

An investigation into understanding of academic literacies of students  
registered in Early Childhood Development Courses

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Education  
at  
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by  
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Field of Study: New Literacy Studies

Supervisor: Prof C Boughey

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## **Abstract**

### **Purpose and research questions-**

This research was based on students enrolled on courses at Rhodes University's Centre for Social Development, an Institute delivering Early Childhood Development courses in the Grahamstown area. Having provided the students with access to a career path and its courses, it was imperative to assist the students to develop a standard of academic literacy comparable to that of in-service education students, in the Intermediate and Senior Phases.

This study was influenced by Gee's (2004) definition of literacy as 'mastery over a discourse'. Gee (1990) termed discourse as the socially accepted way of thinking, believing and being.

The study therefore investigated the enablers which assisted students to produce academic texts. This was achieved by finding out how the students and the course facilitators construct academic literacy; in other words what their discourses were regarding academic literacy. In order to ascertain this information, the students and the course facilitators were asked what reading and writing the students had done prior to enrolling on the course, what they had brought to the course, what the students and the course facilitators thought comprised a successful academic assignment, and how the students were supported in their academic literacy during the course.

Data was gathered through interviews with both students and course facilitators, analysis of course assignments, and assessment reports written by the course facilitators. This data was analysed, looking for discourses on similarities and contradictions. Critical Discourse analysis was used to investigate the discourses that the course facilitators and students were using.

### **Findings**

It was evident from the data that the autonomous view of literacy was predominantly used. The course facilitators and, to a limited extent, the students, saw literacy as a set of technical skills that needed to be mastered. The students and course facilitators did not take into account that literacy is a social practice, and that literacy occurs within a particular

social context and cultural context. The course facilitators tended to hold a deficit discourse related to the perception of inferior education under Bantu Education, which was seen as an inhibiting factor to academic literacy and academic success. The discourse of second language was also an issue that both the course facilitators and the students noted which prevented students' academic literacy. Christie's (1985) Received Tradition of Literacy, which focused on the forms and functions of literacy, was a discourse that both the students and the course facilitators ascribed to.

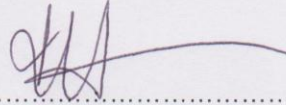
### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The course facilitators' and students' discourses were very similar, both being embedded within the autonomous and deficit models of literacy. It is recommended that course facilitators become cognisant with the models of academic literacy and that they become aware of the various discourses evident on the course and articulate these discourses for themselves. Furthermore they should assist the students by clearly articulating and unpacking the course requirements regarding academic literacy.

## Declaration

I, Karin Hackmack, declare that this thesis 'An investigation into understanding the academic literacies of students and staff registered in Early Childhood Courses' is my original work, and that all the sources that I have consulted, have been acknowledged.

East London  
December 2013



.....  
K.Hackmack

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## Glossary

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AD	Academic Development
ANC	African National Congress
B.Ed FP	Bachelor of Education Foundation Phase
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
BSAE	Black South African English
BVE	Black Vernacular English
CALPS	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills
CAPS	Curriculum and Policy Assessment Statements
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CHE	Council of Higher Education
CR	Critical Realism
CSD	Centre for Social Development
CUP	Common Underlying Proficiency
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ELO	Exit Level Outcomes
ETDP SETA	Education Training and Development Sector Education Training Authority
FET	Further Education and Training
FET:ECD	Further Education and Training: Early Childhood Development
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate

FP	Foundation Phase
Grade R	Reception Year, also known internationally as KG1 and Kindergarten
HBU	Historically Black Universities
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEQF	Higher Education Qualification Framework
HWU	Historically White Universities
L1	Home Language / Mother tongue
L2	Additional or second Language
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
ND ECD	National Diploma in Early Childhood Development
NLS	New Literacy Studies
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
QCs	Quality Councils
RU	Rhodes University
SAQA	South African Qualification Authorities
SETA	Sector Education Training Authorities
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFH	University of Fort Hare
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

I have worked in Early Childhood Development (ECD) for over 10 years, in South Africa, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Syria. My responsibility during this time has been to develop and conduct courses for, and to give support to, Early Childhood practitioners<sup>1</sup>. These courses have been aimed at practitioners who bring many different literacies to the learning process. The students, therefore, could be from rural South African students, to recent school-leavers who have been admitted to the Bachelor of Education Foundation Phase (B.Ed FP). Most of the former are working while studying part time, and often live busy family lives, raising their own children, while the latter are typically full-time students. These experiences have led me to investigate the role that academic literacy plays in the academic and professional success of ECD practitioners.

In this introductory chapter, therefore, the contextual and theoretical backgrounds for the study are outlined. The chapter provides background information on the partnership between the Centre for Social Development (CSD) and Rhodes University (RU), as well as highlighting the challenges faced by the students enrolled on the courses. This is followed by a description of the research purpose, the objectives, and the question that this research project aims to investigate. Finally, the chapter provides an overview of the research project in its entirety, including a synopsis of what each chapter contains.

## 1.2 Background to this study: Reasons for undertaking the study

After the 1994 democratic election, the South African higher education landscape changed. Students, particularly Black students, were now granted access to higher education courses, and career paths that previously had been denied to them. Morrow (1994) argues that 'formal' access to higher education does not equate to academic success, arguing instead for the need for 'epistemological' access, defined as 'access to the ways of knowing which sustain the academy, to accompany formal access. As a course facilitator at the CSD, I questioned how we could assist students, who had been granted formal access to

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<sup>1</sup> The distinction-n between ECD 'practitioners' and teachers' will be explained below.

courses, to achieve academic success, and at the same time improve the quality of courses provided by CSD.

The fact (as I outline in Chapter 2) that a number of literacies exist, but that one or more specific academic literacies are seen as imperative for academic success, formed the basis of my research. The success of students in courses run by the CSD, is key to alleviating the problem of the shortage of Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa, and in particular in the Eastern Cape.

### **1.3 The Context of this research**

The research project on which this thesis is based, focused on students who were registered for courses run by the CSD. The students were all following an in-service education route, with the aim of achieving a B.Ed FP degree. In order to understand the various courses offered by the CSD, a brief explanation of the national policy in South Africa is provided, beginning with brief descriptions of the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). This is followed by a short introduction to the CSD and an outline of the complex relationship that exists between the CSD and RU. Thereafter, I provide an explanation of the various courses, including how they emerged, and the academic literacy(ies) required of students on each course. This includes a description of the career path that the CSD offers.

RU supports the work of the CSD through the development of a qualifications path for ECD practitioners, via its Faculty of Education. This enables those practitioners (the term is discussed below) or teachers with SAQA accredited qualifications to register for a graduate programme, and from there to progress to post graduate programmes.

#### **1.3.1 Background to the establishing of the course**

##### **1.3.1.1 The National Qualification Framework (NQF)**

After the transition to democracy in 1994, the African National Congress (ANC)<sup>2</sup> and its affiliates began investigating various alternative structures, in order to redress the educational inequalities of South Africa's colonial and apartheid past (Allais, 2003, p. 4).

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<sup>2</sup> The ruling political party in South Africa since 1994.

The NQF was established to create a more egalitarian education system in South Africa (South Africa. South African Qualification Authority [SAQA] Act, 2005). The NQF's broad objectives included "to expand the ways in which people are able to acquire learning and qualifications of a high quality" (South Africa Department of Education and Labour [DoEL], 2002) and to provide educational opportunities for students previously disadvantaged under the apartheid system. A further goal is to "facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths" (South African Qualifications Authority [SAQA] homepage, 2012). One of the ways in which the NQF fulfils these goals is by integrating training and education, and by ensuring that students are able to progress through articulated qualification levels and coherent career paths (South Africa. DoEL, 2002). The NQF allocates each qualification to a specific band or level (see Figure 2). The Level 4 and Level 5 Early Childhood Development (ECD) qualifications described below, are based on the NQF guidelines and SAQA standards set for each course.

#### **1.3.1.2 South African Qualification Authority (SAQA)**

SAQA is the national body tasked with the mission to ensure "the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework which contributes to the full development of each learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large" (South Africa. South African Qualification Authority [SAQA], 2000).

SAQA has three overarching quality assurance bodies, known as Quality Councils (QCs). The three QCs cover the three main education sectors. These sectors are, a) general and further education and training, b) higher education, and c) the trades and occupations sector. Umalusi is the QC for the General and Further Education and Training, and is therefore responsible for quality assurance in schools and Further Education and Training Colleges (FET). The Council for Higher Education (CHE) is concerned with universities and universities of technology. The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations deals with workplace learning and skills development, such as learnership programmes (South Africa. SAQA, 2005). The QCs have been tasked by SAQA to "seek quality partners (statutory and non-statutory professional bodies, occupational associations, legislated boards, Sector Education Training Authority, etc.) appropriate to each group of related occupational qualifications. It will appoint national moderating bodies in this context, which will be

delegated certain quality assurance responsibilities” (South African. SAQA homepage, 2012).

Figure 1 below shows the relationship between SAQA, the QCs, and course delivery.

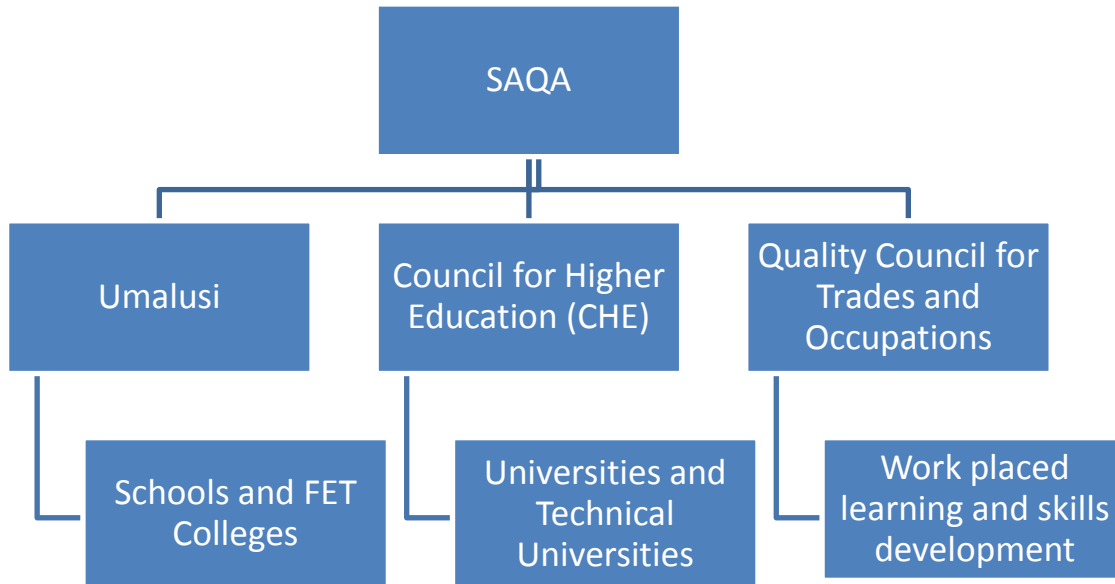


Figure 1 SAQA Landscape

As the quality assurance mechanism, SAQA develops policies and criteria for all qualifications submitted by the three QCs. Thereafter, if the qualification meets the requirements and criteria, SAQA registers them. All accredited courses offered must be registered with SAQA to assure quality. The CHE is one of the quality assurance bodies that falls under SAQA, and deals with the registration of courses offered by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). A distinction is made between a Higher Education Programme and a qualification. The NQF states that a qualification is legally credited, and is certified as an achievement through the learning processes. Once it is completed, it is awarded by a legally recognised higher education institution. On the other hand a “programme is a formally structured set of collective learning processes, which collectively leads to a qualification” (South Africa. National Qualifications Framework [NQF], 2012). The CSD Level 4 and Level 5 courses are programmes, according to these definitions, while the B.Ed is a qualification. Courses offered at Level 4 or Level 5 must undergo external moderation twice a year. Courses, policies, and curricula are scrutinised every six months by the relevant Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA), which has been tasked by the QC to fulfil this

function. In the case of the CSD and RU, the Education, Training and Development SETA (ETDP SETA) undertakes this task.

### **1.3.1.3 The CSD and RU**

The CSD, an institute of RU, has a long and successful history of community development, including training of community members in Early Childhood Education (ECE<sup>3</sup>). In addition, the CSD establishes ECD centres in order to provide young children with educational opportunities denied to them during apartheid. CSD provides support for ECD in different contexts; at home, in ECD centres, and at schools. The CSD also establishes and supports multi-purpose community programmes through trained development practitioners, who undertake home visits that promote an integrated approach to ECD.

With the establishment of the NQF and SAQA, the CSD formalised its ECD courses, and developed curricula and courses or programmes at Levels 4 and 5 on the NQF.

RU, as an HEI, is legally entitled to offer qualifications from Level 5 to Level 10 on the NQF, but is not entitled to offer courses at Level 4. The RU institutional plan did not, and does not, include Diploma or Certificate courses of two or three year duration. However, the CSD negotiated with RU to establish such courses, which then fell under the umbrella of the RU Faculty of Education, although they essentially remained the domain of the CSD. In addition, the CSD obtained Non-Profit Organisation status in order to be able to offer the Level 4 FET Certificate in ECD.

With the establishment of the B.Ed FP, specialising in ECD, the relationship between the Faculty of Education and CSD became more formal. The faculty took on a supervisory role, at times sharing staff and expertise, including the use of faculty employed lecturers, to lecture on the B.Ed FP.

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<sup>3</sup> ECE is often used internationally to refer to ECD

### **1.3.2 The CSD Career path**

Under-qualified ECD practitioners who wish to progress to Diploma level may register for the Further Education and Training Certificate (FET: ECD) at Level 4 on the NQF. On completion of the FET: ECD, students may progress to the National Diploma in Early Childhood Development (ND ECD) at Level 5 on the NQF. This may be done through the CSD.

While the NQF notes the importance of the career path for ECD practitioners, in reality such a career path did not, and still does not, exist. There is no further focused and specialised ECD teacher education programme following the NDECD (Level 5), which leaves a gap between this qualification and higher qualifications. Furthermore, the students on the Level 4 and ND ECD Level 5 courses are not regarded as 'true' RU students, and are not entitled to student cards, nor are they registered on the RU student system. They are provided with limited access to RU facilities, are not entitled to use the RU library, nor to have access to RU computer laboratories.

The CSD had been involved in ECD since 1989 and has, since the inception of accredited qualifications for ECD practitioners, been developing a 'career path' for ECD practitioners, through qualifications based on the NQF and accredited by SAQA. RU, together with the CSD, has devised a qualification path which extends the education of ECD practitioners into the B.Ed and beyond, into the post graduate degrees. The career path begins with Levels 4 and 5. Thereafter, students (if they have the requisite entry requirements) are able to progress to an undergraduate degree (the B.Ed FP). This allows them to be registered as an RU student and have access to all university facilities.

The development of the B.Ed degree was unique, as RU, while having a B.Ed registered with SAQA, did not offer B.Ed courses for student teachers. RU offered only a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), which is not accessible to CSD students as undergraduates, or as mature, working people.

The career path described above offered CSD students a seven-year programme of nationally recognised qualifications, with exit-level points at Level 4 (FETC:ECD), Level 5

(ND ECD) and the B.Ed. This enabled those practitioners (the term is explained below) or teachers with SAQA accredited qualifications to register for a graduate programme, and subsequently, for post-graduate programmes.

The CSD career path (see Figure 2 below) was initiated to cater for students who had completed the ND ECD. The new teacher qualifications (South Africa. Department of Higher Education [DoHE], 2011) that will be implemented in 2014, will mean that the career path will alter significantly, to include a Diploma in Grade R<sup>4</sup>(Reception Year) situated at Level 6 on the NQF (see Figure 3).

Since some of the terminology used in this thesis is very specific, some explanation is necessary.

### ***Early Childhood Education***

Early Childhood Development (ECD) in South Africa is defined as dealing with children from 0-9 years. White Paper 5 (South Africa, 2001) states that the term 'ECD' denotes the full spectrum of competence required in all adults working professionally with young children from the age of conception (family planning for children) through birth, babyhood, toddlers to children of the age of nine (South Africa). As ECD deals with children from 0-9 years it includes both the informal education of children, such as pre-schools or ECD centres, and the formal first four years (Grade R -Grade 3) years of public schooling (basic education).

### ***Practitioner***

The practitioner is generally referred to a person who practises an occupation, a profession, or a technique (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.). In South Africa, the term 'ECD practitioner' is usually used to differentiate between a fully-qualified professional educator who has completed all professional qualifications, and a person who has not yet achieved this status (is unqualified or under-qualified). "A practitioner's highest educational qualification is Grade 10, and she is responsible for 40 registered learners" and "The practitioner has a tertiary qualification – a one – year diploma – and she is responsible for 32 registered learners" (South Africa. Department of Basic Education [DoBE], 2001). In addition, the conditions for the employment of an ECD practitioner (including a Grade R practitioner) and the

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<sup>4</sup> Grade R is the first year of South African schooling, internationally known as Kindergarten.

remuneration provided for the practitioner, are lower than those of teachers in the rest of the Foundation Phase (South Africa. DoBE, 2011, p. 3).

Although, strictly speaking, the students on the CSD courses should be referred to as 'practitioners', as even the students who are teaching Grades 1-3 are under-qualified, for the purposes of this research they will be referred to as 'educators' or 'teachers'.

### ***Educator***

In South Africa, this term is synonymous with that of 'teacher'. It implies a professional status, that is, a professionally and fully qualified person who is employed to teach, either in an accredited government, or private sector, programme.

### ***Course Facilitator***

As the staff at the CSD were initially responsible only for Level 4 and Level 5 courses, they were referred to as course facilitators rather than lecturers. The term 'course facilitator' is used in staff contracts, regardless of the course for which CSD employees have been appointed. The term 'course facilitator' is therefore used in this study.

## **1.3.3 ECD Courses at the Centre for Social Development (CSD)**

The CSD offers programmes leading to qualifications at NQF Level 4 (the equivalent of a matriculation certificate, see Figure 3 below), NQF Level 5 (NDECD), and what used to be referred to as NQF Level 6, but is now regarded as NQF Level 7 (B.Ed FP). The ND ECD is situated at Level 5 (See Figures 2 and 3). After the ND ECD students are given an opportunity to apply for the in-service B.Ed offered by the Faculty of Education. My research focuses on B.Ed students, in particular students on both Levels 4 and 5 courses, as the majority of students applying for the B.Ed must complete these courses. This extends to the new qualifications to be implemented in 2014. Students may enter into the Grade R Diploma with a Level 4 or Level 5 qualification (South Africa, DHE, 2011). The preparation of students academically has a direct impact on the students' access to other courses, and on their ability to successfully master the relevant literacies.

The qualification standards at Levels 4 and 5 were developed by panels of experts (under the auspices of SAQA) in the field in which the qualification is located. The completed

qualification is then registered on the NQF. Any institution is then able develop a programme of learning experiences which allows learners to meet the outcomes describing the qualification. The Levels 4 and 5 programmes, therefore, adhere to the regulations and procedures outlined by SAQA.

The regulations governing the Qualifications (South Africa. SAQA, 2012) state that, in order to offer a whole qualification, courses must comprise compulsory Core, Fundamental and Elective Unit Standards. The Fundamental Unit Standards deal specifically with the reading and writing of texts. SAQA provides broad guidelines in the form of specific outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit standard, at both Level 4 and Level 5. This integrated approach to career pathing for ECD practitioners, involving qualifications accredited by SAQA, was seen as a huge risk by the University (D. Wilmot, personal communication, March 3, 2011) and constant pressure was brought to bear, to ensure that the students achieved a high academic standard which compared well with the rest of the RU students. As a result of this, and of the high academic demands placed on learners undertaking the NDECD, I decided to undertake this study.

