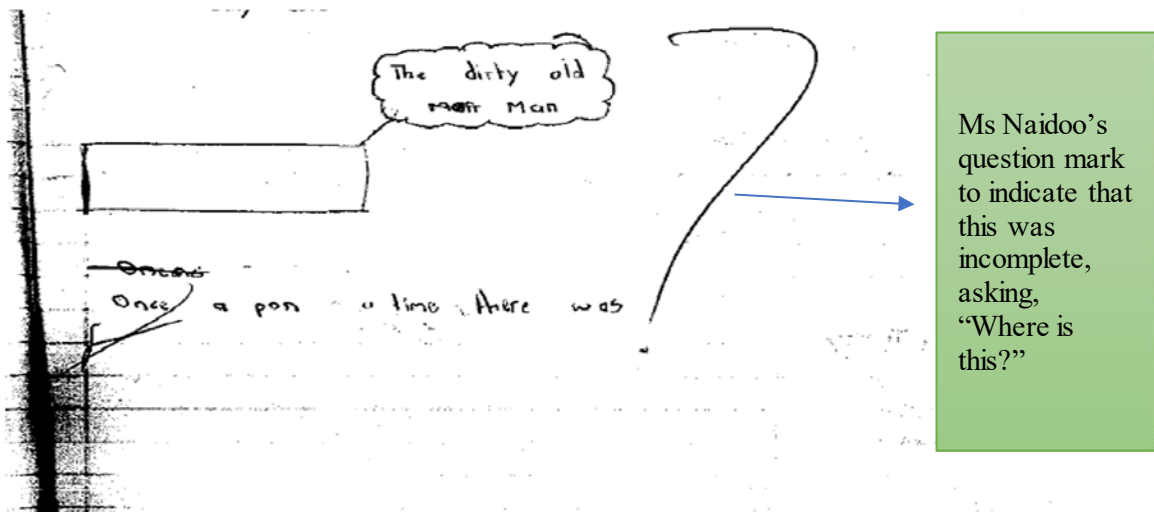
Exemplar 6.3. Wandile's story

Wandile is a second language English learner. He did not begin his story by completing the phrase provided and his sentence construction needed attention. However, if one considers the structure and features of the narrative genre, his story was quite successful, as he used connectives to signal time (then, lastly, still), created vivid images using adjectives (ugly, white man, long teeth, green, grey and white), expressed how he was feeling (scared, frightened and very terrified) and his story was sequential (began with his process before going to bed, the nightmare started, a

vampire attacked him, a woman killed the vampire, he died and then he woke up). When compared with his counterparts from School B, his story would fit into the 'good' category as most boys in School B were unsuccessful in submitting properly complete stories and mind maps. This could be because of differences in teacher knowledge and in the approaches that Ms Chetty and Ms Naidoo used to scaffold the different stages of the writing cycle.

b. School B

The boys in School B were all IsiZulu home language speakers but were learning English at home language level at school, which is not irregular in many South African schools (refer to Chapter 1). Their final submissions had copied mind maps and/or stories that were incomplete; copied mind maps and/or stories that were complete; original mind maps and/or stories that were complete; original mind maps and/or stories that were incomplete. One submission that was categorised as story and mind map incomplete only had the title 'The dirty old man' in the centre of the mind map, and then under the mind map the boy wrote "Once upon a time there was..." Thus, his story had a title and he started with the phrase associated with the narrative genre, but that was all that he did. Ms Naidoo's response to this was a large question mark on the side of the work and her signature in the margin of the page. During the feedback session with Ms Naidoo, when asked about her use of question marks, she explained that she uses them when her learners do not complete their work as per her expectations. The question mark merely draws the learner's attention to the fact that there is a concern but does not make explicit to the learner what the area of concern is. With regards to Ms Naidoo's question mark as a form of feedback, from a dialogic point of view, it is not clear that the boy would recognise the insertion as a question mark, understand what question it signified or be able to respond appropriately. Also, as with Ms Chetty, it would seem that Ms Naidoo's knowledge of marking and using feedback as a tool for teaching may be limited.



Exemplar 6.4. Mbuso's story and mind map incomplete

Another boy, Lwazi, submitted an effort with the title 'Red Riding Hood and the Wolf' in the centre of his incomplete mind map. He wrote the prompts *characters*, *setting* and *plot* on the mind map but nothing was written under those prompts. As can be seen in the exemplar that follows, he began his story thus: "*The Read this poem aloud as a group. You will see it is very similar to the story you know, except that the poet twists the story to show that the girl defends herself against the wolf. As soon as wolf began to feel that he would like a decent meal...*" This was copied from a book even though his teacher explicitly told him to write an original story. What is surprising are the spelling errors which indicates that he did not really take the time to copy accurately. He also included the instruction as part of the story which evidences that he may not actually have understood how a narrative story begins, or perhaps demonstrates reading without comprehension or copying without paying attention to the content. During the lesson observations, Ms Naidoo used her content knowledge to explain how the learners should structure their stories in terms of the character, plot and setting. She also went on to explain the climax of a narrative story but as is evidenced by Lwazi incorrect, incomplete submission, he did not understand her instructions or explanations, possibly due to her limited content pedagogical knowledge and inadequate scaffolding approach.

Indicators that the story is not original.

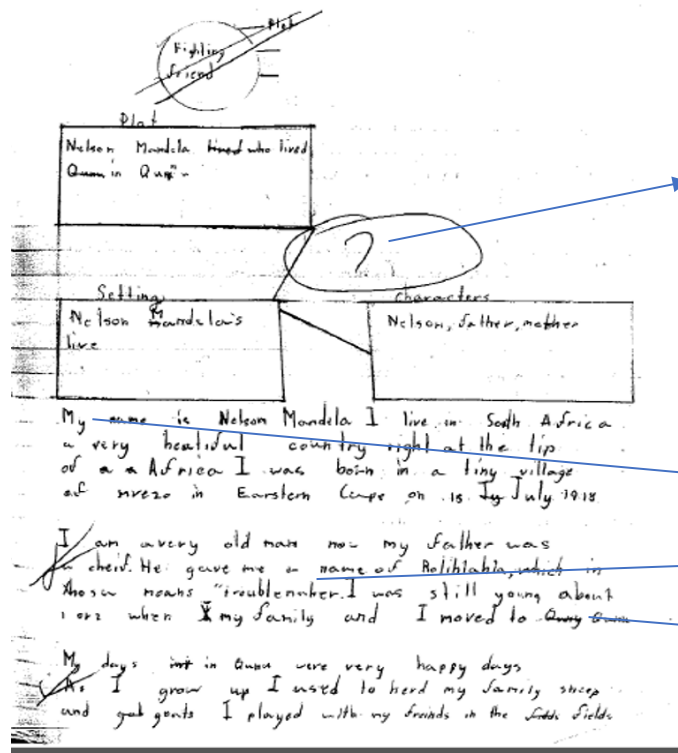
Mind map contains only the prompts that the teacher wrote on the board. The story is not original.

Ms Naidoo's question mark to indicate that did not understand what he had written, asking, "What is this?"

The Red Riding Hood and the Wolf story is very similar to the story you know, except that the plot twists the story to show that the girl deceives herself and the wolf. His been as well began to feel that he would like a decent meal. He went and knocked on Grandmother's door. When Grandmother opened the door, she saw the sharp white teeth, the horrible grin and the wolf.

Exemplar 6.5. Lwazi's copied story and mind map incomplete

Also, within the category of “copied incomplete mind map and story” was Nkosi who copied a story about Nelson Mandela. He began his story by saying, “My name is Nelson Mandela I live in South Africa a very beautiful country right at the tip of Africa I was born in a tiny village...” This boy positioned himself as Nelson Mandela by copying the story directly in the first person and, although his story was copied, there were no punctuation marks. Ms Naidoo put a question mark in the block where he omitted to fill in a title and signed in the margin but did not correct any punctuation errors. In his mind map, he used the *character*, *plot*, *setting* prompts and, although he includes some information under each, he does not seem to understand what the terms mean except for *characters* (Nelson, father, mother).



Ms Naidoo's question mark to indicate that the title was missing.

Some indicators that the story is not original.

Exemplar 6.6. Nkosi's copied, story and mind map incomplete

Of the stories sampled under the “copied with both the mind map and story complete” category was a story that a boy wrote about a flying horse. Kethu started the story in the following manner: “One day there was a story about a flying horse”. Thus, he positioned himself as a re-teller of a story rather than the imaginative creator of an original story.

The Flying Horse

The flying horse

Plot - One day there was a story called the flying horse.

Characters - It was Le, Li, and Minnie.

Setting - It took place in the farm.

One day there was a story called the Flying Horse. The horse was now bored ~~by~~ walking ^{with} feet. It wanted to fly, it went to the king and said "King please ~~give me~~ make me fly like birds. The king said "I were made to walk, but I will make you fly. The king ~~g~~ made the horse ~~to~~ fly. The horse was flying, it went to ^{the} birds and the birds said "Go away". It went to horses the horse's kicked it. ~~It~~ went to live in a hole, alone.

Everyday the horse ~~was~~ sitting in the hole and when it is was ~~dark~~ outside, the horse ~~came~~ ^{would come} out ~~and it went to look for food~~ ^{it} was sitting in a ~~the bad hole and it was smelling in there.~~ ^{hole} The horse went back there when it was in the morning.

The ~~horses~~ horse was now bored sitting in the hole. The horse went to ~~the~~ king and said "King please remove this thing in my body. The king said "I said do not come back because I told you that you were ~~made~~ to walk not to fly. The king told the horse to go away.

Although insufficient, information under each prompt of mind map is correct

Incorrect use of apostrophe not corrected

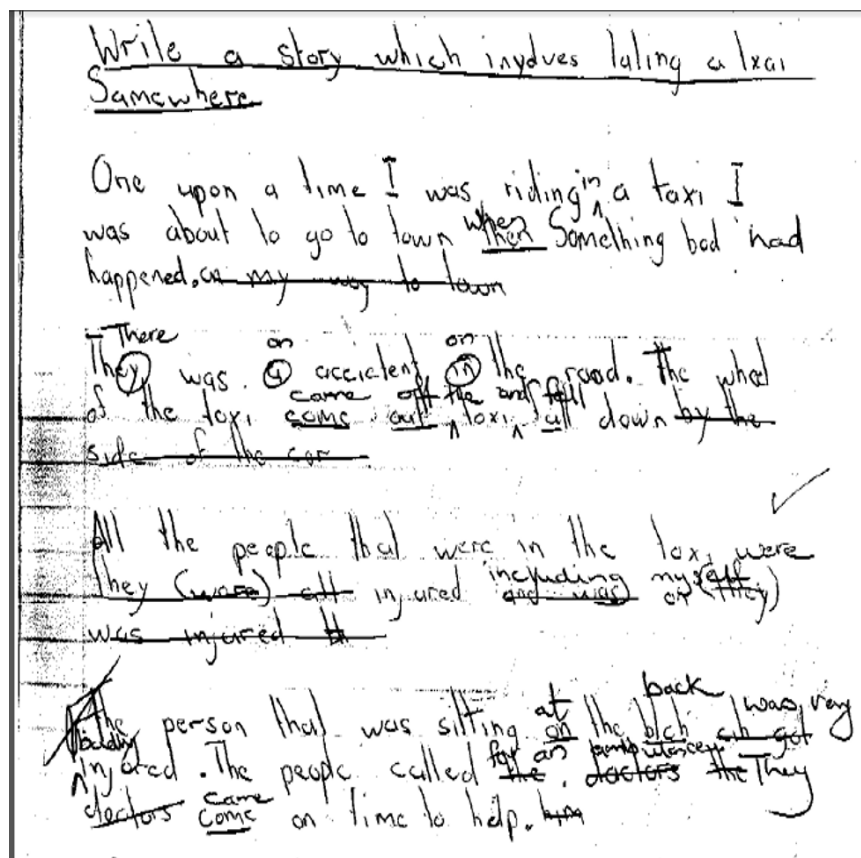
Exemplar 6.7. Kethu's copied, story and mind map complete

As is evident in the exemplar above, in respect to planning, Kethu seems to have a better grasp of the terms *plot*, *characters* and *setting*, as the notes that he makes under each are relevant to that term. However, his notes are not detailed enough to enable him to use them as a guide to write a draft and are, in fact, not related to the story that he wrote. This indicates that he may not have understood the relation between planning and drafting within the writing cycle and had seen them as discrete rather than connected and progressive stages. Kethu was one of the boys who read their stories to the class and was stopped by Ms Naidoo for being copied. Ms Naidoo told him to write a new story, "using your imagination", which he did not do. Instead, Kethu, like the other boys in the class, submitted his draft, unedited as his final version.

The story demonstrated good spelling, a good control of tense, sentence construction, punctuation and grammar and followed the conventions of the narrative genre, having a beginning, middle and end. Ms Naidoo corrected his punctuation (Flying Horse) and a few grammatical errors such as prepositions (by/of, with/on his) and tense (was

sitting/sat) and signed and dated his work. In addition to her not providing any positive feedback to him, she also omitted to correct the word *horse's* by removing the apostrophe, so he may be left thinking that his use of the apostrophe in that instance is correct and may make the same mistake in his future writing. Editing in School B was evidently not effective. Ms Naidoo's pedagogical choice to scaffold the editing phase by selecting one boy's draft to model the editing on the chalkboard was not sufficient. It cannot be concluded that they understood what editing entailed or that they were able to edit each other's work as they boys' submissions revealed that editing had either not taken place or that the editing was put into effect.

The boy's story which was selected to be edited by the whole class is presented in Exemplar 6.8.



Exemplar 6.8. Samkelo's original complete story with no mind map

Samkelo did not complete or even attempt a mind map, but he managed to write a story that was structured and followed the conventions of the narrative genre with an

introduction which introduced the setting, a body which contained the climax and the conclusion which brought the story to an end by restoring the equilibrium. The use of the first person and past tense is maintained throughout the story, but there are many spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, of which Ms Naidoo corrected all. What is interesting to note is that the first two paragraphs were edited by Ms Naidoo and the class during the whole-class editing, but Samkelo did not make any of those corrections when submitting his final draft; it is almost as if he did not accept their positions as editors and instead seemed to have submitted the unedited draft as his final draft to be assessed. This could also indicate that he did not understand the relation between the editing and finalising stages of the writing cycle. Ms Naidoo, unlike Ms Chetty, does scaffold the editing stage by modelling the correction of a draft but her learners were still unable to do so. This may be because their linguistic knowledge was limited.

On the other hand, Anele completed his mind map and created an original story titled: 'A Fierce Storm'. Ms Naidoo wrote "Very Good" at the end of the mind map and "Well Done" at the end of the story. However, during the class observations, Anele was one of the boys who was asked to read his story aloud. He began by reading the title and pronounced the word *fierce* as *feeis*. Ms Naidoo did not understand what he was saying and asked him to repeat it and again he mispronounced the word, so she went to his book and discovered that the word was *fierce*. She concluded that, because he could not even pronounce the word, his work must have been copied.

6.5 Discussion

In this section, I discuss the relationship between the acts of positions in the sequence of writing events, teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, scaffolding strategies and the quality of the boys' writing. Badger and White (2000) state that teaching writing involves knowledge about language, the context in which the writing happens and the purpose of writing, skills in using language and drawing out the learners' potential by providing input to which the learners respond. In both schools the teachers selected the narrative genre and used the process genre approach to writing to develop their learners' skills, but their scaffolding strategies differed. They also integrated the development of vocabulary and language structures and conventions during their

writing lessons. However, at times it seemed that Ms Naidoo's object of cognition shifted from the teaching of writing to the teaching of reading, drama and language because she spent a great deal of time on these aspects.

Yan (2005) states that learners are more likely to be successful in completing their writing activities if their teachers provide prewriting activities that develop schemata. This was clearly the case in School A, where Ms Chetty's pedagogical choice was to scaffold the learners' planning by using a whole-class discussion to co-create an example of the type of story that the learners were going to write about. Her method activated the learners' schema about the topic, developed their speaking and listening skills, and enabled them to become familiar with the language and vocabulary related to the topic and the structures and conventions of the expected genre. Thus, she integrated the other language skills into her writing lesson. She also told the learners to write about a nightmare, giving the boys the freedom to choose any nightmare and allowing for the inclusion of action and adventure which suits boys' learning preferences and which most of the boys selected as their favourite genres in the activity-based questionnaire, while noting that some boys did select romance and fairy tales. The topic was also about something real and relevant to their lives, which makes writing easier for boys (Pavy, 2006), rather than trying to write about something abstract or about something they had never experienced before and would have difficulty writing about.

The situation in School B was quite different, as Ms Naidoo did not activate her boys' schema about the topic. Yan (2005) states that the teacher must build the learners' self-confidence and arouse their curiosity by giving them topics that interest them, and be aware of individual differences that may appear during the writing process. In School B, the first lesson was introduced with the reading and explanation of the stages of the writing cycle, but excitement around a topic was not created. Instead learners were given an open topic, so even though boys had the freedom of choice to suit their learning needs and could include elements of their preferred action and adventure genre in their stories, they were unable to do so. This was possibly because there was no prewriting activity to excite and familiarise them with the topic, and the link was not made between the vocabulary and language development and reading comprehension that Ms Naidoo foregrounded at different points in the lessons that

were observed and in their writing task. Although Yan (2005) states that listening, speaking and reading skills must be integrated in the writing class, King and Gurian (2006) caution that moving boys between too many tasks may result in them becoming irritable, so they may not benefit from the learning experience. Evident in the lesson observations was that Ms Naidoo's rapid changes of position did confuse the boys. Thus, Ms Naidoo's frequent switching of the focus of her lesson, moving from the writing cycle to reading to language and vocabulary development to dramatisation to the features of the narrative genre, may not have been the best pedagogical choice to suit the boys' learning needs.