Figure 2 outlines the career path that the CSD, under the auspices of RU, designed (in keeping with National Policy at the time) for CSD students. This career path is to change drastically, owing to the Implementation of the New Policy on Teacher Education Qualifications gazetted in September 2011, and the recent Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training published in May 2012. I outline the various courses and levels in more detail below:

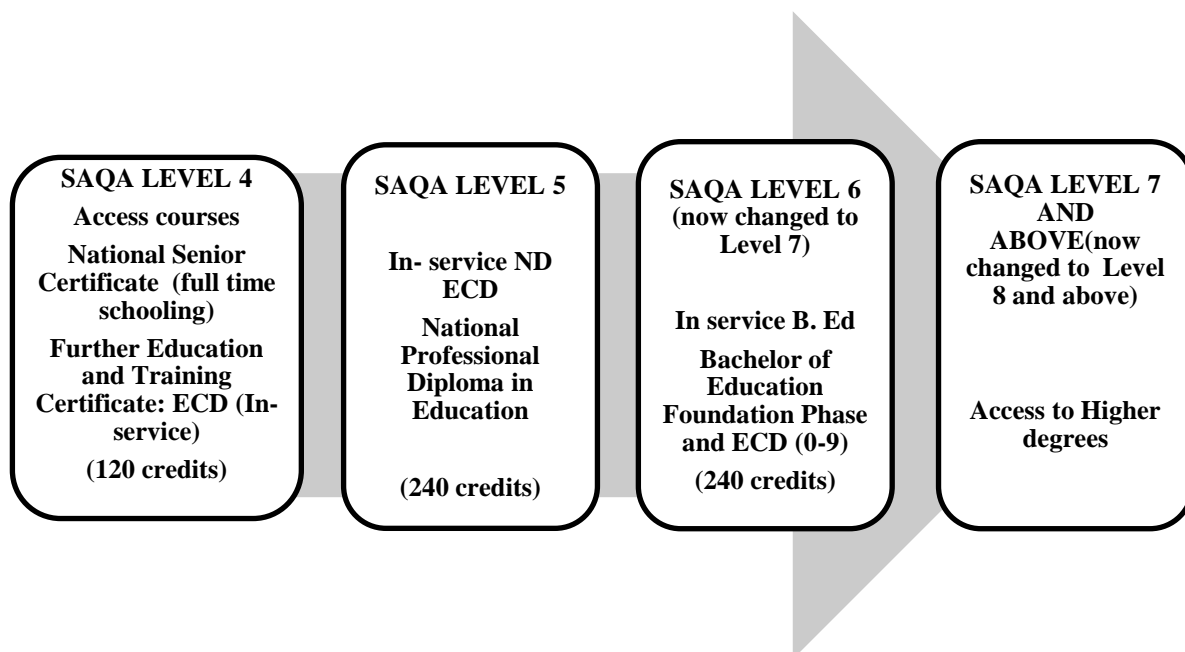


Figure 2 The CSD Career Path

### 1.3.3.1 The Level 4 Course

The Level 4 course has 11 Fundamental Unit Standards, of which nine are concerned with literacies (with eight being literacy focused and the other three being mathematical literacy). As the Level 4 course is the equivalent of a Grade 12 certificate, Level 4 falls under the jurisdiction of Umalusi. The Level 4 Fundamental Unit Standards are therefore separate programmes, and for the sake of convenience are bought from an accredited FET institution. The Fundamental component of the course is thus not thoroughly integrated into the rest of the ECD course materials. The academic literacy requirements for the course are taught as discrete literacy skills. The misconceptions of teaching academic literacy as a set of discrete skills and in addition provide an in-depth definition for academic literacy, is discussed in Chapter 2.

### 1.3.3.2 The Level 5 Course

One of the Level 5 Fundamental Unit Standards, which carries 25 credits, is titled “Develop and apply academic literacy skills” (South Africa. SAQA, 2012). This Unit Standard is the second largest single credit-bearing Unit Standard of the 240 credit diploma course. The high credit allocation for this Unit Standard emphasizes the importance placed on reading and writing academically, within the course, while not necessarily mastering academic discourses (see Chapter 2 on this point). The Unit Standard and its credit allocation reveal

the misconception and lack of understanding (by the developers of the Level 5 Unit Standards Fundamental Unit Standards) of the construct of literacy. The Unit Standard states: “Academic literacy refers to tools or skills for learning in any context” and this “...unit standard enables candidates to learn more effectively, by providing them with skills to deal successfully with the demands of academic contexts and assignments” (South Africa. SAQA, 2008).

The Unit Standard appears to view academic reading and writing as a set of individual discrete skills, and does not take cognisance of the socially embedded nature of literacy. Gee (1990) notes that literacy should not focus on language, but rather on social practices. The ironical use of ‘Academic Literacy Skills’, as opposed to academic literacy, is expanded upon in the section on ‘Statement of the Problem’. Furthermore, the “transfer of literacy ...involves more than simply passing on of some technical surface skills” (Street, 1995, p. 15).

The NQF places the ND ECD as a 240 credit Diploma (South Africa. SAQA, 2012). A Level 5 qualification, at present, allows the students to teach only in a Grade R classroom (the first year of formal schooling). This means that, if they wish to proceed professionally and academically, they need to further their education. This is especially important as the New Policy on Teacher Education Qualifications gazetted in September 2011, alongside the new Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), operative from 2014 onwards, requires a teacher, who works with children entering formal education for the first time (in South African terms at ‘Grade R’) to have a minimum of a Level 6 qualification. As mentioned above, from 2014 the career pathing for CSD students will therefore be changed.

### **1.3.3.3 The B.Ed (Foundation Phase Specialising in ECD) Course**

The B.Ed qualification is at present registered at Level 6 on the NQF, but this will change with the new HEQF which allows for the B.Ed to be at a Level 7. The B.Ed is achieved by means of a three year part-time programme which is accredited by the CHE<sup>5</sup> and appears in the RU Calendar. All candidates must have Grade 12, or the equivalent (a requirement from the Faculty of Education), must have achieved a high standard on the Level 4 and

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<sup>5</sup> The CHE must accredit all programmes of 120 credits or more, before they can be offered.

Level 5 qualifications, and must be employed full time in the ECD field. RU is piloting a programme that recognizes the credits from the ND ECD, and permits students with a National Senior Certificate (colloquially called a 'matric'), and a Level 5 qualification (worth 240 credits) access to the second year of an in-service B. Ed degree. As a result, the students, after successfully completing the 240 credit diploma, can apply to register for the three year part-time Bachelor of Education Foundation Phase qualification, specializing in ECD (B.Ed FP), which is currently offered by the RU Education Department, in conjunction with the CSD.

The B.Ed programme enables students to complete a further 240 credits over three years. At the end of the programme, the students have 480 credits obtained through in-service learning. This will allow them to teach children from 0 – 9 years (including Grades R, 1, 2 and 3 in the Foundation Phase). The successful completion of the B.Ed enables students to apply for a position in the Foundation Phase of a Primary School, thereby increasing their earning potential and their ability to provide adequately for their families, as well as providing South Africa with much-needed qualified and experienced Foundation Phase teachers.

One of the major challenges centres on the development of academic literacy over the seven years of the qualification path. Not only must ECD practitioners/teachers be able to apply successfully for the Level 8 Honours course (which has recently been altered from a Level 7 on the HEQF), but also to educate children in school-based literacies and numeracies, and to engage with the families with whom they work, around literacy and numeracy, at levels far beyond those experienced at present.

In addition, the students on the B.Ed (situated at present at Level 6 but to be at Level 7 on the new HEQF) need to be able to continue on their chosen career path, based on, not only their competence within the classroom, but also on the basis of their academic literacy. This is necessary to ensure that the educators who have graduated with a Level 6 qualification are able to fulfil the seven roles of the educator<sup>6</sup>, and to meet the twelve critical cross-field

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<sup>6</sup> The Seven Roles of the educator are the overarching roles, values, skills and attitudes that a teacher needs to exhibit, as set out in the National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 Policy on the Minimum Requirements For Teacher Education Qualifications.

and developmental outcomes, which underpin all courses at all levels on the NQF. Figure 3 outlines the old and new qualification.

New and old teacher education structure			
Level	New HEQF		Old NQF
10	Doctor of Education degree		
9	Masters of Education Degree		
8	Bachelor of Honours Degree In Education	Post Graduate Diploma in Education	Master of Education Degree
7	Bachelor of Education Degree	Advanced Diploma in Education	Bachelor of Honours Degree In Education
6		Grade R Diploma (360 credits)	Bachelor of Education Degree
5			National Diploma in ECD ( 240 credits) and Certificate in ECD (120 credits)

Figure 3 The Old and New Teacher Education Structure

The New Policy on Teacher Education Qualifications, gazetted in September 2011, makes no provision for the B.Ed in-service to continue in its present form. Thus, it is important to support students in the development of literacies that will allow them to pursue other avenues of study. The implications, as noted above, are that students no longer need to complete the Level 5 ND ECD to gain access to the B.Ed, as they are now able go straight into the **full-time** B.Ed after completing the Level 4 or National Senior Certificate (NSC). Level 5 is no longer an entry requirement. The students will be able to enter into the 360 credit Grade R Diploma with a Level 4 or Level 5 qualification, or a NSC (see Figure 4). There will thus no longer be the need for students to complete a NDECD at Level 5, in order to gain access to the Level 6 Grade R Diploma. After completing the Grade R diploma, students may transfer half their credits towards the B.Ed degree.

Levels	New Career Path for ECD Students		
	Degrees	Diplomas	Certificates
10	Doctor of Education degree		
9	Master of Education degree		
8	Bachelor of Education Honours degree	Postgraduate Diploma in Education	
7	Bachelor of Education degree	Advanced Diploma in Teaching Advanced Diploma in Education	
6		Diploma in Grade R Practices	
5		National Diploma in Education (NDECD)	Higher Certificate in Grade R Practices
4	National Senior Certificate and/or Further Education and Training Certificate: ECD		

Figure 4 The New Career Path for CSD Students

The arrows indicate the career paths that students are able to pursue. However, in reality, only two routes exist. The first is if students complete the Grade R Diploma and take half their credits to the B.Ed pre-service course, or, if they move directly from a Level 4 to a B.Ed pre-service undergraduate degree.

### 1.3.4 The Language of Learning and Teaching on the Course

The Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) on the course is English, as it is the language of learning and teaching accepted by RU (RU, 2005). However, this is being challenged, and the RU Education Faculty is in the process of developing a policy where the LoLT will continue to be English, but the use of indigenous languages to support learning, will be promoted. In addition, the Language Policy for Higher Education, gazetted in

November 2004, clearly emphasizes the status of English and Afrikaans as the LoLT in higher education institutions. This is significant, given the fact that the majority of students on the course speak English as an additional language, and are working and teaching children, not in English, but in their home language<sup>7</sup> (the course facilitators refer to 'home language' as 'mother-tongue'). English is rarely spoken, apart from classroom discussions on the CSD courses. The students do not have money to spend on books or newspapers, so reading is limited to environmental print. This means that not much reading, let alone academic reading and writing, is done. The demand, therefore, that they achieve academic literacy is quite a leap in application and achievement.

### **1.3.5 The Students enrolled on the course**

The students enrolled on the ND ECD are mostly women (with the exception of 2 males, in the last 30 years) employed as teachers<sup>8</sup> in the ECD Field. The students are either working in ECD centres dealing with children 0-4 years, or working with 5-6 year old children in a Grade R class, attached to a Primary School in the Eastern Cape. The teachers working at community centres earn a stipend, which is usually the minimum wage. Teachers working in Grade R classes have the status of practitioner, and are not paid as much as other teaching staff at the school. In addition to studying, students have a full-time job, families and other social and community responsibilities, and are often the sole breadwinner in their families.

## **1.4 The Research problem**

In this section, I explain the research problem and the importance of the South African context for my research.

### **1.4.1 Shortage of teachers in South Africa**

The B.Ed, described above, is unique, as it is one of the few courses that provides a career path for ECD teachers, and access to the opportunity to obtain a teaching position in a Foundation Phase classroom. This is significant, given the high number of Foundation Phase teachers required in South Africa, as well as the declining status of Education as a

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<sup>7</sup> The language most frequently spoken in the home.

<sup>8</sup> Please note the use of 'teacher' and not 'practitioner' as discussed above

profession (Green, Parker, Deacon & Hall, 2011, p 111), which makes it difficult to recruit and keep teachers in the field (Deacon, 2010, p. 41). Over the past years a significant decrease in the number of students wanting to be teachers has been experienced, with teacher education enrolment declining (Green et al, 2011, p. 113). Figure 5 tabulates the teacher demand for the period of 2010 to 2050.

	Grade R	Grades 1- 9	Grades 10 - 12	FET		Total
				Public	Private	
2010	19 259	280 914	85 785	7 878	3 333	397 171
2015	23 152	280 301	89 837	15 695	5 000	413 985
2025	28 149	299 134	96 132	23 649	6 667	453 731
2050	32 482	305 192	99 723	47 513	6 667	491 577

Source: McCarthy & Bernstein, 2011

Figure 5 Demand for Teachers 2010-2050

At the moment, more than 14142 qualified teachers are required to replace teachers who have left the education profession owing to death, retirement or resignation (South Africa, Council of Higher Education [CoHE], 2010), and only a quarter of the number of teachers that are required are graduating from higher education institutions (HEIs) (Parker, 2010).

In 2011, only 1140 Foundation Phase teachers graduated from HEIs (Deacon, 2013). No statistics were available from the DHET for 2012. Furthermore, the teacher age profile shows that a teacher shortage is looming: More than two-thirds of South African teachers are older than 40 years of age (McCarthy & Bernstein, 2011, p.2). There is thus a shortfall in the production, of about 15 000 teachers (McCarthy & Bernstein, 2011, p. 13). The attrition rate amongst teachers means that 20 500 new teachers are needed each year, and amongst the greatest need is for Foundation Phase teachers (*ibid.*). The teacher shortage has resulted in the Eastern Cape schools taking the Provincial Department of Education to court in order to alleviate the problem (SAPA, 2013). In addition to the high attrition rate of

teachers, at the end of 2009 only 13% of the African home language tongue<sup>9</sup> new Foundation Phase teachers will be graduating (Green et al, 2011, p.117) and only four of these will graduate from Eastern Cape institutions (Parker, 2010; Green et al 2011, p. 117). The students completing the ND ECD and entering into the B.Ed will assist in decreasing the shortage of teachers in the Eastern Cape and in South Africa.

Furthermore, as the students graduating from the ND ECD and moving onto the B.Ed (ECD) are mature students, who are determined to become Foundation Phase educators, and are making incredible sacrifices (both personally and financially) to achieve a degree, they are unlikely to not take up a teaching position in the Foundation Phase. This is significant, given the fact that a quarter of the newly-trained teachers (for various reasons) do not take up teaching posts in South African schools (Deacon, 2010).

#### **1.4.2 Access does not equal success**

As noted in the introduction, formal access to higher education does not equal success. The development of academic reading and writing in the Level 4 course is done predominantly through the use of a Fundamental Curriculum which teaches academic literacy as a set of discrete skills, apart from the main course. Leki (1995) points out that teaching academic literacy in this way does not mean that the skills will be transferred to the writing of assignments during the course. The Level 4 course, therefore, does not guarantee that the students will be able to transfer what they have learned, to their assignments. The teaching of academic literacy in this manner is significant, given the ideological shift in the academic literacy movement, from teaching academic literacy as a set of literacy skills, to systemic redress and more contextualized learning within, and throughout, a particular course (Lea & Street, 2000).

The Level 5 course follows a more integrated approach to the teaching of academic literacy, which is embedded throughout the course content, but this, too, does not guarantee student success. Arguably, therefore, the enabling legal and policy contexts which grant access to further educational opportunities (through the NQF) do not guarantee success in completing

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<sup>9</sup> African home language refers to the language that the educators speak most frequently at home. They do not speak English but an African language, and they will therefore be teaching the students in their class in their own home language.

Levels 4 and 5, and progressing to the Level 6 B.Ed. This is owing to the misunderstandings around the development of academic reading and writing, and inadequate and traditional curriculum structures and practices within the courses.

The B.Ed has the most focused and integrated method of teaching academic literacy. In their first year, the students are provided with a number of tasks, which they submit as first drafts. After marking, students are expected to rewrite the task, taking into account the comments made by the lecturer. If necessary, one on one meetings with the student are held, and the students are guided and assisted with their task. This is labour intensive and time consuming, but fortunately the small classes makes this possible.

As already indicated, the notion that access (to further educational opportunities) does not necessarily guarantee success was expressed by Morrow. He made the distinction between formal and epistemological access for students (1994). He emphasized that, once students have gained access to an institution of learning, they have to work hard to gain the epistemological access to knowledge, provided by the institution (*ibid.*). Morrow noted that epistemological access cannot be automatically transmitted to the learner, as “epistemological access is learning how to become a successful participant in an academic practice” (*ibid.*). This is particularly true of the CSD students. They have formal access to the B.Ed programme, but not necessarily epistemological access. It is my contention that it is the curriculum design, and the understanding of literacy, which should contribute to epistemological access. These are areas that I wish to explore in my research.

The high attrition rates of students from HEIs also attest to the fact that access to educational opportunities does not necessary lead to success. The Department of Education reported, in 2005, that 30% of the students enrolled at HEIs dropped out in their first year, and 20% dropped out during their second and third years (South Africa. Department of Basic Education [DoBE], 2005).

### **1.4.3 The Concept of Discourse**

A number of definitions of discourse exist. For the purpose of this study I am using the work of James Paul Gee (1990). Gee’s views of discourse and his notion of big

'D' and small 'd' discourses are expanded upon in more detail in Chapter 2. Gee (Gee, 1990, xv) uses the metaphor of a bar to describe Discourse.

*Imagine that I park my motorcycle, enter my neighbourhood 'biker' bar, and say to my leather-jacketed and tattooed drinking buddy, as I sit down: 'May I have a match for my cigarette please?' What I have said is perfectly grammatical English, but it is 'wrong' nonetheless (unless I have used a heavily ironic tone of voice). It is not just what you say, but how you say it. In this bar, I haven't said it in the 'right' way. I should have said something like 'Gotta match?' or 'Give me a light, would'ya?'*

*But now imagine that I say the 'right' thing ('Gotta match?' or 'Give me a light, would'ya?'), but while saying it, I carefully wipe off the bar stool with a napkin to avoid getting my newly pressed designer jeans dirty. In this case, I've still got it wrong. In this bar, they just don't do that sort of thing: I have said the right thing, but my 'saying-doing' combination is nonetheless wrong. It's not just what you say or even just how you say it. It's also what you are and do while you say it. It is not enough just to say the right 'lines'...*

In this metaphor, Gee shows that it is not enough to use the right language; you have to get the Discourse right. The Discourse is the way of being, thinking, the values and ways of behaving.

#### **1.4.4 Academic literacy**

The term 'academic literacy' is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. However, a brief explanation of the term is provided here, in order to provide the context of the research. Ballard and Clanchy (1998) state that the student needs to 'crack the code' of academic literacy in order to be successful in higher education. The students at the CSD who want to succeed on the course, need to master the ways of being or 'cracking the code' of the discipline in terms of academic literacy, in order to succeed. They have to negotiate the way of doing things and take on the social practices (Gee, 2002), including the academic reading and writing practices.

#### **1.5 Research objectives**

Formal access to a course is not sufficient for students to succeed the perceived concept of what academic literacy entails, for both the students and the course-facilitator play a significant role in determining the success of the students. The objective, therefore, was to explore the way in which the course-facilitators and students constructed literacy, in order to understand how these constructions impact on their chance of success.

## **1.6 Research questions**

Based on the research objective, the research questions were the following:

1. How do students construct academic literacy?
2. How do staff construct academic literacy?

## **1.7 Research approach**

In order to answer the questions posed in this research, three data collection methods were used: interviews, assignment reports and assignment briefs. The data was analysed, using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). A combination of Fairclough and Gee's methods of CDA were employed. CDA is both a theory and a method (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p.16) as it provides a description and interpretation of discourses in social contexts. For this research project, the discourses of both the students and the course facilitators will be provided with a description of the discourse and the interpretation being made. The theory and method of CDA is examined in more detail in Chapter 3.

## **1.8 Structure of the study**

The research project has been structured in the following manner:

Chapter One	Introduction to the study. The chapter provides an overview and context for the research project.
Chapter Two	Review of the literature on the HEI context, discussion on discourse and multiple literacies.
Chapter Three	This chapter outlines the research methodology that was used. It provides a synopsis of Critical Discourse Analysis and the respondents who participated in the research.
Chapter Four	Presentation of the data. This chapter outlines the discourses that were evident in the data collected.
Chapter Five	Conclusions and Recommendations from the research. This chapter draws on the literature, and the discourses evident in the data, and

provide a discussion on the impact and the perceived similarities and differences of academic literacy amongst the course facilitators and students. It examines consistencies and inconsistencies between the course facilitator(s) and the students' perceptions of academic literacy

## **1.9 Conclusion**

Chapter 1 contextualises the study, and provides information on the various courses that were used in the study. It outlines the work of the CSD, its relationship with RU, and the various courses and career paths available to ECD students. A synopsis of the academic literacy expected from the students on each of the courses is provided. Furthermore, it provides a picture of the students enrolled on the courses, and suggests that granting them epistemological access and a career path does not guarantee the students will succeed. A brief overview of discourse and academic literacy is provided, and the importance of students learning the discourse in order to alleviate the teacher shortage in South Africa, particularly in the Foundation Phase, is underlined.