When it came to the planning stage in School A, the boys used the mind map in the activity book, which had prompts to guide their thinking, help structure their stories, and was colourful, with pictures accommodating the boys' visual-spatial learning preference (King and Gurian, 2006). Almost all the boys adequately completed their mind maps, which were useful and usable for completing their drafts. On the other hand, in School B, Ms Naidoo drew a mind map on the chalkboard and wrote three headings: plot, characters and setting. Her learners did not seem to understand what those terms meant, as most did not complete their mind maps and some wrote items that had no relevance to the heading. Ms Naidoo also did not have the pedagogical content knowledge to help them cross over the boundary to her understanding of those terms. The result was that most of her boys submitted incomplete or incorrect mind maps which were not much use for the writing of their drafts.

The editing stage may not have been as successful as previous stages in School A, because the final versions that the boys submitted still contained errors which may have also been a result of the omission of the revising stage of the writing cycle. Penny (1998) found that boys benefitted from reading and hearing their own and their peers' drafts. However, in this study, one boy in School A did not want his work to be edited by his peer and other boys did not seem to take the editing seriously because their submitted versions had many errors, some of which Ms Chetty had edited. However, all the stories of the boys who submitted in School A were complete.

In School B, peer editing could not take place because most learners had not completed their drafts for homework. Instead, the class engaged in whole-class

editing. This may have been a helpful strategy, as it demonstrated to the learners how to edit their peer's writing, but it was time consuming for Ms Naidoo to write Samkelo's story on the board and having his work openly critiqued may well have impacted on his self-esteem. Even though his work was edited by the class, Samkelo's final submission had the same errors that the draft, indicating that he either did not make the corrections or that he simply submitted his draft. On analysing the boys' submissions, it was noted that many of them seemed to have submitted their unedited, incomplete drafts, containing many errors that could possibly be attributed to the omission of the revision stage and the fact that their work had not been edited. It could also indicate that they did not understand the relation between the editing and finalising stages in the writing cycle.

When using the process- genre approach, the teacher must assume the position of assistant and guide and encourage the learners by providing positive constructive advice (Yan, 2005, p.20). In School A, Ms Chetty was able to create a coalition of positions for herself and her learners. Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) state that positions do not occur singularly and should work together to create a coalition of dominant and auxiliary positions. Through the writing process, Ms Chetty positioned herself as the teacher of writing and positioned her learners as writers of an imaginative story. Within this dominant position she selected auxiliary positions such as co-creator of an imaginative story, regulator, facilitator and editor for herself, which supported the dominant position as teacher of writing. This coalition of positions enabled her to help her learners cross the boundary to her understanding and cognise the object of cognition.

Another contributing factor to the boys apprehending the object of cognition and completing the writing activity was the selection of auxiliary positions for her learners, which included co-creators of the imaginative story, planners, thinkers, drafters, editors and writers. Her positioning of her learners was clear and structured and supported the aims and purpose of the lesson. Ms Chetty was able to achieve a coalition of positions and select suitable auxiliary positions because she knew the level at which her learners were, and she had an adequate content pedagogical knowledge of developing her learners' writing skills using the writing cycle. To support these aims further, during the planning phase when the boys had to complete their mind maps,

she positioned herself as a facilitator and walked around checking that her learners were working correctly on task. She also positioned her learners as creative thinkers and planners, so most of the boys were able to correctly complete their mind maps, which formed a guide and structure for when they wrote their drafts.

Even when Ms Chetty adopted the position of regulator, she had a “no-nonsense” approach, created a structured and positive learning environment (Hawley & Reichert, 2010) and was firm, friendly, fair, fun and focused (Pavy, 2006) for the duration of the lesson observed, which accommodated the boys’ relational needs. By doing so, she was able to increase their productivity as opposed to publicly disciplining and humiliating them, which may have resulted in them not completing the writing activity. However, her positioning them as drafters did not work well because she expected them to complete the draft for homework without her assistance and guidance and some boys did not complete their drafts. This meant that during the editing stage, they were writing their drafts and missing the editing stage, possibly resulting in their writing containing too many errors so that even though it had a good structure and ideas, it was not judged to be “very good”.

Ms Naidoo’s dominant position for herself and her learners was less clear, as was her object of cognition. Rather than creating a coalition of positions, at times, her positioning and pedagogical choices created a conflict of positions which occurs when the auxiliary positions do not support the dominant position (Hermans & Hermans-Konopa, 2010). Her object of cognition for the learners appeared to be knowing the writing cycle rather than knowing how to write a story using the writing cycle. Adding to this lack of clarity, at times she placed much emphasis on other language skills such as reading and language development to the degree that these almost replaced writing as the main object of cognition. This could indicate that her content knowledge and content pedagogical knowledge was limited. She also did not seem to know her learners’ level of learning as she often asked them about things that they were not familiar with. The limitations of these categories of teacher knowledge meant that she could not position her learners appropriately. Furthermore, without a clear object of cognition her dominant position was not well defined, and neither was her dominant positioning of her learners. The auxiliary positioning by Ms Naidoo of herself and her learners also did not always support the dominant position, was negative at times (time

wasters, potential cheats) and she switched positions very frequently, resulting in the learners becoming distracted, confused, and not understanding her instructions. The result was most of the boys being unable to complete their mind maps and stories.

Thus, it can be stated that if a teacher does not have a clear object of cognition, knowledge of her learners and content pedagogical knowledge, she will not be able to position herself and her learners appropriately and they will not cognise the object of cognition. If the teacher has a clear object of cognition for her learners, it helps her to identify and pursue a process which can be appropriately linked to this object, and to the learners' prior knowledge and experience in coming to know this object. This can also help her to create moments of intercognition for the learners at various points in the process to the final object of cognition.

In School B, it was made evident that the absence of a clear object of cognition, dominant positions and auxiliary positions to support the dominant position resulted in most of the boys not completing their writing. The frequent switching between positions also disturbed and may have irritated them and the use of negative positioning may also have contributed to their incomplete or incorrectly completed work. The boys could not achieve their teacher's expectations, as these were not made clear to them. To ensure that learners are able to successfully complete writing tasks using the writing process, it is crucial for teachers to have a clear object of cognition and have an understanding of each stage (what it is, why it is necessary and how it should be used) to position themselves and their learners appropriately to meet the expectations of each stage and apprehend the object of cognition by presenting a correctly structured, complete piece of writing.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter illuminated the relations between positioning, the writing process, teacher knowledge and the final product. Exemplars of the different categories of writing that were selected, using stratified, purposive and typology sampling were presented and discussed.

The data suggests that the expectations and conflation of the process genre approach

in the CAPS is challenging for teachers which impacts on how the learners complete their writing activities. Further to this, the scaffolding that the teacher provides through the writing process and the positions that she selects for herself and her learners play a vital role in the quality of work that her learners produce. Importantly, her ability to select appropriate scaffolding and positions for her learners is dependent on her knowledge of her learners and her content pedagogical knowledge. Exemplars analysed from School A reflected that the boys were taken through the process, with the teacher using a coalition of dominant and auxiliary positions in a way which suited their learning needs resulting in the production of complete, well-constructed and imaginative stories that created a vivid picture in the mind of the reader. The presence of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors is demonstrative of the need for the teacher to allocate time for drafting and revising in class and to use a different approach during the peer editing stage. The exemplars that were analysed in School B highlighted the fact that something had been lost between the process and the product because the boys from this school submitted mostly incomplete and incorrectly copied stories. This would imply that an automatic link between the process approach to writing and the actual learning of writing does not exist. If the teacher does not have or fails to apply the different categories of knowledge (Grossman, 1996), she cannot position herself and her learners appropriately, and the process will not be able to play much of a role in the acquisition of the object of cognition and learning will be hindered.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This study analysed the development of two Grade 6 teachers and 39 boys' perceptions, experiences and challenges of teaching and learning writing in two English Home Language KwaZulu-Natal classrooms. The study was qualitative within the interpretivist paradigm, using the exploratory and comparative case study design. A cycle of the teachers' development of their learners' writing skills was observed, the teachers were interviewed, the boys completed an activity-based questionnaire and the boys' written submissions with their teachers' feedback were collected. Using thematic analysis, the process genre approach, positioning theory and document analysis, the data were analysed.

This chapter presents: the summary of the findings; the significance of the study with respect to its contribution to scholarship; a reflection on my own learning as a researcher; and suggestions for further study and classroom practice. The key research questions for this study are:

- How do teachers and boys perceive the affordances of the writing cycle?
- Why do they perceive the affordances of the writing cycle the way they do?
- How do teachers develop their learners' writing skills?
- Why do they develop their learners' writing skills the way they do?
- How do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle, if at all?
- Why do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle the way they do?

7.2 Summary of the findings

7.2.1 How do teachers and boys perceive the affordances of the writing cycle?

To reiterate, this first research question sought to gain insight into how the participating teachers and boys viewed their writing development using the process genre approach to writing. Scholarly research as indicated in the literature review suggests that boys view writing negatively (Kissau & Turnbull, 2008). However, this study produces evidence that contradicts this perception.