## CHAPTER 2

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the literature that informed my research. While this research was focused on academic literacy, because of the non-traditional students enrolled on courses at the CSD at RU, it is necessary to attempt to unpack the educational context in which the research is located. Investigating the literature on South Africa's educational past provides insights into the students and the academic literacies that they bring to the course. A discussion on education under apartheid, as well as the changes the shift to democracy has brought, is also provided. In addition, this chapter also provides an explanation of what is meant by academic literacy (ies), as well as outlining the various literacy theories that are relevant to my study.

I have structured the chapter as follows:

- An historical overview of education under apartheid
- An historical overview of Higher Education during, and after, apartheid, including various policies
- A discussion of teacher training during and after apartheid
- An examination of second language theories
- A definition of academic literacy
- An exploration of literacy theories, including Gee's (1989,1990,2000) and Street's (1984) definitions of literacy
- A definition of what is meant by discourse
- A description of the role of academic development, in relation to the development of academic literacy in South Africa
- A discussion of academic literacy in relation to access and social justice for students in South Africa

### 2.2 Historical review of Education under apartheid

In a Development Bank of Southern Africa Report, Badat (2010) noted that,

*In South Africa, social inequalities were embedded and reflected in all spheres of social life, as a product of the systemic exclusion of blacks and women under colonialism and*

*apartheid. The higher education system was no exception. Social, political and economic discrimination and inequalities of a class, race, gender, institutional and spatial nature profoundly shaped, and continue to shape, South African higher education.*

As outlined in the introduction, this study is located within an educational context, and, as it is related to education and teacher education, it is necessary to explore the present educational context, as well as the educational processes and contexts in which students' personal histories have been forged.

### **2.2.1 Formal Education under apartheid**

This section explains how the education system became as socially unequal as Badat indicates above. The unequal education system did not begin with the advent of apartheid. As Hammett (2008, p. 340) notes, unequal racial segregation in education has been in existence in South Africa, "since the early years of white settlement, when the Dutch Reformed Church led public opinion against multi-racial schooling". Hammett states that, although missionaries did provide schooling for freed slaves and coloured students, the focus was on the development of education in the White communities.

The unequal and racially segregated education system was intensified during the apartheid era, which formally began in 1948 with the election of the Nationalist government. Apartheid was a system of government that entrenched a structure of legal racial segregation in South Africa. South African society was officially divided into four population groups: Indians, Africans (which constituted the majority of the population), Whites and Coloureds (Gilmore, Soudien & Donald, 1999). Separate schools and separate education departments were set up to administer the education of each racial group, with the best educational opportunities being given to the white ruling minority.

This produced a society that had distinctive social and educational inequalities, and a wide chasm between White and Indian, Coloured and Black South Africans (*ibid.*). Furthermore, the South African education system, which supported apartheid through its practical arrangements, and also depended on curricula informed by apartheid ideology, was also viewed as imposing a particular world view on the nation's children (Morrow, 1989). Greenwood (1988, p. 19) states that education indoctrinated white students to rule while

those classified as 'non-whites' (Blacks, Indians and Coloureds) were expected to take on the role of subordinate labourers (Reddy, 2000, p. 9).

The state of the Education system in South Africa is succinctly summarised by Carrim (1998, p. 301), who states that:

*The system of apartheid seriously affected the nature of educational provision and order in South Africa. It ensured that South Africans were schooled in segregated environments. This meant that every level of schooling was cast in a racial mould; educational budget provisions, the structure of educational bureaucracies, the composition of staff and pupils in schools (and universities), the kind of curriculum followed, and the ethos prevalent in schools.*

Language has always been at the forefront of political decisions in South Africa. Owing to the attempt by the British to anglicise the Afrikaners after the Boer War, Afrikaner Nationalism rose, and this had a direct bearing on the language policy in South Africa, of which we are still feeling the effects today (de Klerk, 1995). During apartheid, "the language-in-education policy in South Africa directly reflected apartheid ideology in general, and the philosophy of Bantu Education" (Barkhuizen & Gough, 1996, p. 453). The apartheid government actively promoted the use of Afrikaans in all provinces in South Africa.

Furthermore, language was used as a political tool to divide racial groups. From the 1960s the apartheid government funded the promotion of Black African languages. One of the main aims of promoting these multi-lingual policies was to be able to identify people as belonging to certain ethnic groups, and was part of the 'divide and conquer' mentality of the government (Kaschula, 1999, p.63). The apartheid policies also brought about "a gross disparity in the language-in-education policies of Black and White schools" (Barkhuizen & Gough, 1996, p.454). White children who were English speakers had to attend schools where the medium of instruction was either English or Afrikaans, and had to learn Afrikaans as a second language.

In 1976, the Soweto uprising occurred because the apartheid government forced all Black school pupils to accept Afrikaans as one of the languages of instruction (Hartshorne 1995, 312). The Black children in South Africa, therefore, had either to learn in English (the home language of a minority of people in South Africa) or in Afrikaans (which was, and still is, the

mother tongue of only a small percentage of South Africans). This meant that the majority of learners in South African schools were taught in their second or third language, and had to learn both English and Afrikaans. English was typically seen as the language of liberation, while Afrikaans was perceived to be the language of the oppressor (Gough, 2000). The language issue, and being forced to use Afrikaans, resulted in an escalation of resentment, and sparked off the Soweto uprising.

The language policy resulted in the majority of the population having to become trilingual (Venter, 1998, p.3) This situation was exacerbated by the deprivation and poor quality of education caused by apartheid, as the teaching and instruction that most South African's received in English and Afrikaans languages suffered, which had a "ripple effect throughout the educational process" (Barkhuizen & Gough, 1996).

The apartheid language system created major problems for students when they entered HEI's where, except for one or two cases, all instruction, books and other material, were available only in English. In some cases the proficiency level of up to 85% of students tested was below the Grade 12 level (*ibid.*). Students' lack of success, and their comprehension and ability to express themselves properly has been attributed to the poor quality of education. I discuss the language issue and outline the multiple literacy theories further on in this chapter.

Since the students used in this research were all educated under the South African system, and as the majority of the students are Black Africans, it is safe to assume that the education system from which they emerged was segregated, inadequate and lacking in infrastructure and support. Therefore, their lack of success in academic literacy could be attributed to the course facilitators of the education system from which they emerged.

### **2.2.2 The context of Higher Educational Institutions before and during apartheid**

In this section, the context of HEIs before and during apartheid is discussed, as this has a direct bearing on the students, and on the CSD's courses' lack of access to tertiary

education in the past, and the ability to move beyond the apartheid ideology and education which expected mere domesticity.

### **2.2.2.1 Higher Educational Institutions before apartheid**

While the practices in HEIs before apartheid are not directly related to the students and the course facilitators that formed the nucleus of this research – as the courses only came into being after 1948 – nevertheless, the inherited legislation and practices of the colonial era affect HEIs until today.

This period (1910-1948) was characterised by South Africa being a union with a British Monarch as head of state (du Pré, 1994). The policy of the government during this period was of guardianship of the African people (*ibid.*). The educational institutions, including schools, teacher training colleges and vocational colleges, had been established by missionaries, and were therefore controlled by various church denominations. The educational institutions were elitist, and were biased with regards to gender and race. These unfair educational practices in HEIs made it easier for apartheid policies to be implemented, as well as forming a basis for the unfair practices to continue.

The first White South African HEI to offer Tertiary Education was the College of the Cape of Good Hope (CPUT, 2007), which later became known as the University of Cape Town. The College did not have full university status, and degrees were granted by the University of London (Cooper & Subotsky, 2001). The College grew so substantially that by 1990 it had grown into a fully-fledged university, known as the University of the Cape of Good Hope (University of Cape Town, 2012). While the University catered primarily for White male students, it did allow a small number of female students to enrol for their courses. Segregation in Higher Education was therefore evident before the official 'apartheid' era began in 1948. While Black men and women were not allowed to attend colleges, nor to attend University lectures, they were allowed to write the University of Cape of Good Hope examinations (*ibid.*). This illustrates the lack of access to tertiary education, as well as unfair educational practices that existed for Black students, and in particular Black female students, prior to 1948.

### **2.2.2.2 Higher Educational Institutions under apartheid**

As stated, the apartheid era began in 1948, and this period was characterised as being an era where educational inequalities and access to education, which existed during the previous era, were entrenched and perpetuated.

In 1959, the Extension of University Act was created. This legislation catered for the introduction of universities for different ethnic groups (Walters, 1997, p. 577). Universities catering for African students were located in rural areas, whereas Universities catering for White students were located in urban areas (*ibid.*). There were significant differences in finances, materials, resources, staffing, and quality of students, as well as the courses that were offered in the urban and rural HEIs. “Historically White Universities (HWUs) were given the administrative and financial power to make decisions in relation to the spending of government subsidies, the setting of tuition fees, the number of staff to employ and the way in which any surplus could be invested” (Boughey & Bozalek, 2012, p. 691). This was not true for Historically Black Universities (HBUs) whose financial expenditure and budgeting was controlled by government.

The Council for Higher Education (2004, p. 230) notes that, during the apartheid dispensation, universities were highly fragmented with regards to structure and governance and that universities were, “inherently inequitable, differentiated along the lines of ‘race’ and ethnicity”, and aimed at reproducing White and male privilege and subjugating Black women in all spheres of society. The main purpose of the HBUs was to provide government employees for the apartheid bureaucracy, courses therefore were geared to this end (Boughey & Bozalek, 2012, p. 691). Very little research was done in the HBUs, thus the number of post graduate openings for students was limited. These universities catered mainly for young school leavers (Walters, 1999, p. 577).

This dispensation saw the rise of Black tribal colleges for different Black ‘ethnic’ groups (Cooper & Subotsky, 2001) and later on (in 1979) different technical colleges and HEIs were established for different racial groups. HEIs catering for Black students were by far in the minority (*ibid.*). These institutions were populated mainly by Black men, with only a minority of female students. This is particularly relevant to my research, as the fact highlights the

lack of access for Black South Africans to further educational opportunities, and, in particular, the lack of opportunities open for female students. The students on the CSD courses (the majority of whom were female) would therefore have had very little opportunity or encouragement to finish their schooling, and to apply for courses at a HEI, especially as they were not young Black women who had just graduated from school, but were all professional working individuals, most of whom had families and extended families to support, and had to work and study at the same time.

The CHE reports that Blacks were the largest demographic group in South Africa, yet they had the lowest participation rate in HEIs during apartheid (2004, p.230). By 1994, there were 19 education departments across the country, and each education department was responsible for training teachers. There were 32 self-governing HEIs and technical colleges, with 105 colleges spread throughout South Africa (Sayed, 2002). The medium of instruction in the colleges and HEIs was either English or Afrikaans

In addition, academic employment opportunities in HEI's for Black South Africans were not readily available. The majority (90%) of academic positions in all HEIs were held by White academics. The universities catering for White students had a much lower student to staff ratio, and were provided with significantly more resources and funding from the apartheid government (Bunting, 1994). The low student to staff ratio and resources allowed for more individual attention, and for the academic development of students.

Morrow (1998, p. 387) notes that, "Universities, in particular, are bastions of privilege, and as soon as one presses the questions of who is paying for them and who their beneficiaries are, then their key role in the maintenance and perpetuation of an unjust society becomes clear." The lack of access to educational opportunities, for African, Coloured and Indian students became one of the main platforms in the anti-apartheid struggle. This is significant, as it ultimately "opened the door" to provide the opportunity for the CSD students to have access to tertiary educational opportunities.

### **2.2.2.3 Teacher Training under apartheid**

The apartheid system was perpetuated in teacher education too. By 1970 teachers were trained in racially and ethnically separate universities and teacher training colleges. The newly trained teachers were posted, “to different racially – and ethnically – segregated schools. In other words, each type of college and university trained teachers for specific schools” (Sayed, 2002).

### **2.2.3 Higher Educational Institutions in Post-Apartheid South Africa**

In South Africa, post-apartheid changes in ideology and policy have affected teacher education (both formal and informal) in which this research is located. A brief description of the changes, including policy and legislation changes are provided. This is necessary in the context of my study as it illustrates how the CSD students were able to access courses at the CSD and, therefore, the opportunity to develop professionally.

#### **2.2.3.1 Higher Education in post-apartheid South Africa**

As noted above, the indefensible and unjustifiable inequalities that emerged from the apartheid system were also mirrored and pervasive in the HEIs in South Africa. Therefore, after the ANC won the elections in 1994 the new government began making changes for a democratic South Africa. Since 1994, the ANC has focused on attempting to eradicate the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. They have attempted to transform the education system so that it meets the needs of all population groups equally, with the aim of meeting the needs of all South Africans. As early as 26 June 1955, the issue of access to HEIs for students of all race groups had been addressed, in The Freedom Charter of the African National Congress which declared that the “doors of learning and culture should be opened” (Freedom Charter, 1955). The main problem, that the ANC wished to eradicate, was the unequal access to HEIs, which gave White students a much greater chance of accessing tertiary educational opportunities than Black, Coloured or Indian students. Also, the success rate of HEIs intended for African students, was significantly lower than those established for their White and Coloured counterparts (Bunting, 1994, p. 227). In fact, the dropout rate of Black students is double that of the White students in South Africa (Letsaka & Maile, 2008). The Freedom Charter was therefore regarded as having a pivotal role in initiating the political discourse about access and equity. It became the basis on which

further policies and strategies, relating to access in spheres of education, were based (Scott, Yeld & Hendry, 2007).

Since 1995, comprehensive legislation, focused on achieving democracy, social justice and human dignity, has been produced. These post-apartheid policies and laws, beginning with the South African Constitution (South Africa. South African Constitution, 2006), the National Qualifications Framework (South Africa. SAQA Act, 1995) have radically changed the educational landscape, and facilitated access to educational opportunities.

The Council of Higher Education (South Africa. CHE, 2004, p. 25) also outlines some of the changes that were brought about as a result of legislation in the HEIs. Some of these changes included increasing the number of students entering higher education, in particular those from historically disadvantaged social groups. Blade Mzimande, the Minister of Higher Education and Training (13 January 2010), in a speech at a public lecture at the University of the Free State, remarked that one of the main concerns of his department was in “paying attention to issues such as improving access and success rates in universities and colleges...”. The increased access to higher education has resulted in an increase in enrolment of African and Coloured students (Cooper & Subotzky, 2001; Scott et al, 2007). There has also been a significant rise in the proportion of Black female students attending university (Cooper & Subotzky, 2001, p.77).

The progressive legislation, and concentrated efforts of policy makers in South Africa have provided opportunities for access for Black students to be enrolled at HEI's. The proportion of black students' ages 18-24 entering HEI is 12%, while the number of White students (ages 18-24) entering HEI is 60% (Scott et al, 2007). Overall, however, the sheer numbers of Black students in HE exceeds that of white students. But, despite this they do not perform as well as their White counterparts. This highlights the fact that access to educational opportunities does not equate to educational success, and if you do not have success, this will negate any gains of access (*ibid.*).

In order to be successful within the higher education context, students need to be “apprenticed” into disciplinary contexts (as I elaborate below). Thanks to dominant ideas

about assessment, academic success is measured by the ability to read academic texts, and to successfully produce academic texts. My research does not question the status quo, but instead focuses on the extent to which programmes run by the CSD enable students to master the academic literacy needed to produce successful academic texts, given the socially embedded nature of literacy.

As I have indicated throughout this discussion, in South Africa, students have been provided with the access to furthering their education; however access to further educational opportunities does not necessarily guarantee that the students will be successful. This was part of Morrow's seminal distinction between formal and epistemological access for students (Morrow, 1994). As I have indicated, Morrow emphasized that, once students have gained formal access to an institution, the student has to work hard to gain the epistemological access to knowledge that the institution provides (*ibid.*).

The high attrition rates of students from HEIs attest to the fact that access to educational opportunities does not necessarily equate to success, as I discuss in the section below (2.2.3.4).

### **2.2.3.2 National Qualification framework (NQF)**

The NQF has been discussed in Chapter 1, and is also elaborated on in this section. The NQF was implemented in 1995, and as discussed, it has a direct effect and bearing on the students used in this study. The NQF was established with the aim of creating "a single, coordinated higher education system, within the context of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)" (CHE, 2004). The NQF is significant, as it not only co-ordinates the higher education system, but the entire education system in South Africa. The NQF is governed by SAQA and has three main QC's: Umalusi oversees the schooling sector; HEI's are the domain of the CHE, and The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations focuses on workplace programmes. The three QC's focus on quality assurance of all aspects of the educational arena in South Africa. (See Figure 1 in Chapter 1 for more information on SAQA and the three QC's). As already indicated in Chapter 1, the NQF assists the QC's, as it has as its main purpose, to facilitate mobility and progression within education, and training, and to provide career paths to assist with the acceleration of the

redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities. As noted in Chapter 1, one of the ultimate goals is to contribute to personal, economic and national development (SAQA Act of 1995).

The NQF therefore aims to contribute to the development of an egalitarian education system, by managing the relationship between work, education and training. The SAQA Act (1995) reports that the NQF was a means to provide “mechanisms to ensure horizontal and vertical mobility, and flexibility of access between general formative, technical, industrial and adult education and training, in the formal and non-formal sectors”. The NQF therefore unites both the education and training mechanisms in South Africa, and aims to facilitate and regulate education, and the training of education, from primary school to doctoral level, via both formal and informal routes of learning (SAQA, 2000).

The NQF is relevant to this study as it provides the means for students to access the formal Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Level 6 programme, via a part-time route which begins with a matriculation certificate and moves through a Level 4 Early Childhood Development Programme, and a programme leading to a Level 5 National Diploma in Early Childhood Development.

### **2.2.3.3 Teacher Education after apartheid**

Teacher Education, after 1994, saw a rationalisation of teacher training colleges. The number of teacher training colleges was reduced from 120 to 50 by 2000 (CHE, 2001, p. 21). By 2003, all the teacher training colleges had either closed down or had been incorporated into the HEIs (Jansen & Taylor, 2003). This meant that any student who wanted to become a Foundation Phase teacher had to attend an HEI. The CSD students therefore, who wanted to become teachers had to attend courses at the CSD which fell under RU Faculty of Education.

RU is located in a small town, called Grahamstown, in the Eastern Cape. Grahamstown is a fairly remote town, with the nearest city, and the next HEI, being 130kms away. The students enrolled on the CSD courses all live in Grahamstown or its surrounds. This means

it is not easy for them to attend teacher education courses in any HEI besides Grahamstown, because of the distances involved.

When CSD developed its career path (as outlined in Chapter 1) RU did not have a Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase, only a PGCE. As explained in Chapter 1, the CSD students are undergraduates and therefore do not have access to the PGCE. Furthermore, only a limited number of spaces are available in the PGCE. In 1982, RU purchased buildings to open a satellite campus in East London. The majority (but not all) of the in-service teacher training was relocated to this campus (UFH, 2012). The National Plan for Higher Education outlined the restructuring of the HEI landscape (South Africa. DoE, 2001). The restructuring included the incorporation of the East London RU campus, into the UFH campus. This resulted in the amalgamation of the RU East London campus with the University of Fort Hare (UFH). RU entered into an agreement with UFH not to run undergraduate B.Ed programmes until 2014. Furthermore, RU had been identified as one of the five 'research intensive' universities in South Africa (South Africa. CHET, 2010) and therefore the Institution Plan consisted of degrees and post-graduate education. Negotiation with the Education Faculty ensued in order for the CSD to be able, under the auspices of the Faculty of Education, to offer a B.ED FP.

It is important to reiterate that, as of 2014, the CSD students will no longer have access to the career path as it is at present. (See Chapter 1 Figure 4 for the career path that students will have to follow after 2014 in order to pursue a career as a teacher.) The new career path for teachers was outlined in the New Policy on Teacher Education Qualifications (DHET, 2011), with the aim of alleviating the teacher education shortage, and providing teachers with a clear career path, with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of teaching in the classroom (Green et al, 2011, p119).

#### **2.2.3.4 Access does not equal success**

Both the Levels 4 and 5, and B.Ed programmes offered by the CSD, require the students to do a significant amount of academic reading and writing, and to be able to demonstrate mastery of the requisite academic literacy in order to do this. As already indicated, the academic reading and writing in the Level 4 course is done predominantly through the use

of the Fundamental Curriculum, which teaches academic literacy as discrete skills, apart from the main course. There is no guarantee that the skills will be transferred to the writing of assignments during the course (Leki, 1995). In addition, Gee (1990) points out that academic literacy cannot be 'taught'. It can only be acquired through the scaffolding, in an apprentice situation. The Level 4 course, therefore, does not guarantee that the students will be able to transfer what they have learned, to their assignments, or indeed, if they will learn anything at all. I highlight the fundamental problems inherent in the Level 4 academic literacy as being 'taught' when I outline the two literacy theorists Gee and Street, later in this chapter. The teaching of academic literacy in this manner is significant, given the ideological shift in the academic literacy movement, from teaching academic literacy as a set of literacy skills, to systemic redress and more contextualized learning within, and throughout, a particular course (Boughey, 2007).

The Level 5 course does follow a more integrated approach to the teaching of academic literacy which is embedded throughout the course content, but this too does not guarantee student success. This is owing to the nature of literacy, and the way the students show that they understand it.

Arguably, therefore, the enabling legal and policy context which grants access to further educational opportunities (through the NQF) does not guarantee success in completing Levels 4 and 5, and progressing to the Level 7 (previous Level 6) B.Ed, owing to the misunderstanding of the concept of academic reading and writing, and inadequate and traditional curriculum structures and practices within the courses.

As I have argued a distinction must be made between formal and epistemological access for students (Morrow, 1994). Morrow emphasized that, once students have gained access to an institution of learning, they have to work hard to gain the epistemological access (as it is not automatically transmitted) to the knowledge that the institution provided (*ibid.*). This is particularly true of the CSD students; they have formal access to the B.Ed programme, but not necessarily epistemological access. It is my contention that it is the curriculum design, and the understanding of literacy which should contribute to epistemological access. These are areas that I wish to explore in my research.

The high attrition rates of students from HEIs also attests to the fact that access to educational opportunities does not necessarily lead to success. The Department of Education reported in 2005, that 30% of the students enrolled at HEIs dropped out after one year of study, and a further 20% dropped out during their second and third years (South Africa. DoHE, 2005). In 2013, the CHE report states (South Africa. CHE, 2013) that only 1 in 20 Black South Africans complete their higher education degree, and about 55% who enrol at HEIs drop out before they complete their degree. The Black South Africans who do complete their degree, only 35 % complete their degree within 5 years. The CHE (*ibid.*, p.54) reported that despite the, “policy interventions that have been put in place thus far, there has been limited success post-1994 in addressing these challenges.”

## **2.3 Language and Education in South Africa**

In this section, the language policy of both pre- and post-apartheid, and the use of English as the medium of instruction in education is discussed. The fact that students who do not use English as a home language, are seen as having a deficit, is unpacked, along with Cummins’s work on language, which provides insights into why the students on the CSD courses do not perform well at university, and also explains the perceived lack of academic literacy that these students exhibit.

### **2.3.1 Deficit language model**

Although the Constitution (1995) identifies eleven official languages in South Africa (with sign language seen as a twelfth language), the majority of the HEIs in South Africa use English and an African language or a mixture of both, as their language of learning and teaching (LoLT). The students enrolled on courses at the CSD are predominantly students whose primary schooling occurred during the apartheid era, with English as an additional language. Also, most of the students matriculated from schools that were governed by the former Department of Education and Training. In the past, the lack of academic progress of students was set squarely on the shoulders of the students. Their underperformance was seen as being a result of poor language ability (Street, 1995; Boughey, 2002; McKenna, 2004a; Akoojee and Nkomo, 2007) which consequently resulted in a poor understanding of

learning material, and ignorance of how to analyse it (Taylor, Ballard, Beasley, Clanchy, & Nightingale, 1988, p55).

The deficit discourse is, and was, used in South Africa, to refer to students who are speakers of English as an additional language. Many academics, and students themselves, continue to believe that students who have come through the apartheid Bantu Education system are lacking in the language skills necessary to be successful students at HEIs. “In South Africa, subject-based academics often ascribe the difficulties experienced by ‘under-prepared’ Black students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds as they engage with tertiary study, to their status as speakers of English as an additional language” (Boughey, 2002). Black students who completed their schooling during the apartheid era, were regarded as having a lack of literacy, which was attributed to their poor language ability, and it was believed that if the students just worked harder they could achieve epistemological access. This is linked to the concept of motivation. McKenna (2004a, p.172) discusses the concept that, if students “just worked harder then they would be more successful”. The students’ lack of success was therefore attributed to the fact that Black students lacked motivation. The belief that language is a root cause for students’ lack of success and learning problems, continues to this day. This even applies to students born after 1994, known as the ‘Born Frees’, who were educated under the new dispensation.

Lawrence (2002) referred to this perception as the deficit model, when he spoke of

*diversity in terms of scholastic deficits or lack of academic literacy. Inherent is the assumption that there is one mainstream discourse, and that languages and literacies, other than those of the dominant discourse, represent a deficit or deficiency on the part of the students who do not possess them.*

One of the most influential theories used to explore the language ‘problem’; was that of Cummins (1979). His theories of language acquisition are often used to explain the lack of success by students using English as an additional language, in HEIs. I provide a brief outline of Cummins’s models, and then outline the current growing theoretical trend that sees the deficit discourse as supported by apartheid-associated ideas (Boughey, 2002, McKenna, 2004a). This should be avoided as it labels the students with the problem, as having a deficit in language and cognition. Instead, it is argued that it is necessary to

consider other factors that contribute to students' success, and that the socio-cultural aspects of literacy cannot be negated.

### **2.3.2 Cummins's theories of language**

English Language proficiency is a topic that is much debated and discussed in the South African context. Cummins, a researcher on second language acquisition and bilingualism, has proposed theories which attempt to explain why people can engage in conversations about everyday topics in an additional language, but struggle when they use that language for academic purposes (Cummins, 1979).

Cummins's interest in language acquisition and teaching was sparked by research initiated by Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa on young Finnish immigrant children in Sweden (Cummins, 2000). The research found that immigrant children were fluent in conversation, but that this fluency was not reflected in their academic work. Cummins became interested in these findings and put forward one of the most significant and – controversial – theories pertaining to language learning. Cummins (1997, 2000) draws a distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP s) to explain the discrepancy in children's conversational and academic language performance in schools. He argues that children develop BICS (playground language) first and more easily than they develop CALP (Cummins, 1997). CALP is the more cognitively demanding language, required to complete academic tasks and to succeed academically in school. Cummins observed that it took children from five to seven years to achieve proficiency in CALP, while BICS was learnt at a faster rate, in two to three years (Cummins, 2000).

Conversational and academic language (Cummins, 2001) registers can be seen to be related to Gee's (1990) distinction between *primary* and *secondary* Discourses, which is discussed later in this chapter.

Cummins (1982) developed a developmental continuum organized around four quadrants (see Figure 6). This model indicates that communication can be ranged along two dissecting continua. One continuum depicts the complexity of tasks requiring language use.

The tasks range from cognitively undemanding to cognitively demanding. The second continuum captures the extent to which communication is embedded in the context in which it occurs. When communication is embedded in the context, a range of extra linguistic cues are available to support the communication itself. When communication is 'context reduced', only the forms of the language are available as resources on which language users can draw.

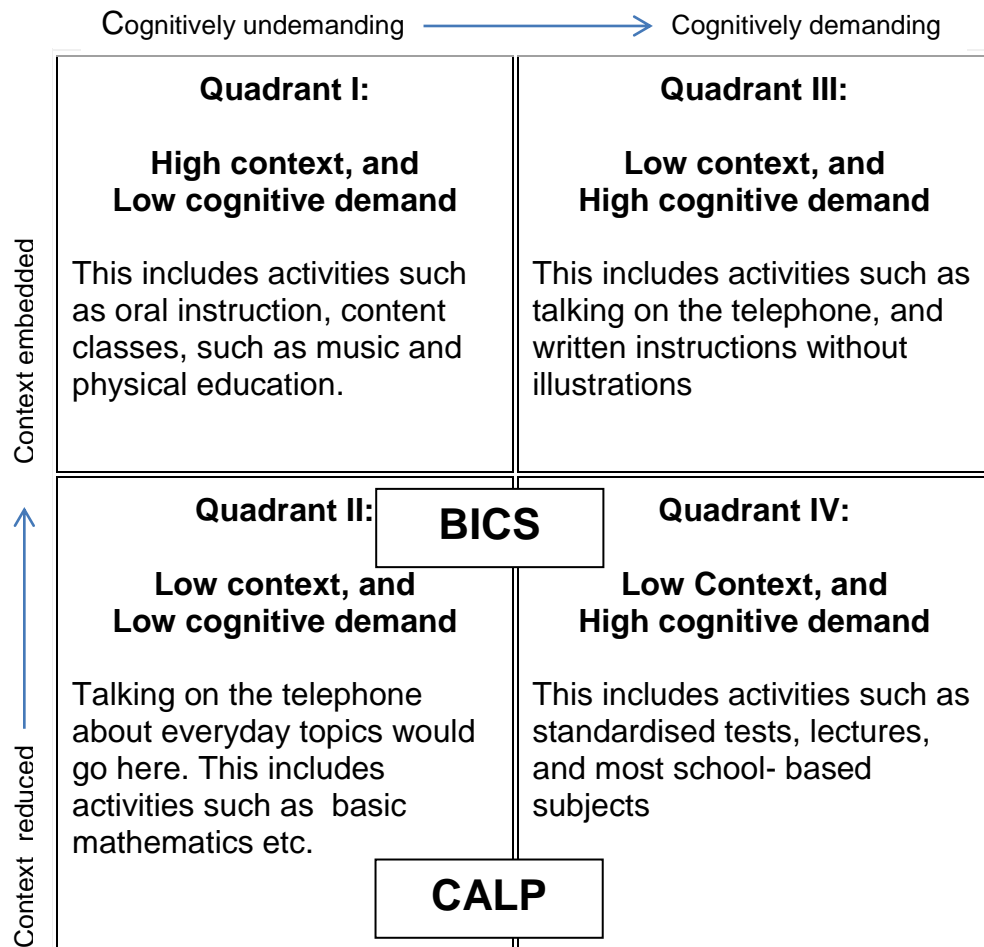


Figure 6 Cummins's Developmental Continuum

In Quadrant 1 of the model, students might receive a context-embedded task which is cognitively and academically undemanding. The task would have embedded visual cues and other forms of support for creating meaning. Cummins's BICS falls into Quadrant 1, as it is everyday language use, and is cognitively undemanding and context-embedded. A child holding a soccer ball in a playground, saying to another child "Do you want to play

soccer with me” is an example of BICS. The soccer ball, and the fact that games are played in the playground are all support in ‘meaning making’ for the child. CALP lies in Quadrant 4 as it is cognitively demanding and context reduced (*ibid.*). The reader is given a book and has to make meaning on the basis of the print on the page only. Academic language is seen to be cognitively demanding and context reduced, and will therefore fall into Quadrant 4.

### 2.3.2.1 Cummins’s Dual Iceberg Theory

In addition to his theory of BICS and CALP, Cummins put forward his Dual Iceberg Hypothesis. Cummins (2000) stated that students drew on a set of language related skills and metalinguistic understandings which they acquired from their home language, to help them acquire a second language. It is therefore beneficial, if students have these skills in their home language, to use them to build their second language. In order to explain this, he used the analogy of the iceberg as depicted in Figure 7 below.

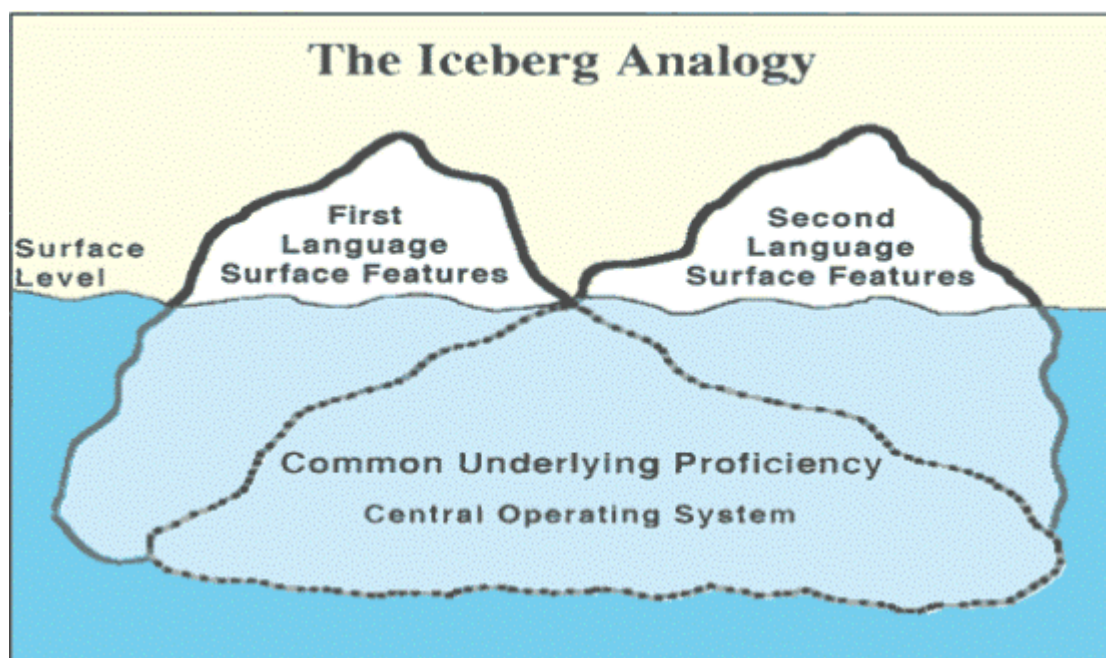


Figure 7 Cummins's Iceberg Analogy

The tip of the iceberg represents the two languages; that is, the first or home language (L1), and the second or additional language (L2). This is all that you “see” of the languages, and the tips of the iceberg therefore represent the conversational features of the L1 and L2. The two languages appear different in conversation when you hear them spoken. Below the

surface they have separate process systems that are specific to each language. However, the two icebergs are fused together and are not separate, with a wide shared base.

Cummins (2000) termed the set of skills and metalinguistic understandings learned from their home language and available for transfer to the additional language, as the 'Common Underlying Proficiency' (CUP). CUP forms the basis of the iceberg and illustrates that, while the first language or home language (L1) and the second or additional language (L2) appear to be functioning in isolation, this is not true, as under the surface there are cognitive and intellectual processes that are common to both languages. Cummins (2000) points out that the competencies' more cognitively demanding tasks, such as "subject matter knowledge, higher-order thinking skills, reading strategies, writing composition skills, developed through the medium of L1 transfer, or become available to L2, given sufficient exposure and motivation" (Cummins, 1992, p.23).

Significantly, Cummins stresses that enliteration needs to occur in the home language, and that if children are denied the use of the home language as a resource when they learn to read and write, they will struggle to do so (Cummins & Swain, 1983). This means that, in South Africa, children forced to learn to read and write in an additional language, are hampered. In addition, if they come from homes which have not supported the kind of language proficiency necessary to advance school-based learning, they will be unlikely to have developed the hidden language proficiency necessary to transfer to the additional language.

### **2.3.2.2 Criticisms of Cummins's theories**

It is important to note that there are a number of criticisms of Cummins's theories. I expand on these when discussing the concept of multiple literacies. These criticisms are:

- a) The research was conducted mainly on children second language learners, whereas adults learn differently to children (Garcia, 1997). In addition, the distinction between CALP and BICS seems to suggest that this prevents students from fully participating in academic work (*ibid.*). Cummins (2000) has countered these criticisms, as he points out that "the BICS/CALP order of acquisition is "typical" rather than "absolute", and that this

order is suggested as being typical for second language children who had not achieved CALP in their own language, but this does not necessarily apply to adults (Cummins, 2000).

- b) The distinction between conversational and academic language seems to suggest that language is autonomous, and does not take into account the social aspects and power relations in language (Edelsky, Hudelson, Altwerger, Flores, Barkin & Jilbert, 1983; Wiley, 1996).
- c) The conversational/academic language distinction reflects an autonomous perspective of language that ignores its location in social practices and power relations (Edelsky et al., 1983; Wiley, 1996). The theory, therefore, reflects an autonomous form of language, rather than encompassing the ideological aspect of language – a point I return to later. Gee (2008) mentions that he believed that children’s difficulties with reading could be attributed, not to their poor reading skills, but, in fact, to the lack of socialization into literacy practices. However, research carried out by Heath (1983) shows that children of middle class educated parents are ‘schooled’ into practices which serve them well from birth to school. Some of these practices involve preparation which will involve the use of CALP language.
- d) The assumption that language learners can be tested, is referred to by (Edelsky et al., 1983; Martin-Jones & Romaine, 1986) as “an artifact of “test-wiseness”. Cummins and Swain (1983) point out that the development of cognitive language proficiency is not dependent on test scores, nor are tests used to show its relevance to education.
- e) Furthermore, Cummins’s theory seems to stem from a “deficit theory” that attributes bilingual students’ academic difficulties to their “low CALP”, or low cognitive abilities (Edelsky, 1990; MacSwan, 2000). Cummins (1982) refutes this point, as he points out that CALP is not only used for cognition, it can also be used to account for socialisation in using language for cognitively demanding tasks.

f) Garcia (1997, p.8) points out that teaching students BICS, and then CALP, in an additional language, is problematic, as you cannot always be sure that BICS will be achieved before the CALP (*ibid.*). This is particularly true of adult learners who may have advanced CALP in their own language, which they then use to understand other academic texts in an additional language. However, Cummins's dual iceberg hypothesis shows that 90% of language is hidden (in the same way that most of an iceberg is hidden). If the proficiency in the L1 has been developed, then it can be used as a basis to build the L2.

## **2.4 Academic Literacy**

The CSD courses are offered in English, and therefore the majority of the students learn in a language that is not their home language. However, as Cummins points out, the students can use the knowledge and skills (CUP) from their home language and transfer these to the additional language. The relationship of language to academic literacy is often confused in South Africa. This section therefore unpacks what is meant by academic literacy, and illustrates how it differs from the language *per se*.

### **2.4.1 Why consider academic literacy?**

Academic literacy is the literacy that is most valued at HEIs (Boughey, 2002; Henderson & Hirst, 2006) and consequently has a high status. The students' academic reading and writing is used as a means to judge their competence. This is also true of the Bachelor of Education (In-service) students. The Education Faculty annually produces a guide titled "Academic writing and reference guide". This outlines a step by step guide on how to write an academic essay. Academic literacy is, therefore, the common understanding of the rules and conventions that most academics share, and, as indicated above, the means they will use to judge the student's competence (Ballard & Clanchy, 1988). If the students wish to succeed, they need to follow these conventions.

The rules of the discipline are often not written down. As pointed out above, RU does provide comprehensive outlines for students, on how to reference and how to write an assignment. However, this information tends to be 'technical' in nature and, while it may tell students how to reference, it does not explore the values underpinning the use of

references. The guidelines and information supplied by the lecturers often relate only to the content of the discipline, and not to the rhetorical processes (Geisler, 1994). Geisler notes that, "...domain content is not a set of facts simply found by the discipline" but is "socially constructed by the discipline's members, and intimately related to the rhetorical processes underlying the reading and writing of texts" (Geisler, 1994, p. 112). This relates to Gee's concept of Discourse which is discussed below.

Not only do we need to take into consideration the social construction of literacy, but also the fact that more than one academic literacy exists. Henderson and Hirst (2007) point out that the use of the term 'academic literacy' in the singular is misleading, as it implies that only one literacy exists, and tends to restrict looking at academic literacy as a singular view of literacy, with a particular set of practices (*ibid.*).

The term 'academic literacies'<sup>10</sup> is now often used when referring to academic literacy or literacy development. When the term academic development is used, it is often used, merely to refer to reading and writing in academic contexts (Lillis & Scott, 2007). The concept of multiple literacies, and the broader context of academic literacies, as being more than reading and writing, is explored by looking at Gee's concept of literacy and Discourses, and Street's notion of literacy, as well as Freire's more political stance, and the work of Bourdieu.

## **2.5 Literacy or Literacies**

The following section outlines that a number of views of literacy have been developed, which have a direct bearing on this research project.

### **2.5.1 New Literacy Studies (NLS)**

New Literacy Studies (NLS) is a literacy movement (one amongst many) that developed and considered understandings of the nature of literacy, focusing not so much on literacy as a set of skills, as in dominant approaches, but rather on what it means to think of literacy as a "social practice" (Street, 2003). NLS therefore took the focus off the individual, and

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<sup>10</sup> As this study is embedded in a social-practice perspective which encompasses a variety of literacies, when the term literacy is used it is referring to literacies in the plural.

placed it on social practices and their interactions. One of the NLS tenets is that, as language is a social practice it can therefore take on different meanings or values, “in different contexts, and that no piece of language, no tool, technology or social practice has a meaning (or value) outside of all contexts” (Gee, 1999a).