In this admittedly small-scale study, in the activity-based questionnaire, 18 boys (out of the sample of 39) chose a language (English or IsiZulu) as their favourite subject, and only four chose English as their least favourite. In addition to this as only five boys selected writing as their least favourite aspect, it could be stated that most of these boys do not have a negative view of writing. This was further evidenced in School A because, although the boys struggled with some aspects of writing, the boys still wrote good stories. Furthermore, their acceptance of their teacher's positioning during the stages of the writing cycle, their enthusiasm during the co-creation of the nightmare and the fact that almost all the boys adequately completed their mind maps and stories supports the above claim that these boys did not view writing negatively. Instead it could be stated that the scaffolding approach that the teacher chooses to take during each stage of the writing process plays a significant role in how the boys view, approach and complete the writing activity. The above conclusion challenges the view that boys do not have an interest in language learning or that they view language learning negatively.

How the teachers in this study perceived their teaching of the writing process and how they actually did so in class were not always congruent. In her interview Ms Naidoo mentioned strategies and approaches that were not evident in the lesson observation. For instance, she said that she taught writing by first brainstorming, she used key words and then used a rubric to grade her learners' work. However, she did not brainstorm the topic as she did not provide a topic, key words were not provided, and she did not use a rubric. Thus, her perceptions of how she developed her learners' writing skills and how she developed those skills were not the same. Mather (2012) found that if a teacher is unable to see the deficiencies in their practice, they are unlikely to change their practice. The findings of this study extend on that claim by emphasising the need for teachers to reflect on their limitations. These reflections should include areas of knowledge as proposed by Grossman (1990) particularly content pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of their individual learners, thus enabling them to work towards selecting suitable positions that will complement the content and their scaffolding strategies.

Finally, when asked about their favourite language skills to teach, neither Ms Chetty

nor Ms Naidoo chose writing. However, both teachers mentioned that they enjoyed writing in their spare time. Evidence from the data suggests that neither the teachers nor the boys view writing using the writing cycle negatively. However, teaching writing is not a favourite of the language skills because they may feel overwhelmed by the many challenges that they stated they experienced when developing their learners' writing skills using the process genre approach. Also, the teachers' views of how they teach writing and how they actually teach writing may differ.

7.2.2 Why do they perceive the affordances of the writing cycle the way they do?

The second research question sought to elaborate on the findings from the first question by detailing reasons for the teachers' and boys' views of writing. The teachers indicated that they found marking challenging and time consuming because of the large numbers of learners in their classes. This challenge is corroborated by Dornbrack and Dixon (2014) as they state that teachers experience difficulty when marking large numbers and thus do not provide useful feedback to their learners. They further state that instruction time constraints have a negative impact on required engagement with the stages of the conflated process genre approach. The teachers in this study also found editing and allocating time to engage with each stage meaningfully challenging. This study found that these are challenges because teachers' understanding and knowledge of what editing and marking entail could be limited, and because the strategies that they select, based on their interpretation of the CAPS and own experiences, end up being time consuming and overwhelming. When speaking about specific challenges that their boys experience when writing, the teachers found that their boys have short attention spans, read less than girls (which impacts on their writing), make more linguistic errors and do not complete their homework. This further supports Dornbrack and Dixon's view that the conflation of the process genre approach poses too many challenges in the SA context to be effective in developing learners' writing skills holistically (2014).

The boys in this study stated that they had trouble with planning which support Daly's (2004) claim that teachers need to take boys' learning needs into account when designing planning activities as boys find planning challenging. Adding to this challenge, the boys here struggled with spelling and editing. Having this knowledge of their boys, the teachers only reminded them to use dictionaries, to support their

spelling when writing their drafts. Thus, when editing, there were many errors to correct which resulted in some peers not being able to edit the work and the teachers being overwhelmed by all the correcting that was required. These teachers have found that peer editing is not effective as peers sometimes do not have the academic or linguistic ability to correct their peers' work, and sometimes learners may not accept the changes or suggestions offered by their peers.

Some boys from School B identified planning, writing an original story and writing without knowing what to write about as challenges that they experienced. This can be attributed to their teacher's limited pedagogical content knowledge about how to scaffold the planning stage which did not appear to have clear aims (Barrs & Pidgeon, 2002) and an introduction that did not capture the boys' attention (Wood et al., 1976).

According to Grossman (1990), content pedagogical knowledge is vital to enable the teacher to choose teaching methods that are appropriate for the content. This study found that if the teachers' categories of knowledge are lacking then their lessons will not be sufficiently focussed. In this case, the boys were confused, distracted and disruptive as they did not have a clear idea as to what was expected of them. A lack of teacher content pedagogical knowledge, the confusion about, and high demands of the writing process and genre, the negative positioning, and their possible feelings of failure for not being able to correctly complete their stories could adversely affect how boys' view of writing. A further consequence of the teacher's inadequate content pedagogical knowledge was that she seemed to be unsure as to what she was meant to be doing and thus unable to go beyond what was required of her and cater for her learners' specific needs and challenges.

The conclusions drawn from the data are as follows. Firstly, writing was not selected as a favourite skill as the boys and teachers experienced many challenges during the stages of the writing cycle. Secondly, the implementation of the conflated process-genre approach places high demands on teachers as it requires the teacher to have a balance of content pedagogical knowledge, context knowledge and the ability to use positioning appropriately during each stage.

7.2.3 How do teachers develop their learners' writing skills?

The purpose of this research question was to gain insight into the strategies used by teachers to develop their learners' writing skills. In School A, Ms Chetty's use of the mind map from the activity book worked well to scaffold the learners' planning, as it had colourful images which supports boys' learning preferences. More importantly, it had prompts to guide the learners' thinking and help them with what content to write about. Evident here is the need for prompts, and not merely headings, as scaffolding when using mind maps to support the learners during the planning stage, and that although boys like to make their own choices (Gurian & Steven, 2010), they need to be given different topics to choose from. Ms Naidoo first explained to her learners what the stages entailed and then tried to take them through the stages to complete the writing activity. She also gave her learners a mind map to scaffold their planning but in the absence of a topic and adequate prompts, the learners struggled to complete the task.

That the revising stage was omitted by both teachers in this study means that I cannot conclusively state what scaffolding strategies the teachers used nor am I able to evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies based on the literature available and the boys' final submissions and suggestions for improved practice during this stage cannot be provided. The inclusion of the revising stage of the writing cycle by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a) is important as it allows the teacher to provide formative feedback on the learners' ideas, structure and content while they are drafting. In this way they can progressively make changes and improvements during drafting rather than completing an entire draft only to find that there are major concerns, so they must write a new draft which may be demotivating and frustrating for them.

What I can conclude is that the omission of this stage and assigning the writing of drafts for homework added more pressure to the editing stage. This exhausted the teachers and resulted in a lack of refinement of the content and many errors were still evident in the learners' final submissions. Thus, the data has shown that the omission of the revising stage and assigning drafting for homework increases error frequency in the learners' final submissions. Adding to this, it can be concluded that even though both teachers adopted the same guiding document and approach, their scaffolding strategies differed which produced very different results.

7.2.4 Why do teachers develop their learners' writing skills the way they do?

The fourth research question sought to provide a platform to analyse the reasoning for the teachers' pedagogical choices during the stages of the writing cycle. As was evidenced by the fact that all the learners were able to complete the writing task in School A whilst most did not even complete their drafts in School B, Ms Chetty's pedagogical knowledge and choices were better. Using an engaging discussion to arouse an interest in the topic, activate the learners' schema and allow the teacher to assess the learners' prior knowledge required Ms Chetty to have content pedagogical knowledge about the story that she wanted her learners to write, and questioning and discussion techniques. She also used her knowledge of mind maps and the content required for this mind map to scaffold her learners' planning. Her lack of knowledge of the revising stage and assigning drafting for home had consequences on the editing stage and marking of the final submissions as she had many errors and content and structural issues to correct.

In contrast, Ms Naidoo's lack of content pedagogical knowledge was evidenced from the introductory stage of her lesson where she attempted to introduce the writing activity by reading and explaining the stages of the writing cycle. It was evident that both she and her learners were not familiar with mind maps or the writing cycle as she did not know how to scaffold their learning and they did not know what to do during each stage. The conclusion that can be drawn by this is that teachers do not use the process genre approach to develop writing and, consistent with Dornbrack and Dixon (2014), the process genre approach requires knowledgeable, expert writing teachers for its implementation to be effective, who may be in short supply in SA given its unfair educational landscape.

In this study, other than engaging more with boys than girls during class discussions and editing boys' drafts, possibly for the benefit of the research, the teachers did not use their knowledge of their boys to implement any specific strategies to scaffold them. Both teachers mentioned that spelling and grammar was a challenge for the boys but during the observed lessons, neither teacher used that knowledge to do anything to support those needs. The lack of, and need for, spelling and grammar scaffolding for the boys for these writing pieces was supported by the multitude of spelling and

grammar errors in the boys' drafts and final submissions. During her interview Ms Naidoo mentioned that she gives the boys extra activities to keep them busy and Ms Chetty said that she constantly checks to make sure that they are working on task, but these did not occur during the lesson observations. As such, I cannot say conclusively what strategies they use to accommodate the individual needs of their boys or how effective those strategies are. Grossman states that teachers need to use their knowledge of their learners to design suitable learning experiences (1990). This study concurs and elaborates with Grossman (1990) because what can be concluded here is that teachers need to use their knowledge of their boys and knowledge of different scaffolding strategies to support needs and interests of their boys.

Secondly, this study found that teachers teach the way that they were taught. Ms Chetty described her teaching of writing as being the same as how she had been taught in primary school and trained at university, and the same as is prescribed by the CAPS. Ms Naidoo stated that her teachers developed her writing skills effectively, so she employs many of their techniques when she is teaching writing. Mather (2012) found the same as the teachers taught reading in the same way that their teachers taught them how to read. This may be problematic as teaching in many schools was deficient during the apartheid era. Unless teachers are made aware of these deficiencies, they will continue believing that their schooling was of an acceptable standard and will employ the same inadequate methods in their own classrooms, thus perpetuating the cycle of an unequal education system (Mather, 2012).

Both teachers also mentioned that, in addition to very few other genres, they read and wrote many stories when they were in school. One can therefore see the link between their schooling and their current practices as they both chose the narrative genre which they were most comfortable and familiar with. The CAPS advocates that learners learn to write a range of genres during their time in the IP (DBE, 2011a). Hence teachers need to be knowledgeable of the different genres and how to teach them (Dornbrack and Dixon, 2014). Adding to this, teachers also need to be clear and familiar with the terminology associated with the process genre approach and the different genres to ensure that learners are familiar with those as they progress through the grades so that the next teacher can build on that knowledge. At times Ms Chetty and Ms Naidoo mixed up terms such as brainstorming, planning and drafting. They also need to call

the type of writing by its name: they both referred to “stories” rather than a narrative essay. This may prove to be challenging for many SA teachers whose English linguistic abilities and knowledge of genre may be lacking due to their deficient schooling and training, which is not compensated for in the CAPS.

Finally, an important consideration for each stage of the writing process is the role of positioning. The link between positioning theory and teaching and learning, as suggested by Rule (2015), cannot be disputed because during every lesson the teacher and learners position themselves and each other through interaction and dialogue with the aim of getting the learners to cognise the object of cognition which is the content, skills or meanings that the teacher wants the learners to know. To do this, the teacher needs to have a clear idea of what her object of cognition is, who her learners are and how she is going to scaffold her learners to attain the object of cognition. The absence of these will result in the teacher choosing dominant and auxiliary positions for herself and her learners that do not suit the learners’ learning needs.

As was evidenced from the data, Ms Naidoo transitioned herself and her learners between many positions and these did not always support the dominant position. Instead they resulted in disruptions which detracted from attaining the object of cognition. Further to this detraction, her negative positions could be demotivating and cause the learners to have negative perceptions of writing. Finally, from the data in this study, it could be stated that teachers choose positions for pedagogical reasons, to provide support for the teaching methods that they choose on their journey to enabling their learners to apprehend the object of cognition. This concurs with Rule (2014) as it could thus be concluded that a lack of teacher’s knowledge results in inadequate positioning which in turn adversely affects the learners’ engagement during the stages of the writing cycle and their final written product. It can be concluded that the teachers made the choices that they did based on their categories of knowledge or lack thereof and their own schooling and training. Finally, their ability to position themselves and their learners appropriately for each stage of the writing cycle influences the way their learners complete their writing tasks.

7.2.5 How do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle, if at all?

The purpose of this research question was to determine the assessment techniques that the participants used during the stages of the writing cycle. Ms Chetty's modelling through a whole class co-creation of the story also allowed her to assess her learners' prior knowledge and identify and fill any gaps in their knowledge. On the other hand, Ms Naidoo's questioning technique did not allow her to determine her learners' prior knowledge as their responses seemed to be more filling in the blanks based on what they thought the expected response was. Here again we see a consequence of the omission of the revising stage and allocating drafting for homework because the teachers were not able to provide much needed formative feedback on their learners' drafts during these stages. The editing stage posed different challenges for the teachers in both schools. Ms Chetty attempted to correct all the boys' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors which took much time. Ms Naidoo attempted to model editing by correcting one boy's draft with the class, but this meant that the other learners' work went unedited. In both instances, the boys still submitted work that contained errors, so it can be concluded that they did not benefit from the formative assessment and feedback during the editing stage, which also made marking the final submissions time consuming for the teachers.

When correcting their learners' work, the teachers in this study tended to focus on correcting all the spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors with no mention being made of the actual content of the story. The corrections that the teachers made to their spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors could be useful to the boys if time was allocated for them to read their stories with the corrections that the teacher made and if they were able to understand why she made those corrections to avoid making the same mistakes in different contexts in future. The final part of the writing seemed to be the teacher marking the stories, giving it back to the learners and then moving on to the next piece of work. Neither teacher used a rubric to assess the learners' writing, nor did they provide meaningful feedback to build the learners' confidence and to foster a love for writing. The feedback also lacked the developmental element whereby learners could use their teacher's comments to identify areas in which they could improve their future writing. Thus, the significant role that feedback plays, particularly for L2 learners (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), and the form that it should take in writing

development as has been discussed by many scholars (refer to Chapter 2, 2.4.4.b.) (Hattie & Temperley, 2007; Elton, 2010; Dornbrack & Dixon, 2014; Akinyeye and Pluddeman, 2016; Esambe, Mosito & Pather, 2016), was lost in these two writing cycles.

The data has revealed that the way in which the writing cycle was presented by the CAPS was inadequate, so teachers did not have a common understanding of what the purpose of each stage was and how to engage the learners during these stages. Their understanding of genre also seemed to be limited as was their knowledge of strategies to assist their boys as per their learning needs. If these categories of knowledge are limited, then their assessment techniques will also be inadequate which means that their learners will be deprived of the benefits of using formative assessment to improve their writing.

7.2.6 Why do teachers and learners use formative assessment in the writing cycle the way they do?

This last research question sought to explore possible reasons for the phenomena observed pertaining to the use of formative assessment in these classrooms. When analysing the boys' assessed final versions from School A, it was noticed that Ms Chetty's summative assessment involved correcting all the spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, writing comments like "good", "scary", "please check your work", or "good account" at the end of a few of the boys' stories, and signing and dating in the space provided. In School B, Ms Naidoo also corrected all the boys' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors and the omission of the revising and editing stages resulted in there being many errors. Ms Naidoo signed the books, dated some, wrote "well done" and "very good", and used question marks to indicate that work was incomplete. These comments are not a complete indication of what was good, what ought to be checked, why the story was a good account or how the boy could improve his story. No rubrics were used as these were not forthcoming in the activity book that Ms Chetty used and in the CAPS.

The evidence from this study suggests that teachers are not equipped with the necessary formative and summative assessment techniques and tools. Instead they assess their learners' writing in the same way that their teachers assessed their

writing. Further to this, it would seem that meaningful assessment is hindered by teachers' lack of training regarding assessment, time constraints and onerous amounts of marking. Finally, the CAPS does not provide teachers with assessment techniques to use during each stage of the writing cycle and assessment tools to assess the different types of writing.

7.3 Reliability and validity of the study

It can be stated that through the integration of sources of data and methods of data collection and analysis, triangulation has been achieved. This bolsters the reliability and validity of this research, thus making the findings more credible and trustworthy. Adding to this, to enhance the confirmability of the findings, the data and conclusions were verified with a peer and then with both teachers to confirm that what is represented here is indeed an accurate and comprehensive interpretation about what actually happened, although informed by a particular perspective and positionality, as in all qualitative research. Also, systematic and rigorous design and execution of data collection and analysis were used to positively impact on the reliability of this study. To this end, my planning was thorough, piloting was effective and constructive, and the management and analysis of the data was appropriate. Finally, I was as unobtrusive as possible during the classroom observations. I was conscious of my behaviour and actions, and mindful of my personal bias and subjectivity regarding the veracity of this research.

7.4 Limitations of the study

A major limitation of this study was my sample. Firstly, the sample was small so not easily generalisable. Secondly, I opened myself up to a blind-spot in this research excluding the girls. Had they been included, I would have had the opportunity to see how the girls responded and performed and made a comparison with the boys. Another limitation is that I could have possibly gained more insight if positioning theory was applied beyond one writing cycle and the shifts in positions could have been analysed to track the boys' writing developments. Fourthly, due to the unwillingness of a larger variety of schools to participate in this study, my sample was limited to these two types of schools and due to time constraints that these teachers had, I was limited to my methods and frequency of data collection.