The view of literacy as a social practice is also reflected in Critical Discourse Analysis that is explained in Chapter 3. NLS’s emphasis on language, as a social practice, has resulted in the possibility of a move away from a deficit of understandings of students, their naming as ‘illiterate’, and the location of the problems they experience in their status as speakers of English as an additional language (Boughey, 2005). NLS has been instrumental in influencing the field of academic development in South Africa (Boughey, 2007). NLS argues that it is better to see academic literacy as academic literacies (Lea & Street, 1998). The NLS had a number of proponents, such as James Paul Gee and Brian Street, amongst others. Gee and Street’s contribution to NLS is discussed in detail below.

## **2.5.2 Street’s concept of literacy**

Brian Street is widely credited with seminal work (1984) in the field of NLS. This section begins by outlining how Street viewed academic literacy. Thereafter Street’s concept of ideological and autonomous model is summarised.

### **2.5.2.1 Street’s view of Academic literacy**

Street outlined academic writing as follows:

*‘Academic writing’ is not a single thing but an aggregation of literacy practices that make, and are made, by the epistemologies and practices (including the use of power) of specific disciplines and other institutional formations; that it mediates identity struggles; that it is largely transparent to instructors socialised in a discipline, assumed; that technical solutions such as ‘study skills’ do not get at the problem. (Street in Baker et al., 1996a, p.118)*

Academic literacy is therefore made up of the norms and values of the educational institution, and is specific to each discipline (in the case of my research this indicates the CSD and RU as institutions, and teacher education as a subset of the broader discipline of education). Becoming a participating member of a university therefore entails becoming

part of the university culture and subscribing to its norms, which include specific forms of language use (Ballard & Clanchy, 1988, p. 7).

Ballard and Clanchy point out that the academic rules and conventions,

*are nowhere codified and written down, and yet they mediate crucially between the student's own knowledge and intentions, and the knowledge and potential meanings that exist within the university. Becoming literate in the university involves learning to 'read' the culture, learning to come to terms with its distinctive rituals, values, styles of language and behaviour (1988, p.8).*

These rules and conventions are never made overt to the students (*ibid.*). Students are expected to take on these practices without being specifically taught the practices, and without questioning them (Boughey, 2002).

Street identifies two models of literacy: the autonomous model and the ideological model. The field of NLS, which is discussed above, subsequently arose from these models (Street, 1984, p.29).

## **2.5.2.2 Autonomous and Ideological Model**

### **2.5.2.2.1 Autonomous Model**

The autonomous model sees literacy as being culturally free (Street, 1984, p. 29) and as a set of normative technical skills that are detached from the social context in which they are used. Within this model, language is also seen as a set of technical skills that can be taught through drill and repetition (*ibid.*). Christie (1993) identifies the teaching of language in this way, as the 'Received Tradition' of English language teaching. The Received Tradition focuses on the teaching of grammar, punctuation and so forth, as a set of rules which have to be mastered, often by mindless copying and filling of gaps. Street (2003, p.77) notes that the autonomous model, which is accepted in schooling and developmental processes, has ramifications of social and cognitive practices. It also impacts on literacy programmes that are aimed at the development of literacy skills, and which do not take into account the wider social and economic conditions in which literacy is embedded.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Literacy programmes which focus on the development of the technical skills involved in encoding and decoding printed text, and which fail to take into account the way participants engage with print in their daily lives, often fail. Participants may achieve minimum levels of technical skill, but do not take up reading and writing as social practices in meaningful ways.

The autonomous model has given rise to a number of assumptions that, being literate, bestows cognitive benefits on individuals and is more beneficial to the society as a whole than to those who are non-literate – a notion taken up by Ong (1982) with his theory of the ‘Great Divide’. NLS proponents have challenged this view and posited instead the idea of multiple literacies, given the differing literacy practices in communities (Street, 2003). Noting that the ‘Great Divide’ referred to a dualism between ‘civilised’ and ‘savage’ communities, Street (2003, p. 77) states that, “The autonomous approach is simply imposing western conceptions of literacy onto other cultures, or, within a country, those of one class or cultural group onto others.” In the case of this study, the course facilitators would impose their viewpoint and expectations of what it means to be literate, onto the students.

In the past, academic literacy was associated with skills-based approaches which consisted of teaching a set of generic skills that the students were understood to need to master, to produce successful academic texts (Boughey, 2002, 2003; McKenna, 2004b). The term Academic literacy is itself misleading. It tends to hide the pluralistic nature of academic literacies and confines us to a “singular view of literacy and a particular set of practices” (Henderson & Hirst, 2007, p. 26), as the ideological model outlines.

#### **2.5.2.2 Ideological model**

In contrast to the autonomous model, the ideological model perceives literacy to be a set of social practices, and not a set of cognitive skills, and emphasizes the social context of literacies. Street (2006, p 78) considers the ideological model to be a much more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices, as they vary from culture to culture.

Street states that reading and writing practices are dependent on context (*ibid.*) and the way in which people approach language and writing is tied up with their beliefs, identity and being. This concept is echoed by Boughey (2002) who points out that the way people get meaning from print or writing is dependent on the way they see themselves, the texts and the value they place on text in their everyday lives. Literacy is, therefore, not neutral and value free but has ideological underpinnings (*ibid.*) and therefore we cannot separate

literacy from the people who use it, and the institution in which it is used. Street refers to the fact that multiple literacies exist (Street, 1995, p. 105) and people “play” more than one social role at a time. Academics tend to ignore, or be ignorant, of the fact that other literacies exist and instead assign blame to the students (deficit model) or the education system (Ballard & Clanchy, 1988, p13).

The ideological model (and NLS) recognizes that multiple literacies exist, and that they are contextually situated. While the ideological model recognizes that multiple literacies exist it also recognizes that some literacies are more powerful and highly valued than others. (Ballard & Clanchey, 1988, p. 7).

Lillis (2001, p.13) notes that the understanding of academic literacy, as a set of social practices, allows the lecturer to move away from seeing student writing as done by an “autonomous, socially neutral person, but instead they can see student writing as a social act that, “uses language to make meaning and construct identities”. However, the ideological model is not always employed or understood in the HEI context. This is elaborated on further, when discussing the historical cycle of academic literacy in South Africa.

Once literacy is acknowledged as a social practice, it becomes possible to see how some home contexts prepare students for the more powerful and valued literacies. Heath (1983, p.2) conducted a study on language patterns and effects within community, home and school settings in two working class communities she called “Trackton” and “Roadville”, and one middle class community she called the “Townspeople”. Heath found that the language-related skills and values that the school valued were those of the middle class community. Heath (1983, p. 369) sums up the relationship of the middle class community and the school: “Their socially determined habits have created for them an ideology in which all that they do makes sense to their current identity, and their preparation for the achievements which will frame their future”. The children from the middle class community are more likely to use interaction patterns with texts that are similar to those of the school. This left the students from “Trackton” and “Roadville” at a disadvantage, as their home language skills and values were not privileged by the school and as a result constrained the

student's success. Heath's study showed how middle class parents prepared their children for school-based literacies, and how this advantaged them over children from two working class communities.

Scollon and Scollon (1981) also supported Heath's study. They worked amongst the Inuit Indians on the North American continent (called the Athabaskins) and put forward the concept of two world views which they call "bush consciousness" and "modern consciousness". "Bush consciousness" was the world view of the Athabaskins and was the way of living in the bush that was necessary for them (Scollon & Scollon, 1981, p. 37) in order to survive. The "modern consciousness" they referred to as the world view of the English-speakers. The "modern consciousness" was the world view adopted by the schools that the Athabaskins and the English-speaking children attended. The English-speaking children, therefore, had an advantage over the Athabaskins, as their home background had prepared them for the world views and literacies valued by the school. This research (Scollon & Scollon, 1981) illustrated how middle class western educated parents educate their children for school, while the children of Inuit Indians arrive with different literacy practices. It is usually the literacies that the children acquire from home, rather than the school, which prepares children for HEI. This is relevant to my study, as the participants are mostly working class, and live in communities where different sets of literacy practices exist from those which are dominant in schools and universities. This means that whatever practices students might encounter in the course, or in schools, are not affirmed in their home contexts.

### **2.5.3 Gee's understanding of literacy**

In this section, I outline Gee's (1989, 1990) views of literacy and its relevance to academic literacy, as well as defining how Gee views the concept of Discourse. His view of Discourse is relevant and is discussed again in Chapter 3 as it forms the basis of my data analysis.

Gee (2004) defines literacy as the ability to demonstrate mastery of a Discourse (Gee's definition of a Discourse is elaborated on below).

### 2.5.3.1 Gee's Theory of Primary and Secondary Discourses

Closely linked to Street's ideological model of literacy are Gee's writings on primary and secondary Discourses. Discourse can be defined in various ways. In order to understand the distinction between primary and secondary Discourses we need to understand Gee's particular perception and definition of Discourse, which is deliberately capitalised to distinguish this use of the term from other uses.

Gee defines a Discourse as,

*...a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful role" (1990, p. 143)*

He further elaborates on the concept of Discourse by referring to it as an "identity kit", "which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, and talk, so as to take on the particular role that others will recognize" (Gee, 1989, p 1). Gee then defines 'literacy' as the ability to demonstrate that an individual has mastery of a Discourse. This means that the term 'literacy' extends beyond reading and writing, not only to other forms of behaviour (speaking and acting, in Gee's terms), but also to valuing and thinking.

He notes that each person can master a number of Discourses, and furthermore makes a distinction between primary and secondary Discourses. A primary Discourse is the initial socialization that occurs through the home and peer group. All students are literate in their primary Discourse, and thus are able to demonstrate their membership of the home community. The primary Discourse is the Discourse that is used during casual social interactions, and becomes the foundation on which to build further Discourses, acquired later in life. Gee (1990) refers to these later Discourses as Secondary Discourses. They are the Discourses required by various, "non-home based social institutions... these may be local stores and churches, schools, community groups...and so forth" (*ibid*).

The primary Discourses of some children and social groups are closer to the elevated secondary Discourses, such as those of schooling. This means that these children, usually from middle class homes with educated parents, have an advantage and head start over

other children when they attend school. This has implications for my study, as the students participating in this study, because of apartheid, were structured into working class positions in homes where education had been denied. In many instances the students on the course are the first generation to finish their schooling, let alone attend post school courses, or obtain an undergraduate degree. Research (Gough & Bock, 2001) has shown that Black students often have difficulty at HEI because they rely heavily on their primary Discourse.

The rules of Discourses are rarely made explicit (Gee, 1996), and this is exacerbated by the fact that, in the academy, Discourses are discipline specific. What constitutes good academic writing or practice in one discipline may not apply to another discipline or course (Lea & Street, 2000, p.40).

Gee (1996, p. 139.) maintains that literacies can only be acquired, and not taught i.e. they can be mastered only through enculturation and scaffolding and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the literacy related to the target Discourse. Many academics, while being aware of what they require from students, with regard to academic writing, are unable to express the requirements in words (Elton, 2010, p.151). The comments on students' essays often tend to highlight structural and grammatical issues with broad and vague comments (Lea & Street, 2000). It is possible to assist a student to eliminate their surface grammatical errors in an essay, but this does not mean that the essay demonstrates mastery over the Discourse, nor have the students being enculturated and scaffolded into the dominant Discourse (Gee, 1996, p.146). Gee (1996) notes that discourses are "inherently ideological" and are implicated in the exercise of power, noting that, if an individual does not demonstrate the literacy of a Discourse then he or she is seen as not being a member of that Discourse

The work of Vygotsky can be seen to support Gee's position on Discourse and literacies.

### **2.5.3.2 Zone of Proximal Development**

Vygotsky (1978) put forward the theory that our literacy practices are shaped and embedded by our socio-cultural practices. Vygotsky did not think that learning happened in isolation. He did not see learning as the child exploring the environment by him/herself.

Vygotsky (*ibid.*) believed that the child learns by being in a social group, and by learning culturally relevant behaviour. The children learn, therefore, by internalizing the activities, habits, vocabulary and ideas of the members of the community in which they grow up.

Vygotsky believed that all learning was social. He believed we form our knowledge by participating in activities over time. We acquire this knowledge by doing activities such as cooking, going to church, union meetings or soccer games, and by singing, playing music, and doing maths and science. In order to participate in any of these activities, we have to learn how to think and behave in certain ways. We have to learn the cultural or social knowledge. He believed that the community plays an important role in helping us to make meaning of things. This means that the students on the CSD courses literacy practices have learned from their community, which is related to Street's (2006) ideological model. It also highlights the fact that the CSD students need to learn the discourses with the conventions of the course they are studying.

Vygotsky (1978) has three other concepts, besides situated learning. These concepts are: the notion of scaffolding, the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and the role of the 'expert' other, or more knowledgeable other (MKO).

The ZPD was a concept developed by Vygotsky to explain the gap, or the distance, between what the child can already master – that is his/her actual level of development – and what he/she can do or achieve with assistance, but cannot yet achieve independently. (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky defined the ZPD as:

*...the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by the independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers (1978, p. 86).*

He believed that knowledge exists outside of the child, and, with the help of the 'More Knowledgeable Other' this information can be internalized by the child. The MKO, as Vygotsky notes could be anyone who has a better understanding of an ability than the child. The MKO could therefore include a teacher, coach, older child, adult, and so forth (Smidt,

2002). The ZPD is the difference between what a learner can do without help, and what they can do with help from the MKO (Smidt, 2002).

Scaffolding is the way that the MKO guides the child's learning so that he can do what he was not able to do before (*ibid.*). The scaffolding analogy is similar to that of a construction site; the scaffolding is used during the construction of a building but taken down when it is not required. This is similar to the MKO 'scaffolding' the child into moving from their actual level of development to perform tasks independently, and without supervision. When, eventually, the scaffolding can be removed, the child will be able to do the task independently. Figure 8 (retrieved from [www.Vygotsky/mshim.mht](http://www.Vygotsky/mshim.mht)) below outlines the scaffolding process and how the child moves through the ZPD.

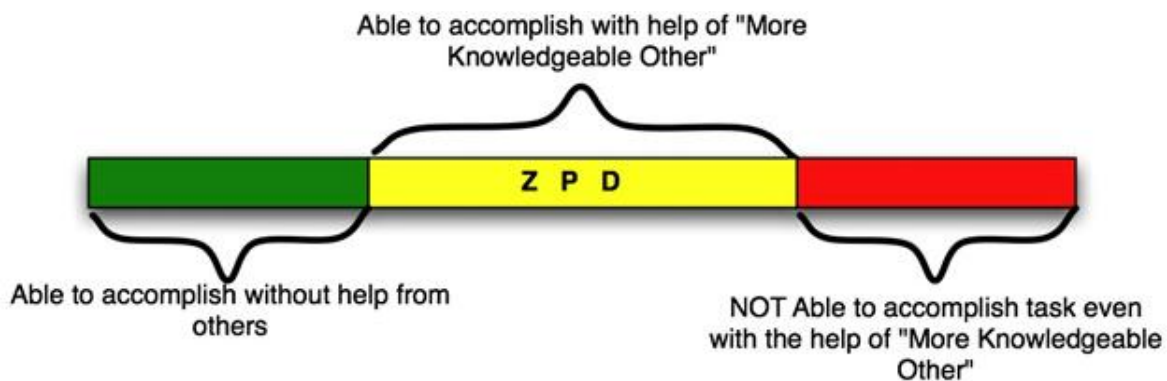


Figure 8 Vygotsky's Concept of the ZPD

Gee (1990, p. 174) was very influenced by Vygotsky's social cultural theory of ZPD and scaffolding, and it is closely linked to Gee's concept of Discourses which he believes are achieved through, "enculturation ('apprenticeship') into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the discourse".

Vygotsky (1978) used the concept of situated learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) also argue that situated learning is rooted in situations in which individuals find themselves. Social interaction is important in situated learning, as learning and learners must become involved in a community of practice (*ibid.*) from whence practices emerge and are sustained by sets of beliefs and values. This means that values and beliefs also need to be accessed if practices are to be meaningful to Discourse members.

Gee (1999a, p. 65) notes that:

*Within a community of practice all members pick up a variety of tacit and taken-for-granted values, norms, cultural models and narratives as part of their socialization into the practices and their on-going immersion in the practices. Tacitly accepting these values, norms, cultural models, and narratives (in mind, action and embodied practice), and sharing them with others, is just what it means to be a community of practice. This, by and large, solves the problem of critique.*

Discourses thus become 'commonsense' and 'natural' and are "resistant to internal criticism and self-scrutiny" (Gee, 1996<sup>12</sup>). Any criticism is then seen to undermine the discourse, and the person offering the critique is seen as being external to the Discourse. The Discourse itself, therefore, defines what acceptable criticism is (*ibid.*). The ideological implications of the discourse are therefore never queried. In order to be successful at university, students have to become proficient in academic literacy, which demonstrates the ability to engage in academic Discourse (Gee, 1990). The secondary Discourse that students experience in the academy is usually very different from their primary Discourse and school-based Discourses. Learning difficulties, or problems, perceived in reading and writing can thus be seen as stemming from their "status as outsiders" to the academic Discourses that sustain the university (Gee, 2002, p. 57; Boughey, 2000, p.296).

This means that, instead of labelling the students as being deficit, academics need to consider the fact that students are trying to make the transition between their primary and secondary Discourses (Gee 2002).

As indicated above, the primary Discourse practices (or home literacies) of the students enrolled at the CSD are very different from the secondary Discourse that is required of students enrolled on CSD courses. Gee (2000) states that, if the secondary Discourse is closely related to the primary Discourse, then the individual (in this case the CSD student) will have a greater advantage over the other students. However, even if the secondary Discourse is similar to the primary Discourse, there will be significant differences in the secondary Discourse that the student will have to master. In order to master the secondary Discourse, however, students are faced with the obstacle that the academic discipline does

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<sup>12</sup> Gee's point is clearly associated with the Gramscian (1978) notion of hegemony.

not always make its rules explicit. This is further exacerbated by the fact that academic writing is discipline specific.

Gee's (1989, p. 6) concept of Discourse is as a result of a combination of issues:

*At any moment we are using language we must say or write the right thing in the right way, while playing the right social role and (appearing) to hold the right values, beliefs and attitudes. Thus, what is important is not language, and surely not grammar, but saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combinations.*

We cannot, therefore, automatically assume that the language itself is an issue, and so the problems students experience are solely related to their status as speakers of English as an additional language. Rather, students' literacy-related experiences can be seen to be related to their lack of enculturation into academic Discourses and, more specifically, to saying (writing) -doing-being-believing combinations used in the interaction were not properly used (Gee, 1996, p.127). Gee's concept resonates with Hallidayan linguistics. Halliday (1978, p. 68) argues that, "educational failure is really a social problem, not a linguistic one".

Hallidayan Linguistics is the theory put forward by the linguist Michael Halliday. Halliday is linked to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which was influenced by NLS. SFL argues that language use involves choices at a variety of levels, and that language is a system of making meaning (Halliday, 1985). SFL is therefore a linguistic model:

*that is functional from two points of view: the external, that of the function of language in society, and the internal, that of the way that a particular language is organised to fulfil the functions it has to: to represent the world, to create relationships between those communicating and to signal the structure of text (Halliday, 1994, p.6).*

SFL suggests that in different contexts of use, language takes on various forms which reflect its particular use (Halliday, 1985). For example, you can choose to refer to a child as a child or you can call it a kid, a brat, and so on. We also have grammatical choices available. For example, we can use the passive or the active. The choices we make are based on our understanding of the situation, and the wider context of culture (Halliday, 1978).

While the immediate context situation of the study was the CSD and RU courses, the “context of culture “is much broader. It is, “the whole historical and socio-political context in which language is used; the ‘cultural knowledge’, the competing systems of values and beliefs of which the writer needs to be aware, and which conditions the choices they make in any act of writing” (Clark & Ivanic, 1997, p.67). As noted above, Halliday (1978, p. 68) attributed educational failure to language, as he saw failure as being related to the broader context of culture and the linguistic context in which you are brought up. Reading and writing therefore need to be viewed in the broader context in which they have to be interpreted.

The “concept of situation” is the direct social context. For example the courses are run by the CSD in Grahamstown at RU. Halliday and Hasan highlight the relationship between context and text:

*The context of situation, the context in which the text unfolds, is encapsulated in the text, not in a kind of piecemeal fashion, not at the extreme in any mechanical way, but through the systemic relationship between the social environment on one hand, and the functional organization on the other. If we treat both text and context as semiotic phenomena, as modes of meaning, so to speak, we can get from one to the other in a meaningful way (1985, p. 11).*

When a text is being produced, three features determine the text producer’s choice (*ibid.*). Firstly, the field, which refers to ‘what’ is being spoken or written about. Next is the tenor, which refers to the ‘who’ is participating in the interaction that is the relationship between the participants (this includes their status, role, relationship and so forth) involved in the communication. Finally, the mode needs to be considered. The mode refers to the medium or type of communication, that is, whether it is spoken or written. It can also be referred to as the ‘how’ of the text. The context of a situation will involve the text-producers in asking the questions ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘how’, but the context of culture will provide the ‘why’ (Eggins, 1994). Halliday therefore, like many theorists, (Gee, 1996; Geisler, 1994) challenges the concept of autonomous text, but rather sees the social aspect of the student playing a significant role in literacy development.

Boughey, (2005) makes the point that students and lecturers draw on different contexts of a situation and culture when they make language choices. This choice, therefore, relates to

Discourses, and it is Discourses which will determine the language choices which are appropriate. If students, therefore, have mastered the Discourses in their home language, they will be able to draw on its values to make appropriate choices as they learn an additional language. This concept is also related to Cummins's dual iceberg hypothesis, described above.

This concept is also echoed in research conducted by Thomson, in her PHD study (2008, p. 87) with students who were teachers enrolled on an in-service B.Ed course. The teachers had not mastered the Discourse because, when they were given texts professionally translated into isiZulu (their home language), they asked, "What is this Zulu?" which revealed that they did not even recognize the language forms in their home language. Thomson's study also reflects the dual iceberg hypothesis put forward by Cummins. This does seem to suggest that the argument used that, if we would only educate the teachers/students in their home language, then the education situation in South Africa would be alleviated.

A preliminary (unpublished) study conducted by an independent consultant, on behalf of the CSD, revealed that the students felt ill-prepared to cope with academic work. They reported that they encountered difficulty in engaging with the texts they were expected to read, and the writing tasks they were set. The students highlighted the need for additional support in these areas.

In addition, Gee describes the differences between the autonomous view of literacy and the New Literacy Studies as follows:

*This traditional notion rips literacy out of any social context and treats it as an autonomous, asocial, cognitive skill with little or nothing to do with human relationships. It cloaks literacy's connections to political power, to social identity and to ideologies ... often in the service of privileging certain types of literacies and certain types of people (Gee 1990, p. 49).*

In this statement, Gee argues that the use of literacy is embedded within social practices, and that it is impossible to divorce the various uses of literacy from the social practices in which they are embedded. This is because there is always a social dimension, to every act

of reading or writing. The analysis of any aspect of literacy must therefore take into account the accompanying social practices.

#### **2.5.4 Bourdieu's theory**

Gramsci (1978) made reference to hegemony, which is related to the coercive control of dominance of one group over another. 'Consensual control' is when an individual embraces the world view of the dominant group, in order to gain access to the higher status that the dominant class embodies. Bourdieu (1977) proposes the notion of "cultural capital", a phenomenon which embodies the values, beliefs, expectations and rituals that are shared by individuals who are members of a cultural group. Cultural capital, therefore, provides the individual with advantages or limitations placed on them by the cultural capital that they acquire during their life. An individual might have the cultural capital necessary to function in one situation but not in another. Some forms of cultural capital are more powerful than others, but this depends on location. For example, it is possible for the cultural capital and 'street cred' which helps an individual, to function in a gang, but which is not necessarily useful in an HEI. Gramsci's (1978) concept of consensual control helps us to understand how individuals would seek to gain access to cultural capital, other than that which they already draw on, in order to gain powerful positions in society.

Bourdieu (1991) notes that language has its own distinct cultural capital, especially within the education system. Context therefore is essential with regards to cultural capital. He described language as being:

*... 'well chosen', 'elevated', 'lofty', 'dignified' or 'distinguished' contains a negative reference to 'common', 'everyday', ... 'colloquial', 'familiar' language'... It follows that the legitimate language is a semi-artificial language which has to be sustained by a permanent effort of correction, a task which falls both to institutions specifically designed for this purpose and to individual speakers. Through its grammarians, who codify and fix legitimate usage, and its teachers who impose and inculcate it through innumerable acts of correction, the educational system tends, in this area as elsewhere, to produce the need for its own services and products i.e. the labour and instruments of correction (1991, p60).*

In South Africa the legacies of colonisation and apartheid have resulted in the dominating western literacy practices. They are elevated and sustain the Discourse which is pervasive throughout our schooling system. Students, whose home literacy practices differ from the school, will experience difficulty in accessing the secondary Discourse of the education

system (McKenna, 2004a). Students on the CSD courses are predominantly from homes and communities whose primary Discourses value oral traditions and literacies which are other than those of the university.

As already indicated, Gee notes that the primary Discourse of certain social groups are similar to those of some secondary Discourses. Gee (2000), however, did point out that, even if the secondary Discourse is similar to the primary Discourse, an individual would still need to be enculturated into certain aspects of the secondary Discourse. Gee (*ibid.*) does indicate that universities and academics facilitate their own power base through legitimising their own Discourse (Gee, 1996). He notes that Discourses are related to the distribution of social power and hierarchical social structures (Gee, 2000).

### **2.5.5 Genre Theory**

As Gee (2002) mentions, any number of Discourses exist. In relation to the academy, an academic discipline has its own ways of being, thinking and acting which students need to acquire if they are to be accepted as members of the Discourse. They will therefore have to acquire discipline-specific practices, including reading and writing and access to the value and belief systems of the contexts of culture, and a situation which, in Hallidayan terms, will allow them to make appropriate language choices. Genre theory provides a framework for explaining the differences and similarities amongst language varieties. It is informed by the Systemic Functional Linguistics (Cheng, 2008, p. 51) and Bhatkin's work on speech genres.

Swales (1990, p. 33) defines genre as a "distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken or written" that occurs as a response to the demands of a social context. Bhatia (1997, p. 181) states that genres are defined by the language used in a specific conventionalised communicative setting. Genres are meant to serve the goals of specific discourse communities, and in so doing, they tend to establish relatively stable structural forms" (*ibid.*). Genre theory, therefore, is closely associated with discourse communities, such as academic disciplines, or a particular profession (Johns, 2003).

Genre specific teaching is also seen as one way of teaching Academic Literacy, as it teaches the students the genre of the specific discourse community (the academic

discipline). It provides the student with a specific understanding of how discipline specific texts are constructed, and why they are written in a particular way (Hyland, 2004, p11). Genre theory is therefore a method seen as helpful in assisting students to acquire the disciplinary discourse.

Thomson's (2008) research focused on an academic literacy course which was based on SFL and drew on genre theory, at the former University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg. The students on the course were all teachers doing an in-service B.Ed. Thomson (2008, p. 32) notes that the use of genre theory in the course did not provide the students with the "critical perspective of literacy as a social practice". Also, the use of the genre approach did not improve their academic literacy, which "continued to elude them" (*ibid.*).

## **2.6 Academic development trends in South Africa**

In South Africa, three distinct phases of the history of academic development (AD) were identified (Volbrecht & Boughey, 2005). These three phases were: Academic Support, Academic Development and Higher Education Development. In identifying these phases they noted (*ibid.*) that this division was for convenience only, and that the three phases should not be understood as being distinct from each other, or having any marked transitions from one to the other. Significantly, the fact that 'practices associated with the three phases have in some cases co-existed, and sometimes continue to do so' (*ibid.*, p.59) was emphasised. Furthermore, both McKenna (2004a) and Boughey (2005, 2007) emphasise that, although these three specific cycles or periods have been allocated dates, the cycles overlap at various times and are not as clearcut and linear as has been described.

Furthermore, Boughey (2005, p. 1) stresses that the phases should not be understood as distinct from one another, and argues that they, "are indicative more of dominant discursive formulations than actual periods of time". She (*ibid.*) points out that following Chouliariki and Fairclough (1999):

*these formulations are understood to give rise to 'conjunctures' or relatively stable sets of social practices around specific projects (in this case student support). This is an important point as, in many respects, the student support practices which have characterised each phase (or each discursive formulation) have co-existed in many cases and, in some, continue to do so alongside dominating practices.*

In critical realist terms, what were identified (Volbrecht & Boughey, 2005, p. 58) as the 'open sets of practices' characterising AD work can be seen to emerge from different sets of conditions which, using the framework proposed in this chapter, exist at the level of the real. In terms of the framework, therefore, the 'phases' are best understood as relatively stable sets of conditions from which practices, and experiences of practice, emerge. Some conditions are more or less dominant at any one time. This means that dominant sets of conditions can be related to time, and that changes in practice over time can be related to shifts in conditions. It is in this context that the term 'phase' needs to be understood, as it is used in this chapter.

I now turn to using the framework to analyse each of these sets of conditions within the three 'phases' identified by Volbrecht and Boughey (*ibid.*). The Academic Support phase was the support offered to predominantly Black students who had enrolled in higher education in the 1980s (Boughey, 2007). The second phase was from the 1990s onwards. The AD phase took the focus off the students and onto the institution, curriculum, teaching methods and so forth (*ibid.*). The last cycle, Higher Education Development was "from the late 1990s onwards, and results from the need for universities to respond to demands related to globalisation and a more neo-liberal agenda at policy level" (Boughey, 2007, p. 2).

In addition to Boughey's three phases, McKenna (2004a) outlined three specific curriculum cycles of language development that she identified as occurring in the post school education in South Africa, from 1991 to the present (*ibid.*). These cycles are described as: Cycle 1. English Second Language, Cycle 2. English for Academic Purposes and Cycle 3. Academic Literacy. Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 were based on the deficit model, where the problem lay with the students (*ibid.*).

Cycle 1 English Second language occurred from about 1991 to 1998. During this period, the academic support was mainly add-on courses, only for students who were identified as being 'weak' students. As Boughey (2007) noted above, these courses were predominantly for speakers of English as an additional language. The focus was on teaching language,

grammar and sentence construction. The courses were generic courses for all students, no matter for which discipline or course they were enrolled.

Underpinning such generic courses were beliefs related to what Christie (1983) has termed the 'Received Tradition' of language teaching. Such beliefs stressed the importance of correct language usage, over the creation of meaning. As Christie points out, grammar teaching can be related to a form of social control – control which ultimately seeks to deny access to powerful ways of 'meaning-making' by forcing students to focus on the details of language use, which they actually did not control, at the expense of more meaning-related concerns.

This cycle also relied on what Christie (1985) called models of 'Language as an Instrument of Communication'. It considered that thought was developed independently of language, and did not take into consideration the power relations present in language. This cycle failed to take into consideration the dominant discourses of the institution, nor the specific disciplines, nor the primary and secondary discourses. It was based on the autonomous approach to language and did not reflect the ideological nature of literacy.

The second cycle identified by McKenna (*ibid*), termed 'English for Academic Purposes', ran from about 1997 to 1999 and also targeted students who were identified as 'at risk' or 'weak'. This cycle, like the first cycle, was also generic and not discipline-specific nor focused on Second Language proficiency. The students were provided with a set of skills, such as note taking, reading strategies, writing an introduction and so forth. The students had to transfer the generic skills to their own disciplines, which many students were not able to do (*ibid.*). The skills were not always relevant to each discipline. This deficit way of viewing students also did not take into consideration the institutional discourses nor the ideological view of literacy. The add-on classes for 'weak' students also reflects what Christie (1993) calls 'Language as an Instrument of Communication', and seeing texts as autonomous.

The last cycle, Academic Literacy, was from 1991 to the present (*ibid.*). This cycle moved away from viewing academic literacy as an add-on course for the 'at risk' students. This

period saw academic literacy as being subsumed into the specific disciplines. The responsibility for the student's academic literacy lay with the specific discipline and the lecture, as it was incorporated into the discipline's course work. McKenna (2004a, p113) noted that this cycle was the continuation of the move from a 'Received Tradition' discourse, towards a discourse of 'discourses'.

In closing this section, it is necessary to emphasise that, although work on 'phases' of AD and cycles of language development work are useful in understanding shifts in practice in South Africa, the phases and cycles themselves cannot be seen to be definitive. Practices characteristic of each phase or cycle continue to co-exist on the South African higher education landscape. Significantly, so too do the beliefs which underpin them.

## **2.7 Academic literacy and social justice**

Social justice is related to the application of justice and the redress of injustices from a social perspective, and is identified with respect for human dignity (Shiman, 1999). The Higher Education Monitor (South Africa. DoBE, 2010(b), p. 46) notes that social justice emphasizes the inclusion and high participation, especially of people who were previously excluded in South Africa. Higher Education policy, therefore, is rooted in the discourse of social justice with student success and access being pivotal issues that the policy aims to address. In order for social justice to occur, the students enrolled at the CSD must, not only have access to educational opportunities, but be provided with every opportunity to succeed in their studies. Students are usually situated outside of academic Discourses, and one means of ensuring that they are provided with the opportunity to succeed, is to address the aspect of academic literacy and thereby to enable them to gain mastery and fluency over the Discourse(s) used in HEI's.

Access to the autonomous Discourse of the HEI, and achieving social justice is dependent on the student being taught or inducted into the dominant literacy of the Discourse. Gee states that Discourses are mastered by "enculturation ('apprenticeship') into social practices through scaffolding and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse" (1990, p. 47).

One of the functions of the lecturers, or course facilitators, at the HEI, is to make the dominant Discourse explicit for the students. This must not be done in an uncritical manner, as the practices that are used to enculturate the students could be outdated social and literacy practices (Gee, 2004, p. 91). In addition to this, the nature of literacy could be pluralistic. The course facilitators must also take cognizance of their own practices and the ideologies embedded in the academic literacy practices within the HEI.

The way in which perceptions of academic literacy have evolved, and the pluralistic nature of academic literacy have been highlighted in this chapter. Academic literacy, as now referred to, sees academic literacies in the plural, and refers to a multiplicity of literacies (Henderson & Hirst, 2007; Gee, 2004). It does not restrict academic literacy to a single view of literacy, with a particular set of practices. This pluralistic view of academic literacy sees each academic discipline as having a particular set of knowledge, practices and vocabulary. In order to produce acceptable academic texts, the student will have to be able to learn the specific literacy of his/her discipline, and also the ontological and epistemological norms of the HEI (Henderson & Hirst, 2007). This is related to my intention to explore how the lecturers in the CSD construct literacy, and to see how, and whether or not, the CSD courses are contributing to social justice.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have outlined the educational inequalities that the majority of the CSD students experienced during their primary education. In addition, I have outlined that by merely providing the students with epistemological access to the courses does not necessarily guarantee success. The manner in which literacy, including academic literacy, and the discourses which surround these issues, needs to be taken into consideration. The students need tacit understanding of what is required of them, in order to succeed on the course, and for social justice to be implemented.

## **CHAPTER 3      METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I begin by outlining the purpose and objectives of the research. This includes restating the questions that the research investigated. The chapter discusses and outlines the ontological paradigm on which my research is based. My research draws on the relationship between Bhaskar's Critical Realism (CR) and Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). I therefore begin by outlining the main concepts of CR, as well as its ontology and epistemology. This is followed by describing the research methodology, which includes an explanation of CDA, the methodological tool used for the purpose of data analysis.

Finally the data collection methods are described. This is done, firstly, by providing a brief profile of the respondents and the method of selection; secondly, by describing the assessment reports that were analysed. Thereafter, a brief description of how the assignment briefs were selected, is provided. Finally, the ethical considerations and limitations of the research is commented upon. My research focused on an analysis of the discourses used by the staff and the students at the CSD, to construct academic literacy.

### **3.2 Research Purpose and Objectives**

In Chapter 1, the context of the CSD students, was outlined, along with the academic literacy requirements of the respective courses that they are studying. The point was emphasised that, even though students have been provided with physical access to courses, this did not necessarily translate to epistemological access to the academic discourse of the courses.

In Chapter 2, I highlighted literature and research that outlined the difference between epistemological access and physical access to courses, and various understandings of, or approaches to, literacy that exist. In light of the context of the students and the supporting literature, my study aimed at investigating the understandings of CSD students and staff, with regards to academic literacy.

To achieve these goals, I investigated the following questions:

1. How do students construct academic literacy?
2. How do staff construct academic literacy?

### **3.3 Context of the study**

As outlined in Chapter 1, the study was focused on courses conducted by the Centre of Social Development (CSD). The CSD is an Institute attached to Rhodes University (RU). RU is located in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape Province. The CSD runs courses situated at Levels 4, 5 and 6 (B.Ed) on the NQF.

### **3.4 Paradigm or Orientation**

When conducting research, the research needs to be located in a paradigm. A paradigm is, in essence, a particular way of thinking about reality and knowledge. The term “paradigm” is derived from Greek, and refers to the way in which we understand and interpret the world (Covey, 1989, p.11). Guba (1990, p.17) refers to a paradigm as “a basic set of beliefs that guides action” and, later, as “a guide to disciplined inquiry”. The paradigm therefore encompasses both theories and methods (Cresswell, 1994, p.1).

Janse van Rensburg (2001, p.11) maintains that it is important that, before the researcher begins, he or she should have a clear understanding of the philosophical frameworks and paradigms that will guide the research activities. This also includes the underlying assumptions and limitations of the paradigms. The particular philosophical framework will be informed by, and in turn will inform, the research question and research goals, and the data collection method, as well as providing guidance for the analysis of the data collected.

As indicated, the paradigm provides the research direction and is a guide for the researcher throughout the research process. I proceed by outlining what is meant by CR, the philosophy which informs my research, and explain how discourse is located in the meta-theory. I have chosen CR predominantly, as it enables an analysis of discourse and consideration as to why people draw upon certain discourses (this is explained in more detail below). Scott (2005) noted that CR, its ontology and epistemology can offer an adequate metatheory for educational research.

### **3.5 Critical Realism (CR)**

Critical Realism (CR) is a philosophy, and is therefore a meta-theory, and consequently has both an ontological and epistemological element which outlines how structures, mechanisms and entities make up the social world (Bhaskar, 1989).

CR is minimally the claim that there is a real world, including a real social world, which exists independently of our knowledge about it (Fairclough, 2005). The most influential proponent of CR, and one of its key theorists, is Roy Bhaskar (1978, 1989, 1998). He noted that CR is a philosophy of reality and acts as an “underlabourer” to research (Bhaskar, 1978), and he outlines both the stratified ontological and epistemological bases of CR. Bhaskar maintains that there is an external reality that exists (ontological claim) independently of our conceptions (epistemological claim) of it (*ibid.*). CR’s manifesto, therefore, “is to recognize the reality of the natural order and the events and discourses of the social world” (Carlsson, 2005). We will only understand (and change) the social world if we identify the structures at work, that generate those events and discourses.

An exploration of the ontological and epistemological premises of CR is provided. This is followed by looking at the basic tenets of CR. The three ontological tenets that are outlined are: intransitivity, stratification of reality, and, thirdly, the role of causal relations in social reality. Finally, the role of language and discourse in CR is discussed.

#### **3.5.1 Critical Realism ontology**

As noted above, Critical Realism has both an ontology and an epistemology. Bhaskar (1978) notes that this takes the form of a philosophical ontology. I outline the ontology below.

##### **3.5.1.1 Transitive and in-transitive dimensions of reality**

Bhaskar makes an important distinction, in CR, between transitive and in-transitive dimensions of reality. He maintains (Bhaskar, 1978), as I have indicated above, that an external reality exists (for the most part) independent of our conceptions of it. The reality that exists, which we attempt to analyse, is called the “intransitive object of science”. The transitive, on the other hand, is that which is changing and is dependent on the historical and social context, and is our experience of the social world (*ibid.*).

Bhaskar’s theory of a layered or stratified reality can be exemplified by using a lecture/teaching situation involving the relationship between the lecturer/teacher and the student in the classroom setting. The student usually feel intimidated by the professional status and power of the lecturer. The lecturer/teacher, on the other hand, usually feel that he/she has the greater professional and “content knowledge”, and will assume the dominant teacher-student role. In the intransitive dimension of the lecturer’s and student’s experiences, neither the lecturer nor the student is aware of the underlying structures, mechanisms and processes that give rise to those experiences (the transitive). In other words, the intransitive world of the social relations exists, independent of our knowledge or belief about it (which is the transitive).