It is also possible that that participants behaved differently when being observed for this research (Christiansen et al, 2010). In both schools the teachers deliberately focused on the boys by ensuring that they contributed to class discussions. In School A, when it came to teacher editing, Ms Chetty only called the boys to have their work edited by her, and in School B Ms Naidoo only asked the boys who had not completed their homework to raise their hands and only the boys were asked to read their drafts. It was clear, therefore, that my focus as a researcher of boys' writing influenced the teachers' pedagogical choices and engagement with their classes.

In addition, both teachers at some point during their lesson turned to include the researcher in the discussion. For instance, in School A, by the end of the last lesson, Ms Chetty exclaimed to me how exhausting it was to edit each child's work and in School B Ms Naidoo also tried to position me as an empathetic observer while reprimanding the learners on one occasion for not completing their homework by highlighting to me the difficulty experienced in getting learners to complete their assigned homework. In both instances, the teacher positioned the researcher as an ally and as a sympathiser with their individual plights, and almost to get affirmation that they were not complaining over something trivial. Important to note in the excerpt below is how Ms Naidoo positioned herself as helpless and limited by saying, "Right, I cannot force you to do your work." This could result in her authority status being diminished in the classroom and result in discipline issues.

7.5 Significance of the study

What follows in this section is the original contribution that this study has made to the body of literature pertaining to boys and writing development in the SA context.

The CAPS (DBE, 2011a) prescribes that teachers use the planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing stages when developing their learners' writing skills. This study has highlighted the importance of teacher knowledge, positioning and having a clear object of cognition and the role that those play in the final product. First, my study yields insights into the relations among the writing process, teacher knowledge, the writing product, and the positioning of teacher and learners. Second, it contributes to

the body of literature around SA boys and language learning. Third, it highlights some of the limitations of the process approach to writing as prescribed by CAPS, and finally provides methodological insights into conducting research with boys are provided.

The link between Grossman's (1990) categories of teacher knowledge and the learners being able to cognise the object of cognition was established in this study. According to Grossman (1990) teachers need to have context knowledge, subject matter knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Thus, the teacher must know what she is teaching, why she is teaching it and how to teach it (Rule, 2015). Using this knowledge, she needs to position herself and her learners during the different stages of the process to enable them to achieve the purpose of the stage toward completing and submitting a final product that meets the structures and conventions of the genre. An automatic link between the process and learning does not exist. In the absence of teacher knowledge and suitable positioning, there will be a break in learning and learners will not cognise the object of cognition, as was seen in School B and in some instances in School A. Adding to this, this study found that there is a need for a further category of teacher knowledge which would deal with knowledge of assessment techniques and tools.

Some limitations of the writing process as prescribed by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a) were foregrounded by the data in this study. The CAPS (DBE, 2011a) does not make explicit the purpose of each stage, nor does it provide teaching strategies for teachers to use during each stage. For instance, the CAPS (DBE, 2011a, p.19) states that when planning the target audience, purpose and type of writing need to be considered, mind maps or lists need to be used to brainstorm and ideas must be organised. This does not tell the teacher anything about an introduction that models the type of text to be created in a way that captures the learners' interest and develops their schema, vocabulary and knowledge of the structures and conventions of the genre. It also does not explain the purpose of a mind map or list and how this should be structured and used. Thus, teachers can use what the CAPS provides as a checklist without achieving the purpose of the stage.

In addition to this, the data from this study suggests the possibility that the conflation of the process and genre approach creates an unrealistic expectation for many SA

teachers. Such teachers may have been subjected to deficient schooling and training to begin with and are now expected to adopt this approach after only attending a CAPS training workshop. Also, considering the pacing and sequence of the CAPS curriculum, teachers have little time to give the required attention to each stage of the writing cycle. Lastly, insufficient knowledge of assessment techniques and overcrowded classes means that teachers do not provide adequate formative feedback to all the learners during each of the stages. Furthermore, teachers are limited in the type of summative feedback that they can give to the learners on their final products, which means that it is not possible for marking to be used as a valuable tool for teaching.

Regarding the methodological contribution that this study has made, it was found that taking boys' needs and learning preferences into account when trying to illicit rich, in-depth data from them is advantageous. The design and use of the activity-based questionnaire and different stations meant that relevant, insightful data were collected in a way that suited the boys' needs for visual stimuli, movement, competition and choice (King & Gurian, 2006) and that the boys were able to share their feelings about learning English and writing in a safe, non-threatening manner that did not compromise their need to reaffirm their masculinity to their peers (Younger, 2005).

7.6 Reflexivity

I began the journey of writing this dissertation knowing something about the teaching of writing using the writing cycle, a little about boys' learning needs and nothing about positioning theory. As I approach the end of this journey, it is important for me to reflect on the way I developed my learners' writing skills, my participants and the people who will read this dissertation. In the past, I began the lesson by explaining the structures and conventions of the genre, the topic, and rubric that I intended using to assess their writing and provide the learners with a list of vocabulary words. The learners would complete the writing task as I walked around checking and commenting on their progress, but due to time restraints they needed to complete the writing for homework, and then the next day I collected and assessed their efforts as per the rubric. My marking involved correcting all the spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, evaluating the structure and content, writing a comment or two and awarding a mark out of twenty. I dreaded this marking because it was time-consuming and, as I taught

English HL to second language speakers, I was aware that their writing had many errors. Like the teachers who participated in this study, I found that the boys generally made more errors than girls, did not always complete the writing activity and submitted untidy, incomplete work and so were awarded lower marks than the girls.

In the last year of me teaching Grade 6 English, the CAPS was introduced in the IP. I realised that my teaching of writing needed some revision. The textbooks that aligned with the CAPS were designed to be followed from cover to cover which meant that writing was taught in the context of a theme. This meant that the learners read a passage, answered comprehension questions, did activities to develop their vocabulary and specific language skills and then wrote their own text, using the stages of the writing process. This writing was based on the text type that they had been reading and on the application of the vocabulary and language skills that had been developed in previous lessons.

When the CAPS was introduced I felt that I did not know enough about the writing process, so I did some reading and adjusted my approach accordingly. Adopting what I learnt from the CAPS and literature pertaining to the development of learners' writing skills, I began my lessons as Ms Chetty did, with an exciting activity to create interest around the writing to introduce the topic. The topic fitted into a broader theme and the genre was modelled on a text that was read and analysed in previous lessons. I would then explain the topic and marking rubric and make links to the reading, vocabulary and language activities that had been completed in previous lessons. Next, the learners were given a mind map with prompts (often phrased as questions) to plan the writing which they would sometimes have to complete for homework. The lesson that followed involved writing their drafts and again, as I did before, I walked around and commented on their progress. When their drafts were complete they began peer editing. However, I did not feel that peer editing worked well because learners who were not very proficient in English were unable to correct their peer's errors and the learners seldom commented on ways to improve the content. I now realise that I ought to have modelled editing by using a similar text with deliberate errors and structural and content issues. I also should have selected specific language aspects to focus on correcting for each piece of writing.

Since leaving teaching Primary School learners and moving into the tertiary space, I am now involved in teaching future teachers how to develop their learners' writing skills. I will certainly foreground the following with my student teachers. Firstly, I will ensure that they understand the stages of the writing cycle, why these are used and how they should be used. Secondly, emphasis will be placed on the importance of positive, useful feedback and assessment tools and techniques. Student teachers will also be advised on some strategies that they can use in their classrooms to accommodate boys' learning needs such as the need for visual stimuli, movement, competition, public affirmation and non-confrontational methods to discipline them in private. Lastly, I have now learnt that positioning during the stages of the writing cycle plays a pivotal role in the learners knowing the object of cognition and thus submitting a correctly structured, complete piece of writing. I will therefore make my student teachers aware of the positions that they need to adopt and those that they need to select for their learners to achieve a coalition of positions that supports the purpose of each stage of the writing cycle.

In terms of the teachers who participated in this study, I feel a deep sense of respect and admiration toward them. Like soldiers at the end of a war, they are doing the best they can with the little that they are given. I hope that when they read this dissertation, they can reflect on their current teaching practices and use the literature, findings and conclusions from this study to work towards achieving best practice for their contexts to develop their learners', particularly their boys' writing skills.

For the people who read my dissertation, it must be remembered that my intention was not to make judgements about my participants, or fault them for inadequacies in their teaching for which it was found that they could not be held accountable. I also did not seek to pretend to be the most knowledgeable in writing and boys' learning, as these have a scope that is far greater than the aspects that I focussed on in this dissertation. It is my hope that, like the teachers who participated in this study, the readers of this study will gain more insight into boys' learning and writing in the SA context.

7.7 Suggestions for further study and future practice

7.7.1 Suggestions for further studies

This study found that positioning, teacher knowledge and having a clear object of cognition play a vital role when developing boys' writing skills using the stages of the process approach to writing as prescribed by the CAPS (DBE, 2011a). However, more research needs to be conducted regarding specific methods to accommodate South African boys when learning languages in different grades, particularly a language that is not their mother tongue. This would be important in finding out more about why boys are outperformed by their female counterparts in language subjects and to find strategies to use in the classroom when teaching different language aspects to improve South African boys' performance in their language subjects.