Our theories and notions of this objective reality constitute our knowledge of it i.e. they make up the transitive object. The transitive dimension is socially determined and changeable (in both the natural and the social orders) (Bhaskar, 2011, p. 137).

### 3.5.1.2 Differentiation and Stratification of reality

CR argues that the real world is ontologically stratified, differentiated and changing (Bhaskar, 1978, p13). The stratified ontology sees processes, or events, and structures as different strata of social reality with different properties (Fairclough, 2005). In CR, reality is viewed as being made up of distinct layers which are irreducible to each other (Bhaskar, 1979, Archer, 1995, Sayer, 2000). The real world consists of a plurality of structures that generate the events that occur, and do not occur (Carlsson, 2002).

	Domain of the Real	Domain of the Actual	Domain of the Empirical
Mechanisms	X		
Events	X	X	
Experiences	X	X	X

Figure 9 Bhaskar (1978, p13) Bhaskar’s three-layer conceptualisation of reality

In Figure 9, the “X’s indicate the domain of reality in which mechanisms, events and experiences, respectively reside, as well as the domains involved for such a residence to be possible” (*ibid.*).

The first layer of the layered reality is the Empirical. The Empirical is what we can see and experience directly or indirectly. In other words it is that which is experienced or observed through our senses. It is the layer where we make sense of, and interpret what happens. The experiences and observations are multiple and will depend on the history and social context (it is transitive). The layer of the Empirical is also relative. People will have differing experiences and make different observations, depending on who they are and their social context.

The next layer, the Actual, is also transitive, and is the layer of events from which experiences and observations emerge. This is the realm of events that actually happen when the real is activated. The actual is where events in the social and natural worlds actually occur. Teaching takes place as a series of classes or meetings with students.

The final layer is the Real. This layer comprises structures and mechanisms with generative power (Bhaskar, 1979, Sayer, 1992). The idea that these structures and mechanisms have ‘generative’ power signifies the emergence of events at the level of the Actual, and experiences at the level of the Empirical as a result of their interplay. Both the Actual and the Empirical emerge from the Real – but cannot be reduced to it. Bhaskar noted (1979) that, “real structures exist independently of, and are often out of phase with, the actual patterns of events”. The Real is therefore intransitive and unchanging and consists of mechanisms that produce the events (causal powers) and are independent of human thought and existence. This layer effectively encompasses all layers but, importantly, includes the mechanisms from which other layers emerge. These mechanisms can be active or dormant. The realms of the Actual and Empirical are made possible by the Real.

An example of the stratified ontology is that of a lesson with the CSD course students. According to Bhaskar’s theory, the lesson, conceptualised as an event at the level of the

Actual, is generated by mechanisms and structures which exist at the level of the Real. The mechanism and structures will include education policies, the curriculum, or philosophies of teaching and learning. In the context of this study, these structures and mechanisms will also include theories of what it means to be literate, on the part of the lecturer and the students. The participants in the lesson, namely the course facilitator and the CSD students, will experience the lesson in different ways. The course facilitator will experience and observe the lesson differently to the students, because of the way structures and mechanisms have worked to affect the emergence of these experiences. The student will experience the lesson differently, because different structures and mechanisms are affecting emergence in her case. Different learners in the lesson will also experience the lesson differently. Figure 10 below is a diagrammatic representative of this example.

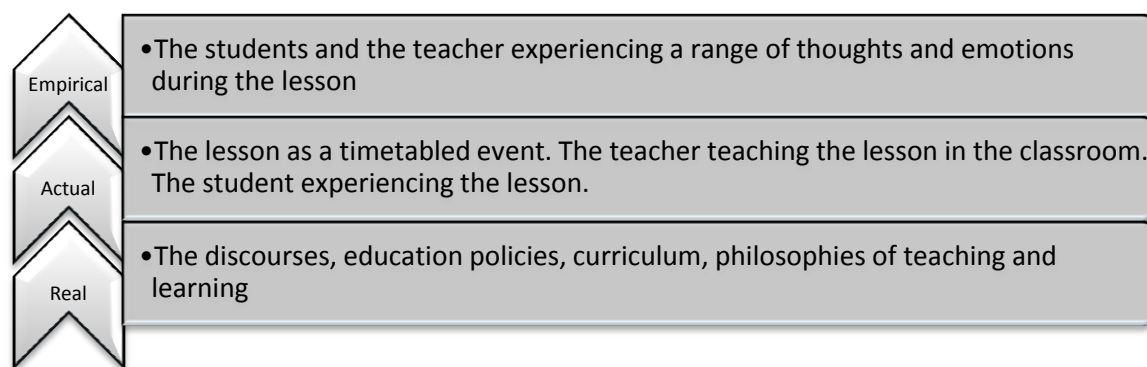


Figure 10 The Real, Actual and Empirical

As this example outlines, Bhaskar’s philosophy allows the researcher to account for the relativity of human experience and observation, whilst at the same time, acknowledging an absolute relativity of generative mechanisms and structures.

### 3.5.1.3 Causality and mechanisms in Critical Realism

Bhaskar (1978, p.13) sees causal mechanisms as being part of the domain of the Real (see Figure 9). He identifies the mechanisms as existing “as the causal power of things” (*ibid.*, p. 50). Things do not happen by chance, or without a reason. Behind events and courses of events there are powers generating them (Danermark, Ekström , Jakobsen & Karlsson, 2002). Nonetheless, the relationship between powers and events and courses of events, and people’s experiences of them is tendential rather than strictly causal. This is because

the world is understood as an open system. An open system can be seen as, “When generative mechanisms operate in combination with each other; the more mechanisms involved, the more difficult to anticipate the outcome”. In an open system the connections between cause and effect are not always clear. The activities in the system will be unstable, as people will interpret and implement things differently according to the variables (Archer 1998; Sayer 2000).

The purpose of research is to find the inherent mechanism (“causal powers”) that generate events as they are relatively enduring. “Critical realism consequently takes its entry point on the basic assumption that objects in reality possess causal powers, that is, generative mechanisms” (Danermark et al 2002). Baskhar (1989) remarked that:

*we will only be able to understand—and so change—the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses ... These structures are not spontaneously apparent in the observable pattern of events; they can only be identified through the practical and theoretical work of the social sciences.*

### **3.5.2 Critical Realism epistemology**

Sayer (2000, p.2) noted that the CR epistemology is based on the idea that the ontology has theories of reality, and that these theories can be improved upon. As the theories can be constantly improved upon we can never claim to know the world fully. Our knowledge of the world is fallible (*ibid.*).

CR views knowledge as socially produced and transient (*ibid.*) so that we can only understand and explain the world in terms that are available to us. It is always possible to discover more causal mechanisms.

### **3.5.3 Language and discourse in Critical Realism**

CR enables an analysis that can be used to determine why people draw upon certain discourses, and help to determine the discourses that are used.

The manner in which people perceive, understand and take action in the world is historically and culturally specific, therefore socially constructed (Burr, 1995). The ontological paradigm of CR, states that social worlds are socially constructed, and claims that there are mediating entities that account for the relationship between structure and processes or events. CR

sees language as constructing our social realities as a result of the conceptualisation of discourse as a mechanism at the level of the Real (Bhaskar 1998). Discourses, when identified by a researcher, are the manifestation of an activated causal mechanism. Sayer (2000, p. 96) states that, “discourses can have real effects: but then, if it can have effects, it must also be capable of being causal, that is, capable of producing change”. People are often not aware of the effects of the discourses to which they subscribe, and the effects of activating mechanisms are often unintended (Sayer, 1992). Carlsson (2002) sees CR’s manifesto as recognizing, “the reality of the natural order and the events and discourses of the social world”.

### **3.6 Research Methodology**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was the methodology used in this research project. While the paradigm provides the scaffolding for the research, CR, as a meta-theory or paradigm, consists of both an epistemology and strong ontological framework. A methodology can be viewed as a, “set of tools for choosing between different methods” to investigate the nature of social reality (Midgley, 2000, p.53).

Archer (1995, p. 57) remarked that all social theory is ontologically shaped and methodologically moulded, even if these processes remain covert and are hardly acknowledged by the researcher. Ontology acts as a “gatekeeper and bouncer” for methodology, and the two regulate each other. She further elaborated that, “ontology without a methodology is deaf and dumb; a methodology without an ontology is blind” (*ibid.*). Methodology therefore needs to be linked with ontology and provide guidelines for choosing a different method. However, while the methodology provides a lens for the researcher to view the data, it does not begin to provide a tool that the researcher can use to analyse the data.

In outlining the methodology, I begin by analysing what is meant by the term ‘discourse’ and how discourse relates to CR. This is followed by an explanation of what is meant by CDA, and the role of discourse in CDA. Finally, an outline of the Critical Realist approach to Discourse Analysis is provided.

### 3.6.1 Discourse

As my research was concerned with the constitution of and role of discourses in academic literacy, and as discourse can be understood as a generative mechanism in the realm of the Real in CR, an explanation of the term 'discourse' is provided. There are various definitions of discourse, which can be confusing (Tenorio, 2011, p.184). My research uses Kress's definition of 'discourse', as his definition underpins CDA, the research methodology used in this study. Gee's use of big 'D' and small 'd' discourses was outlined in Chapter 2. Gee's understandings of Discourse/discourse differs from Kress'. It is therefore necessary to be clear that I am using the Kressian definition within my methodological framework, and Gee's definition as substantive theory to effect my analysis.

#### 3.6.1.1 Kress's definition of Discourse

As I focussed on the use of CDA as the methodology for my study, Kress's definition of discourse is used.

Kress (1989, p 7) states that discourses are:

*...systematically-organised sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution. Beyond this, they define, describe and delimit what is possible to say (and, by extension, what is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally. A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organises and gives structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. In that, it provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions.*

Kress's definition of discourse sees discourses as a set or group of ideas that are found together in language or other sign systems. The discourses, or sets of ideas, are not static, but are open to change. In CR, discourse can be located at the level of the Real, and understood as a causal mechanism on which individuals draw to effect the emergence of events at the level of the Actual, and experiences at the level of the Empirical.

It is useful to note the distinction between discourse and discursive practices. In CR, discourse-related practices are located in the realm of the Real. This is where the students and the lecturers, or teachers, do or speak the discourses that they consciously or unconsciously adhere to. That is, the 'clumps of ideas' are located here. These ideas give

rise to the practices at the level of the Actual. The discursive practices emerge from the discourses at the level of the Real as 'events' at the level of the Actual. Discourses (but not discourse practices) are also mechanisms present at the level of the Real (this relates to discourses as defined by Kress). Discourses at this level are the accepted discourses and mechanisms as they are the more dominant discourses and seem, and appear, to be common sense (and therefore not challenged). For example, a teacher subscribes (consciously or unconsciously) to discourses which focus on learners being active participants in constructing their knowledge. She believes that knowledge is therefore constructed through interaction. The lesson which emerges as a result of the generative power of these discourses will be very different from a lesson which emerges from a teacher whose discourse is that children should be subservient and listen, and that knowledge is simply transmitted.

### **3.6.1.2 Gee's definition of Discourse and Critical Realism**

I have already described Gee's concept of Discourse in Chapters 1 and 2, so only a brief explanation is provided in this chapter. Gee sees Discourse as being the socially accepted way of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting, that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network' (Gee, 1990, p. 143). I furthermore outlined primary discourse used in a particular context which has embedded social and cultural practices. This was contrasted with secondary Discourse, which is acquired during schooling, and is usually indicative that the person can use language meaningfully to read and write relevant texts (Gee, 1990). In order to become a member of a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), membership is indicated by the acquisition of the group's Discourse. This Gee (1990) refers to as Discourse with a capital D. Membership is shown when the person acquires the Discourse and is able to appropriately use the group's "language".

In other words, it is a particular social group (for this research the social groups refer to the Staff and students at CSD) and their "way of being in the world", their social identity, and their form of life (Gee, 1990, p3.). In the context of this study, one Discourse is the academic Discourse prevalent in the Academic Discourse of the CSD and its ensuing environment. Each Discourse is tacit and conveys tacit messages that the staff and

students consider is the right way to think, to be, and to behave in a particular context, and the academic work and “literacy” that they are expected to produce. Gee’s definition of discourse therefore spans both the Real, the Actual and the Empirical, as he identifies Discourses as having being, saying, doing , valuing and believing roles. Gee’s construct of Discourse can thus be seen to relate to CR.

### **3.6.2 What is meant by the term Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)?**

#### **3.6.2.1 CDA is a methodology**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) contributes a theoretical frame for observing and understanding social life and social reality. CDA provides a framework that enables the researcher to study the processes that construct and maintain the social world. Phillips and Hardy (2002, p. 2) note that, “Without discourse, there is no social reality, and without understanding discourse, we cannot understand our reality, our experiences, or ourselves”. Discourse analysis is a methodology that enables an analysis of the discourses prevalent in the social world.

#### **3.6.2.2 What is meant by CDA?**

A vast amount has been written about CDA (Atkins, 2002, p. 2). As a result it is challenging to define CDA in simple terms, as it encompasses a vast number of tenets and uses a range of techniques. One definition of CDA is that of Luke (1997, p.50). Luke says that:

*Critical discourse analysis is a contemporary approach to the study of language and discourses in social institutions. Drawing on poststructuralist discourse theory and critical linguistics, it focuses on how social relations, identity, knowledge and power are constructed through written and spoken texts.*

As CDA is concerned about social issues (van Dijk, 1997) and, as I have contended (in Chapter 2) that access to academic literacy is a matter of social justice, it was appropriate that CDA be used for data analysis.

Although, CDA does not ascribe to a particular orientation, and is multi-disciplinary (van Dijk, 2003), its basic tenet is that of making sense of the world in a subjective interpretation of individuals, and is influenced by the social environment and the dominant discourse (Talja, 1998, p. 1). In CDA, the researcher does not make “the assumption that there is only

one truly active version of participants' actions and beliefs." (*ibid.*). CR, does not advocate that there is only one active version of participants' actions and beliefs, and admits relativity at the levels of the Actual and Empirical (Bhaskar, 1978).

In essence, "CDA is used to describe, interpret and explain the relationship between language, society and educational practice" (Rogers, 2004, p.2). As CDA not only focuses on texts (spoken, written or pictures) this means a 'critical' account of Discourse requires:

*a theorization and description of both the social processes and structures, which give rise to the production of a text, and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social-historical subjects, create meanings in their interaction with texts" (Fairclough &Kress, 1993).*

CDA can also be used as a type of analytical research that has its primary focus on dominant relations "by elite groups and institutions, as they are being enacted, legitimated or otherwise reproduced by text and talk" (van Dijk, 1993). The CDA approach is referred to as critical, as it is concerned with relations of power as it provides an explanation of how Discourse is "shaped by power and ideology, and how it is used to construct social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief" (Cots, 2006, p.336). A number of different approaches to CDA exist and can all be applied to educational research. For the purposes of analysing the data that was collected, I have used a combination of both Gee's (1999b) and Fairclough's (1992) analytical approaches. As noted above, the methodology of CDA used to analyse the data was underpinned by Kress's definition of discourse. This definition locates discourses (in the Kressian sense) as mechanisms at the level of the Real in CR.

### **3.6.3 The use of Fairclough and Gee in analysing data**

Gee (2004), points out that approaches to CDA differ with regard to their belief in form and function, but this does not mean that they are incompatible (form refers to grammar, semantics, syntax etc., and function refers to how people use language in different situations to achieve an outcome). Fairclough (1992), one of the leading theorists of CDA is a Critical Realist and has developed a three-dimensional model.

Gee's and Fairclough's frameworks of CDA are similar, and they each subscribe to the concept that CDA occurs from the bottom up (Gee, 2004). While Fairclough's work is based on Hallidayian models of textual analysis and grammar, Gee's model consists of grammar and textual analysis and socio-linguistics, combined with literacy criticisms (*ibid.*). Despite this, these two models are not incompatible. They merely reflect the difference in training between the two analysts (Gee, 2005; Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui & Joseph, 2005). I therefore used Gee's guidelines for CDA, but I used Fairclough as a lens to interpret the data that I collected.

### 3.6.4 Fairclough's Model for CDA

Fairclough (1995) has developed a three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis. This model is depicted as three interconnected boxes, which are all necessary for analysis, and in order to interpret each other. These boxes represent: socio-cultural practices, discursive practices, and finally, the texts (both oral and written). These three dimensions are not separate, but can overlap, depending on the level, or levels, that are more relevant to the research process (Fairclough, 1995, p.57).

The following figure outlines how the three dimensions relate to each other.

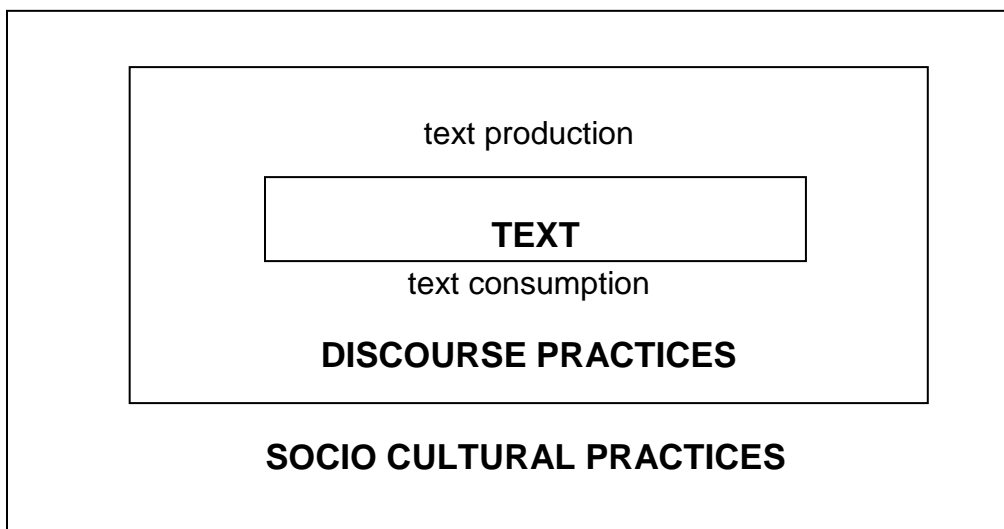


Figure 11 Fairclough's 3 dimension concept of CDA

### **3.6.5.1 Socio-cultural practices**

Socio-cultural practices means, “the social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is part of” (*ibid.*). Socio-cultural practices therefore refer to the broader social and cultural practices that inform the conditions with which the text is concerned. For the purposes of this research, the socio-cultural process refers to the following three contexts: local, institutional and societal. The local context, or domain, refers to a particular text (oral or written) (Fairclough, 1995). The local contexts, in this research, were the interviews that I conducted, as well as the assessment reports. The institutional domains refer to the social institutions that enable, or constrain, the local domain (Rogers, 2004, p.6). In my research the institutional domain will be the CSD and RU institutional policies, the NQF and SAQA, as well as the course materials that were used in each course to scaffold learners’ academic literacies. Fairclough refers to the societal context as the meta narratives are influenced by, and in turn influence the institutional and local domains (Fairclough, 1995). In my research, this domain related to narratives about literacy and academic literacy in particular.

Roger (2005) points out that an analyst using Fairclough’s framework of analysing data will constantly be moving between the macro and micro analyses of the text (written and oral).

### **3.5.5.2 Discourse Practices**

Discourse practices, refer to the conditions related to the production and consumption of the text (Fairclough, 1995, p. 57). The topic of discourse has been discussed extensively in this chapter, and this is therefore not done again. However, it must be noted that Fairclough’s model of CDA conceptualises discourse practices at the level of the Actual in Critical Realism (Fairclough, 2005).

### **3.6.5.3 Text Analysis**

In Figure 11, the innermost box refers to the text itself, using linguistic and discursive strategies to analyse the text, as part of this. Text, in this instance, refers to both written and spoken text. Fairclough’s model allows for the interpretation of the text, not as a singular entity divorced from social and economic constraints, but as a factor that is both constituted, and constitutes, current social relations (Fairclough, 1995, p. 57).

### 3.7 Data Collection Methods

Three data collection methods were used. During my research, I focused on gathering qualitative data, using a series of semi-structured individual and focus group interviews. I also analysed assessment reports written about students' work, and one assignment, required by the respective courses.

The individual interviews, and the focus group interviews, were semi-structured as, in qualitative research, the interview is in essence a conversation, and it is up to the researcher to establish the general direction for the interview (at least initially), but to be flexible in pursuing topics raised by the respondent (Babbie & Mouton 2001, p. 289). The interviewer may diverge in order to pursue an idea in more detail (Britten, 1995, p. 251).