The use of positioning theory as a theoretical lens for this study was indeed beneficial, so conducting research using this theoretical framework to explore the teaching of other language skills in English and other languages at HL and FAL level could make a valuable contribution to our understanding of language learning in the South African context. As this study was limited to two schools, there is a need for more research into what happens during the writing cycle in similar and different schooling contexts such as rural schools and ex-model C schools to determine if the issues identified in this study are evident in other schools and to discover other factors that may be contributing to our learners' low literacy levels. Further research on assessment techniques in language classrooms is also needed, as marking and teacher feedback play a significant role in learning.

7.7.2 Suggestions for future practice

The following suggestions for improved classroom practice are made based on the findings of this study. Teachers need to have a clear, well defined object of cognition and position themselves and their learners to enable their learners to cognise the object of cognition. Teacher training for current and future teachers should include instruction as to what the stages of the writing cycle are, their purpose and how to teach writing using those stages. Adding to this, when developing boys' writing skills, the teacher ought to give the learners topics to choose from within a theme. Furthermore, writing lessons should begin with a captivating introduction that helps

the teacher to determine what her learners know and what they still need to learn, to activate their schemata, create an interest about the writing and model the type of writing that is expected. Rubrics should be designed and explained to the learners before they start planning, so that they can take the assessment criteria into account as they go through the stages of the writing cycle to produce a piece of writing. The teacher could also provide the learners with spelling lists.

To assist the boys with their spelling in a manner that would suit their learning needs, their teachers could provide them with a list of words related to the broader theme and give them a spelling test at the end of the week. This would not be time-consuming or add marking pressure to the teacher, as the peer can mark them, and they can be used to motivate and encourage the boys to learn their spelling words and create healthy competition amongst them by attaching incentives and rewards. Fun spelling activities and games that require movement and drawing could be designed to keep the boys energised and give them a more positive attitude toward spelling and the learning of new words, because if they view these negatively, they will become bored and most likely resist being developed in an area where they desperately need to be developed.

During the planning stage, mind maps or lists must have prompts to guide the learners thinking and provide them with an outline that they can use for writing their drafts. The writing of the drafts should happen in class under the supervision of the teacher so that she can give the learners ideas to revise their stories. Editing can be simplified and more achievable if the teacher selects a few language aspects for the learners to focus on when editing and if she models how the learners need to go about editing their peer's drafts, correcting the errors and commenting on the structure and content of the writing, using her own text with deliberate errors. To save valuable class time, the writing of the final versions can be assigned for homework, as the learners' drafts would have already been edited and the publishing stage does not require much supervision.

When marking their learners' writing, teachers need to comment on the content and structure rather than viewing marking as only correcting all the learner's spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. To make the feedback meaningful and a tool to

enhance teaching and learning, these comments need to provide the learner with more detail. The teacher could state something positive about the writing to develop a positive attitude towards writing and motivate them to want to complete their writing tasks. This should be followed by details of how the content of the story could be improved and which punctuation and grammatical areas need development. Finally, there is a need for a remediation stage which follows once the learners receive their assessed writing to ensure that they are being developed in the areas identified by their teacher. The teacher could possibly also design activities placed in the context of the topic to address the most frequent, common errors as a form of remediation to provide practice for the learners so that it is less likely that they will make the same errors in their future writing, in this way promoting their development from one writing task to the next.

7.8 Conclusion

This study analysed the teaching and learning of writing to Grade 6 boys using the stages of the writing cycle in two KZN English HL classrooms. The purpose of the study was get a sense of the perceptions and challenges the boys and their teachers faced regarding writing development as per the CAPS. The key issues follow.

Even though the teachers in this study knew their boys were underachieving and had challenges when writing, they did not use any specific strategies to accommodate the boys' needs. For teachers to focus on the boys learning needs they would first need have a sound content pedagogical knowledge of the writing process and genre, their boys' individual needs, and different strategies that they could use to support those needs. In this way they will be able to go beyond the general expectations of the writing process and tailor their lessons to provide extra support for the boys, rather than trying to figure out what the CAPS means and complying accordingly.

The CAPS is merely a guiding document for its purpose, perhaps it is adequate, but it is not enough to redress the inequalities created by apartheid education systems. Teachers who were schooled during apartheid believe that they received a good education when it was deficient in many ways. Until they can see those deficiencies there is not much chance that their teaching practices will change. Also, they believe that the CAPS is ideal because it is based on the same principles as traditional

teaching. This indicates their lack of understanding of the CAPS and its underlying principles as it seeks to incorporate modern teaching methods into the SA classroom context. This does not always work well, as was evidenced in this study with the conflated process genre approach which was shown to be onerous on the teachers and learners. A need for more SA research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of these methods with the aim of achieving best practice for the South African child.

The two participating Grade 6 teachers' earnestly endeavoured to comply with their guiding document to develop their learners' writing skills. Due to deficiencies in the CAPS and contextual factors, their best efforts were sadly not always rewarded with the best outcome. The teaching of writing requires careful thought and planning of both content and pedagogical strategies. The teacher also ought to be knowledgeable of how to teach writing and of her learners' contexts and interests and adapt her teaching to suit their needs. In considering the teacher's knowledge, she not only needs to know what to teach, but why she is teaching it and how to do so. Positioning during the writing process will determine whether the learners are able to cognise the object of cognition and the quality of the product submitted. It was found in the observations that to know the object of cognition, learners and teachers need to be positioned in the right way, which can only be achieved if the teacher has the relevant categories of teacher knowledge and knowledge about assessment. This dissertation challenges policy makers to foreground effective teacher training, and to implement a writing approach that is tailored to suit the individual, unique needs of the South African child.

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APPENDIX 1: Informed Consent: Teachers

Consent to participate in study: Teachers



**UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION LETTER

1. Study title and Researcher Details

- **Department:** Adult Education

Project title: An analysis of boys' and teachers' experiences in a Grade 6 writing programme, using a positioning perspective

- **Principal investigators:** Nazarana Mather

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in this educational study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with other members if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to **analyse how the teachers and boys experience the writing programme and the positions that they transition through during the writing process**

4. Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen **because you are involved in your learners' writing development.**

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, I will give you this information sheet to keep and I will ask you to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawal from the study will not have any negative consequences for anyone choosing to do this.

What will happen to me if I take part?

I will ask you questions based on your teaching of writing (with particular reference to the boys selected for this study), observe how you teach a cycle of writing, collect and analyse the participating boys' written submissions (with your feedback) and take photographs of your work environment. The study will take place between February 2015 and October 2015.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, I will not include your name or your address in this study. I will do this so that nobody can recognise you from the information that you will give.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The final research report will be made available at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The results of this study may also be presented at a conference and published in a journal. I will not write your name or address in any report or book.

NB: At the end of my study I will hold arrange a meeting with you in which I will provide you with in-depth and detailed feedback of the results and findings of this study.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Who has reviewed the study?

The University of KwaZulu Natal – Research Funding Committee and Ethics Committee.

Contact(s) for Further Information

If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of this research project please contact:

- Dr Peter Rule at the Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Education Building, Pietermaritzburg. Tel: 033 260 6187; Email: rulep@ukzn.ac.za
- Ms Phumelele Ximba (HSSREC Department at University of KwaZulu-Natal), Tel. 031 2603587; Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you!

PLEASE NOTE:

1. The information I give will be used as part of the data needed for Mrs Mather’s Doctoral thesis;
2. The data will be kept with the highest degree of confidentiality and that the right to remain anonymous in the course of reporting the findings of the study will be observed;
3. My participation in the study is voluntary;
4. I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time of my choice;
5. I am entitled to question anything that is not clear to me in the course of the interview, discussion or any other form of participation;
6. I will be given time to understand and where necessary consult other people about certain points expressed in this document;
7. I will be given chance to cross-check the resultant information before the final report on findings is written; and
8. I will be provided with feedback from this research at the end of the study; and In the event of wanting more clarification concerning my participation in this study, I can refer to the supervisor of the research project, Dr. Peter Rule of the University of KwaZulu-Natal on Tel 033 260 6187.
9. If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

DECLARATION SECTION: Teachers

I.....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I 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.

I hereby provide consent for the researcher to:	Yes	No
Interview me and video/audio-record my interview		
Observe and record me teaching a cycle of writing		
Collect and analyse the selected male learners’ written efforts with my feedback		
Take photographs of my work environment		

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Thank you for your willingness to contribute to this research.

APPENDIX 2: Informed Consent: Parents

Consent to participate in study: Parents



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION LETTER

1. Study title and Researcher Details

- **Department:** Adult Education

Project title: An analysis of boys' and teachers' experiences in a Grade 6 writing programme, using a positioning perspective

- **Principal investigators:** Nazarana Mather

2. Invitation paragraph

Your son is being invited to take part in this educational study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with other members if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish for him to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is **to analyse how the teachers and boys experience the writing programme and the positions that they transition through during the writing process**

Why has my son been chosen?

Your son has been chosen because I would like to understand better how boys experience the writing process.

Does he have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not he should take part. If you do decide to let him take part, I will give you this information sheet to keep and I will ask you to sign a consent form. If you decide to let him take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawal from the study will not have any negative consequences for anyone choosing to do this.

What will happen to me if my son takes part?

I will observe your son's writing lessons, ask him to complete an activity-based questionnaire and collect his written submission.

The study will take place between February 2015 and October 2015.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, I will not include his name or address in this study. I will do this so that nobody can recognise him from the information that he will give.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The final research report will be made available at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The results of this study may also be presented at a conference and published in a journal. I will not write your name or address in any report or book.

NB: At the end of my study I will hold arrange a meeting with you in which I will provide you with in-depth and detailed feedback of the results and findings of this study.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Who has reviewed the study?

The University of KwaZulu Natal – Research Funding Committee and Ethics Committee.

Contact(s) for Further Information

If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of this research project please contact:

- Dr Peter Rule at the Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Education Building, Pietermaritzburg. Tel: 033 260 6187; Email: rulep@ukzn.ac.za
- Ms Phumelele Ximba (HSSREC Department at University of KwaZulu-Natal), Tel. 031 2603587; Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you!

PLEASE NOTE:

1. The information I give will be used as part of the data needed for Mrs Mather’s Doctoral thesis;
2. The data will be kept with the highest degree of confidentiality and that the right to remain anonymous in the course of reporting the findings of the study will be observed;
3. My participation in the study is voluntary;
4. I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time of my choice;
5. I am entitled to question anything that is not clear to me in the course of the interview, discussion or any other form of participation;
6. I will be given time to understand and where necessary consult other people about certain points expressed in this document;
7. I will be given chance to cross-check the resultant information before the final report on findings is written; and
8. I will be provided with feedback from this research at the end of the study; and In the event of wanting more clarification concerning my participation in this study, I can refer to the supervisor of the research project, Dr. Peter Rule of the University of KwaZulu-Natal on Tel 033 260 6187.
9. If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

DECLARATION SECTION: Parents

I.....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to my son participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw him from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent for the researcher to:	Yes	No
observe and record a cycle of your son learning writing which will be recorded		
ask your son to complete an activity-based questionnaire		
take photographs of your son’s school environment		
collect your son’s written submission		

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE

.....

.....

APPENDIX 3: Informed Consent: Boys

Consent to participate in study: Boys



RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION LETTER

1. Invitation paragraph

My name is Nazarana Mather and I would like to invite you to take part in a research that I am conducting. I am studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. My study is about Grade 6 boys and their writing lessons. I would like to invite you to participate in this research.

2. Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen **because I would like to understand better what it's like for boys to do writing and how you experience the writing process.**

3. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to take part. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

4. What will happen to me if I take part?

I will observe your writing lessons, ask you to complete a fun activity-based questionnaire and collect your written submission.

The study will take place between February 2015 and October 2015.

5. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, I will not include your name or address in this study. I will do this so that nobody can recognise you from the information that you will give.

6. Contact(s) for Further Information

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project please contact:

- Dr Peter Rule at the Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Education Building, Pietermaritzburg. Tel: 033 260 6187; Email: rulep@ukzn.ac.za
- Ms Phumelele Ximba (HSSREC Department at University of KwaZulu-Natal), Tel. 031 2603587; Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you!

DECLARATION SECTION: Boys

I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm

that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I 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.

I hereby provide consent for the researcher to:	Yes	No
observe and record a cycle of my learning writing which will be recorded		
ask me to complete an activity-based questionnaire		
take photographs of my school environment		
collect my written submission		

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

.....
Thank you for your willingness to contribute to this research.

APPENDIX 4: Interview questions: Teachers

Interview Questions

Teachers

General

1. How old are you?
2. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

School Experiences of Writing

1. How did your primary school teacher teach you writing?
2. Was this the same/ different from the manner in which your high school teacher taught you writing? Explain.
3. What types of texts did you write in school?

Pre-service training

1. Why did you decide to become an English teacher?
2. Where did you study to become a teacher?
3. What qualification did you obtain?
4. Did you study further after receiving this qualification? If so please give details.
5. How were you trained to teach writing?
6. Do you think that you were adequately trained to teach writing? Explain

Current classroom practices

1. For how many years have you been an English teacher?
2. What do you enjoy most about teaching English?
3. Describe what the CAPS says about teaching writing?
4. How do you teach writing?
5. Do you incorporate reading, speaking and listening skills in your writing lessons?
How do you do so?
6. How is this the same/ different from the way you were taught writing and trained to teach writing?
7. What challenges do you experience when teaching writing?
8. Do you find that the girls or boys are better at completing writing activities? Please elaborate.
9. What challenges do the boys experience when completing their writing activities?

APPENDIX 5: Activity-based questionnaire



STATION 1: PENS



Station 2: Stickers



Station 3: Colours



!!HELP DESK!!

GENERAL

1. MY NAME IS _____
2. MY SURNAME IS _____
3. MY ADDRESS IS _____

FIND A PINK PEN AND BRING IT TO THE HELP DESK TO CLAIM YOUR REWARD



4. Stick a flower sticker on your age:


10	11	12	13	Other _____
----	----	----	----	-------------



5. Use your favourite colours to colour in the people who help you with your homework:

MUM	DAD	BROTHER	SISTER	AUNTY	UNCLE	GRANNY	GRANDAD	OTHER
-----	-----	---------	--------	-------	-------	--------	---------	-------

SCHOOL

2.  Stick a heart sticker on the block that best describes how much you like school


Very much	A fair amount	Not too much	Not at all
-----------	---------------	--------------	------------

Find a sticker of a fairy and bring it to the Help Desk to claim your reward

3.  THE BEST THING ABOUT SCHOOL IS


4.  THE WORST THING ABOUT SCHOOL IS

5.  MY BEST-FRIEND'S NAME IS


6.  Pick your favourite sticker and stick it on your favourite subject. Then stick a green star on your least favourite subject.

ENG	AFRIK	ZULU	MATHS	LIFESKILLS	SS	NS
-----	-------	------	-------	------------	----	----

ENGLISH

1.  Colour in orange the part of English you like most and in blue the part you like least


Reading	Writing	Orals: speeches, role plays	Listening to stories	Learning new words	Learning punctuation and language rules
---------	---------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------	---

2.  Stick a heart sticker on the type of story you enjoy reading the most and two green stars on the type of story you enjoy reading the least.


Adventure	Action	Fairy	Folk	Romance	Comics	Other
-----------	--------	-------	------	---------	--------	-------

		tales	tales			
--	--	-------	-------	--	--	--

WRITING

2.  Stick green stars on all the types of writing you do in class


Stories	Descriptions	Plays/ dialogues	Letters	Cards	Poems	News reports
Posters	Invitations	Adverts	Other (write in these blocks)->			

3.  Colour in orange the type of writing you enjoy most and in blue the type you enjoy least.

Stories	Descriptions	Plays	Letters	Cards	Poems	News reports
Posters	Invitations	Adverts	Other			

Find a blue flower and bring it to the Help Desk to claim your reward.

4.  THE MOST DIFFICULT THING ABOUT WRITING IS:

-
5.  Draw a picture of a writing lesson on the back of this page. (The best picture and paragraph will earn a reward)

Write a paragraph to explain the picture that you drew above of how you learn writing.

APPENDIX 6: Lesson observation schedule

Observation Schedule

Date: _____

School: _____

Teacher: _____

Topic: _____

Focus	Question/s	Notes
Genre	What genre/s did the lesson cover?	
Skills	What skills did the lesson develop (speaking, listening, reading, writing)?	
Knowledge	What kinds of knowledge were developed?	
Methods/Activities	What methods did the teacher employ	
Learner responses	How did the boys respond?	
Assessment	How did the teacher assess the boys' progress?	

Phase (tick)

Prewriting/ planning	
Drafting	
Revising	
Editing	
Presenting	

Duration: _____

1. Describe how this stage of the writing cycle was approached by the teacher:

APPENDIX 7: Analysis sheet for activity-based questionnaire

Analysis of the activity-based questionnaire

School: _____

Learner	Age, Race	Fav subject	Least fav subject	Best about Eng	Least about Eng	Fav genre to read	Least fav genre to read	Types of writing learnt	Fav genre to write	Least fav genre to write	Difficulty with writing

APPENDIX 8: Permission to conduct research from the Department of Basic Education



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:24/8/413

Mrs N Mather
PO Box 136
DALTON
3236

Dear Mrs Mather

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"AN ANALYSIS OF BOYS' AND TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN A GRADE 6 WRITING PROGRAMME, USING A POSITIONING PERSPECTIVE"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 15 May 2015 to 30 June 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 12 May 2015

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

APPENDIX 9: Ethical clearance from University of KwaZulu-Natal



5 June 2015

Mrs Nazarana Mather 972134689
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Mather

Protocol reference number: HSS/0321/015D

Project title: An analysis of boys' and teachers' experiences in a Grade 6 writing programme, using a positioning perspective.

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 13 April 2015, 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 Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Peter Rule
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele
Cc School Administrator: Ms T Khumalo/Ms B Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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