Focus group interviews were used. This study is "a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher" Morgan (1996 p.1). Focus groups, furthermore, constitute a research technique that is an effective method of data collection in academic research, particularly suited to exploring attitudes and beliefs (Gibbs, 1997).

In addition, focus groups are a means of bringing several people together to share their thoughts and their experiences, and to create meaning amongst themselves (Babbie and Mouton 2001, p. 289). Focus groups are an important data collection method, as a focus group, "promotes self-disclosure among participants and enables the researcher to inductively know what people really think and feel, and creates a comfortable and permissive environment" (*ibid.*). In light of the social nature of literacy, this method was appropriate to use to collect data for my research, as it allowed me to access dominant discourses related to literacy.

The data was recorded, using a micro cassette audio recorder. All the interviews were transcribed.

### **3.7.1 Profiles of students and course facilitators/lecturers**

The focus of my research was on looking at the way CSD course facilitators and the students enrolled on the various courses, constructed academic literacy. The way both staff and students construct literacy discursively is important, as this impacts on their literacy practices (in the case of the students) and on their teaching of literacy (in the case of the course facilitators). It is thus ultimately related to epistemological access. Students are expected, on the various courses, to do a vast amount of reading, and to produce academic texts based on their own understandings of what is required of them by the course, course facilitator, and institution. These conceptions of academic requirements may, or may not, be the same as those of the institution and the course facilitators.

All interviews were transcribed, and each respondent was allocated a number in order to preserve anonymity. The course facilitators were allocated a number from C1 –C11, for both the individual and the focus group interviews. The students were allocated a number S1 – S9 when transcribing the responses from the interview.

### **3.7.2 Semi-Structured individual interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were held with individual CSD students and staff members. Gillham (2006, p. 62) states that when interviewing, even if interviews are unstructured and as natural as possible, it is not to be rushed into. In light of this, I informed the participants in good time of the research, and ensured that they were informed about the purpose of the research prior to the interviews taking place. I emphasised anonymity and tried to make the participants as “comfortable” as possible.

#### **3.7.2.1 Profiles of individual students interviewed**

The students that were selected for this study were all students who were either on the Levels 4, 5 or B.Ed courses. The majority of the students enrolled on CSD courses, are practising teachers, either in an ECD Centre or a Foundation Phase Classroom in a Primary School. The LoLT in CSD courses is English. The Levels 4, 5 and B.Ed classes predominantly consist of participants who are speakers of English as an additional language. The Level 5 and the B.Ed students have a matriculation certificate, but this is not necessarily true of the Level 4 students who can gain access to the course, as a Level 4

course is seen as the equivalent of a Matriculation Certificate (Senior Certificate). The majority of the students were products of Bantu Education during the apartheid era.

For the purposes of this study, I was unable to use random sampling, but rather self-selection (on the part of the students) was used, as students offered to be interviewed. Initial contact with the students was made by asking the Levels 4, 5 and B.Ed course facilitators for a list of students they thought would be willing, and sufficiently confident in English, to take part in the research project. All students recommended were approached as to their willingness and availability to take part in the interviews and to be interviewed in English. Six students were interviewed for the purpose of this study.

The following students were interviewed: two students from the Level 5, two students from the Level 4 course and two students from the B.Ed course. One of the B.Ed students was doing the B.Ed course at the time of the study, and the second student was a student who had already graduated with a B.Ed degree. Although students self-selected for the study, I tried to interview students from a range of social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. I was fortunate in that both black and white students volunteered to participate in my study.

Initially I attempted to start the interview with the students by presenting a piece of written work, and asking them to comment upon it. By doing this, I hoped to elicit their understandings of what constituted appropriate academic text. Unfortunately, the students seemed reluctant and/or unable to comment. I therefore only asked questions during the interviews. I emphasised anonymity, and tried to create a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

The interview discussions were based on the students' experiences of the course, writing of assignments and feedback by the course facilitator. An interview schedule, consisting of a set of guiding interview questions, was used. See Appendix B for a copy of the interview schedule and questions used.

### **3.7.2.2 Profiles of individual course facilitators/lecturers interviewed**

The staff who are teaching on the Level 4 and Level 5 courses are referred to as course facilitators, while the staff teaching on the B.Ed course are referred to as lecturers. But, for the purpose of the study, all the staff were referred to as course facilitators.

Three course facilitators were interviewed; one course facilitator from each of the following courses: One from Level 4, one from Level 5 and one from the B.Ed group. The Level 4 course had two course facilitators; they were both approached with regard to their availability to be interviewed. One course facilitator indicated that she was willing to participate in an individual interview, the other felt that she had not enough experience, but would form part of the focus group interview. The Level 5 course had only one course facilitator, so unfortunately this limited the choice of staff members to interview. Selection of an interviewee at the B.Ed level was constrained as there was only one full time staff member working at this level, while other lecturers were part time. The B.Ed course facilitator had taught the Level 5 courses in previous years.

### **3.7.3 Focus Group Interviews**

#### **3.7.3.1 Profiles of students for focus group interview**

The focus group interview consisted of five students: one from the Level 4 course, two from the Level 5 course and two from the past B.Ed course. The two Level 5 students had in previous years completed the Level 1 (now defunct), and Level 4 courses. Similarly, one of the B.Ed students had completed the Level 1, Level 4 and B.Ed course. They were, therefore, familiar with the CSD courses and methodology (ies). The students were chosen on the basis of their willingness and availability to participate in my study.

#### **3.7.3.2 The CSD staff**

Profiles of the course facilitators interviewed for the focus group interview are discussed below. Both of the Level 4 course facilitators formed part of the focus group interview. The only Level 5 course facilitator formed part of the group interview, so too did the B.Ed Lecturer and a part time lecturer on the B.Ed who was intimately acquainted with the course and students, and had taught extensively on the course. The full time B.Ed lecturer had

also taught on the Level 5 course, so she was familiar with both of the courses and the academic requirements.

### **3.7.4 Assessment Tasks and Assessment Reports**

In addition to the interviews an analysis was conducted on assessment reports. Course facilitators are required to complete assessment reports after each assessment has been completed. The reports are based on student performance and require comments on students' strengths and areas for improvement. Three assessment reports were analysed: one from Level 4, one from Level 5 and one from the B.Ed course

The Level 4 and Level 5 courses mandatory assessment reports are written by the course facilitator, after each Unit Standard has been assessed. These reports are required by the Education Training Development Practice Education Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA). The B.Ed lecturer writes a generalised Assessment Report to the students, after each batch of academic or practical assignments.

One assignment report was chosen from each of the respective courses. Each of the assignment reports were very different in format, and content, and, as noted, some of the reports were intended for individual students, while others were general reports for the whole class.

The Level 4 assessment report, for the Special Needs Assignment, that was provided for this study, was written as a generalised assignment report and did not focus on any individual student.

The Level 5 has a general assignment report, but individual students were referred to. The Level 5 Assessment report that was chosen was the Assignments for Exit Level Outcome (ELO) 1 and 4 that students would be required to do during their second contact session block week. In total, five Assignments (a mixture of practical and academic) were outlined for ELO 1 and 4, but for the purposes of this study only one of the assignment briefs was chosen. The assignment brief included in this study was the report that covered the

assignment entitled: “Helping Children Acquire a Second Language.” This brief was chosen as it was the academic assignment required for these ELO’s.

For the purpose of this research, the first B .Ed Assessment Task for the first years was selected. The Assessment Task was comprised of eight smaller tasks which were all academic in nature.

The assessment report compiled by the B.Ed lecturer for this Assessment Task was chosen, as this would highlight general initial challenges, general errors and comments that students encountered, as perceived by the lecturer. Figure 12 outlines the various levels, the assignments and assessment reports that were collected for this research.

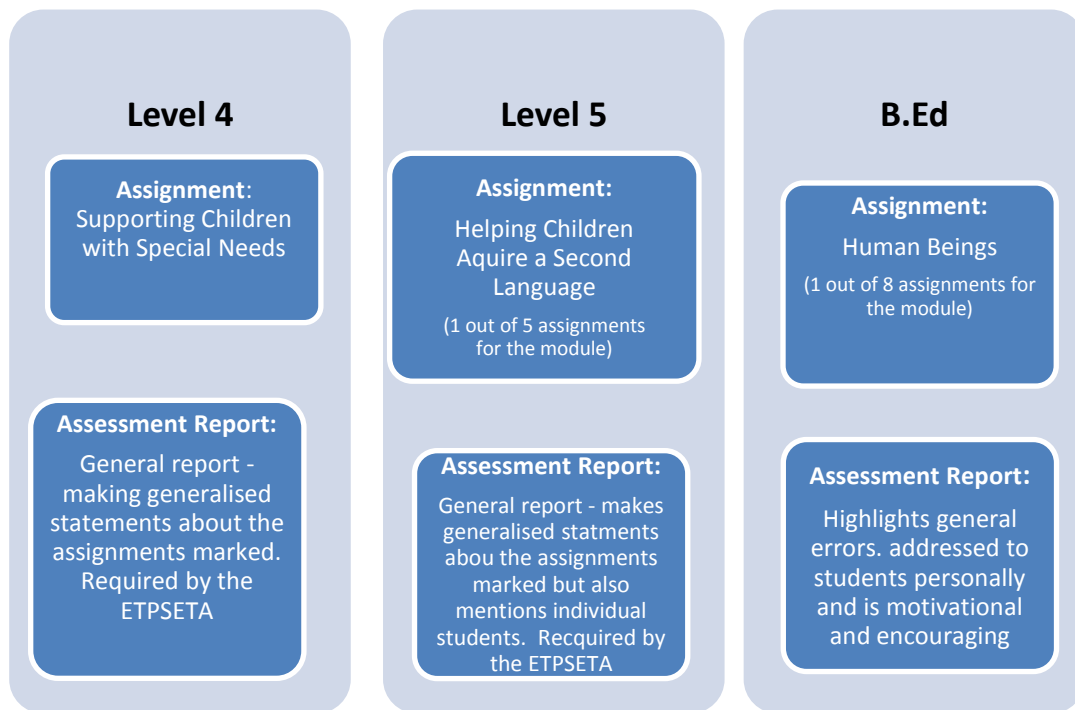


Figure 12 Synopsis of Assignments and Reports

### 3.8 Dealing with the data

#### 3.8.1 Interviews

The data generation began by conducting the interviews (as outlined above). The individual and focus group interviews were then transcribed. Each interviewee was referred to as a ‘respondent’ and provided with a number in order to ensure anonymity.

### **3.8.2 Assessment Reports and Assignment requirements**

The respective course facilitators were requested to provide one assignment or assessment for their course, as well as a corresponding assessment report. Electronic copies were provided.

### **3.8.3 Nvivo**

The transcriptions along with the assignment reports and the assignments were all exported onto NVivo 9 software programme. NVivo is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, with tools that help code and categorise large amounts of data (Yin, 2009). NVivo 9 is a software programme that is loaded onto the computer to assist with data analysis. Pope, Ziebland and Nicholas (2000, p. 115) note that the evolution of using data management software programmes has the potential to improve the rigour of analysis of data collected.

### **3.8.4 Data analysis steps**

I began the data analysis by using NVivo to look at the raw data, and began to use CDA as a lens to get a sense of the recurring ideas and, thus, key discourses. NVivo assisted with the coding of the transcripts, as well as assisting with the investigation of discourses prevalent in the assignment reports, generated by the course facilitators, as well as the assignment briefs. Coding is in essence a procedure that disaggregates the data and breaks it down into manageable segments (Schwandt, 2000). It also identifies and names those segments. Coding, therefore, involved the process of finding commonalities, giving them a code or category and then linking other parts of the data that share something in common with the category or theme.

During the coding process I looked for related and unrelated ideas, and interpreted them, using Gee's guidelines for CDA, but I used Fairclough as a lens to interpret the data that I collected. From a preliminary identification of the broad discourses, I could begin to draw out subordinate discourses. I constantly looked at the data and compared the codes with other codes, while looking for new discourses. This was done repeatedly.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

The question of ethics needs to be considered at all stages of the study. It was assumed that the staff and students have knowledge and understanding of academic literacy, and it was considered that their knowledge was tacit.

Informed consent was obtained from the students and course presenters, regarding their participation in the study (See Appendix A). This included consent to tape-record interviews and use the information gleaned from the focus group sessions. In addition to obtaining informed consent, participants were assured of anonymity. Furthermore, participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time (Denzil & Lincoln, 2000). Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, (2000) observed that qualitative researchers focus their research on exploring, examining, and describing people and their natural environments, which results in a power relationship between the researcher and the respondents. The fact that the students are enrolled at the CSD could have been an inhibiting power factor which prevented them from being forthright in their interviews.

### **3.10 Limitations of the research**

This research relied on the staff and the students volunteering to committing to be interviewed. The interviews took place at a time that was convenient to most people. However, some of the students were unable to make any of the times and dates set for the focus group interviews. Despite this, all the participating students and staff were willing to participate in the research.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

This chapter reported on the data collection methods, the reason why these methods were used, as well as the paradigms and ontology that framed the research and analysis of the data. This chapter therefore provides a thorough background and context for Chapter 4, which is set out in the findings from the data.

## CHAPTER 4

## PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the major discourses, related to my research study, that emerged from the data that I collected. In this section, I begin by describing the discourses that became apparent during the data analysis. I outline how the discourses surfaced, by first looking at comments from individual interviews with the course facilitators. This is followed by the outlining comments from the focus group interviews with the course facilitators. Thereafter, the section on the course facilitators is completed by looking at the assignment requirements, and the staff reports that were written on assignments. This is followed by the relevant data pertaining to the various discourses mentioned by the students during their individual interviews, and finally the focus group interviews are discussed. (When citing respondents, I have used the exact wording from the transcripts so any grammatical errors or repetitions are from the original transcripts.) The remarks and/or commentaries in italics are my own, in order to provide context to some of the comments made during the interviews. As indicated in Chapter 3, I made use of NVivo to manage the data and to identify the relevant discourses prevalent in the data.

### 4.2 Research Findings

#### 4.2.1 'Autonomous Model of Literacy' Discourse

The first discourse to be discussed relates to the way facilitators and students construct literacy. This discourse is clearly pertinent to my research questions. The critical analysis of this discourse draws on Street's autonomous and ideological model of literacy, and includes Gee's understanding of Discourse and literacy as outlined in Chapter 2.

As already indicated in Chapter 2, the autonomous model sees literacy as a discrete set of skills that need to be learnt in order to succeed, while the ideological model views literacy in a broader sense, and emphasises the social context of literacy. As the autonomous model views literacy as consisting of skills that need to be learnt, it overlaps, to a certain extent, Christie's Received Tradition of Language Teaching. The Received Tradition of Language Teaching "calls for the remedying of grammatical problems, as if a conscious knowledge of

the surface rules of language is what the students are lacking”, and if these instructions were made overt to the students the problem would disappear (Mc Kenna, 2004b, p. 282). This is a separate discourse and is discussed later on in the chapter. Abundant evidence of the autonomous model exists in the data collected for the study.

#### **4.2.1.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

Respondent C7 made a statement about the students’ general literacy abilities; she noted that “some of them (*students*) are illiterate”. This indicated that the course facilitator respondent C7 saw literacy in terms of being literate or illiterate. This contrasts with Street’s notion of the ideological nature of literacy, which identifies multiple literacies as well as Gee’s construct of primary and secondary Discourses. The respondent was also drawing on a discourse of deficiency constructing students as lacking ability. Students might not have demonstrated mastery of the literacies of the academy or the school, but, nonetheless, they would have demonstrated mastery of some literacies.

Furthermore, respondent C7 voiced the opinion on students’ reading ability, “for them (*the students*) to read, it’s difficult”. This comment outlines not only the deficit discourse of students’ abilities, but also does not take into account the ideological nature of literacy, and suggests that reading is a set of skills that needs to be improved. In addition, it does not take into account discourses and the ideological nature of the readings.

Respondent C8 stated that students should be encouraged to go to ABET classes to improve their reading and writing, because those are the skills that they will need, “more especially when they are teachers [it is] obvious that they have to write most... there are those who can read and write now and they must keep on reading so as to get better understanding”. Further on in the interview she once again referred to the idea that students’ writing skills were poor. The statements made by C8 all draw on Street’s autonomous model of literacy, that literacy is made up of discrete skills and based on the idea that literacy involves the encoding and decoding of print.

Street’s autonomous model of literacy, in addition to viewing reading as a skill that will improve with practice, was also commented upon by course facilitators C5 and C11.

Respondent C5 noted that giving the students activities to improve their reading, such as summarising and paraphrasing, “made the reading go quicker”, while respondent C11 stated that, “just giving them (*students*) more practice in writing” would assist. This respondent was also drawing on the autonomous model of literacy which views literacy as a skill which needs to be practised.

#### **4.2.1.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

During the individual interviews, respondent C1 remarked that she thought the students could read and write, but then amended her statement to agree with a colleague (respondent C3) who said, “they (*referring to the students*) can read and write up to a point.” Respondent C1 later elaborated that she had, “a group of students whose basic language and reading and writing skills are poor. They are almost illiterate”. These statements also reflect Street’s autonomous model of literacy and the belief that literacy is when one is either literate or illiterate and that literacy involves the encoding and decoding of print.

In addition, during the individual interviews, respondent C6 revealed that she thought that, “for literacy, an assignment, a written assignment” needs to be compiled by the students. In this statement the course facilitator was revealing that she thought that literacy consisted of writing, which was once again in contrast to the ideological nature of literacy, and the concept of literacy as relating to Discourses (Gee, 1990).

Respondent C6 did not consistently refer to the autonomous model of literacy. At times she made reference to the ideological nature of literacy, and in particular to Gee’s concept of primary Discourses. This can be seen in her comment, “When you ask students a question they are often inclined to answer the question from their own experience. It has nothing to do with the text”. This comment seemed to indicate that students did not have the literacy practice of finding the answers in the text. The primary Discourse that they drew on did not support this practice. Rather, it supported the practice of drawing on prior experience. Finding answers in the text related to a particular school-based literacy, practised in reading comprehensions.

The ideological nature of literacy was also reflected in her comments on how:

*. . . the students that have come in, like the students that we have now, they can write you know. But it's like their reading they write in everyday way and schooling is not about the everyday, you know. It's about trying to understanding things in more depth you know. Otherwise why bother to go to school... or to university?*

Respondent C6 was not only illustrating that she ascribed to the belief in the ideological nature of literacy, but also her awareness that schooling involves more than teaching 'everyday' understanding of things. The understanding that the knowledge at school is different from that of the school resonates with Bernstein's (1999) theory of different types of knowledge, which he terms 'discourses'. Bernstein (*ibid.*) distinguishes between horizontal discourse and vertical discourse. The horizontal discourse or common sense or 'profane' knowledge is the kind of knowledge that is acquired and used in the home and local community. On the other hand, the vertical discourse, or arcane knowledge, is characteristic of formal schooling and of academic study, where knowledge is abstracted from every day and common sense understandings. Respondent C6's comments seem to indicate her belief that the students have not made the transition from profane, or common sense knowledge, to the more arcane knowledge prized by formal schooling.

In addition, respondents C2, C5 and C4 all referred to the interrelationship between reading and writing, and the belief that if reading skills are mastered, then writing will improve. For example, respondent C2 said that they need to practice their reading so that their writing will improve. This was echoed by respondents C5 and C4. Respondent C5 noted that, "On writing, "I suppose it goes hand in hand with the reading you know, and then the comprehension and everything." Respondent C5, when summing up the development of academic literacy that occurs in Level 4, mentioned that the course facilitators, "are starting at a very basic level...with students of various levels... you are trying to build on that". While respondent C4 said: "I see the only way to improve reading and writing is by giving them (*students*) lots of reading and written tasks to do". The three respondents were once again referring to the autonomous notion of literacy, and that language is made up of discrete skills. They also did not take into account literacy in an 'ideological' sense.

If the students are encouraged to read and write more, then it is likely that they will gain more access to academic literacies. However, this depends, to a large extent, on the manner in which this happens. For example, if the course co-ordinator merely makes use of the typical grammatical-type exercises, and reading comprehension, then the students will be subjected to the 'Received Tradition', and reading and writing will continue to remain divorced from their everyday lives. If the course co-ordinator adopts a different approach, which takes the socially embedded nature of reading into account, and which, firstly, engages students in reading as an everyday practice (i.e. so they see the purpose and use of reading in their everyday lives) and secondly, introduces the student to the idea that reading has a purpose and meaning, and provides a standpoint on a topic (which is a part of academic literacy), then more gains might be achieved.

Prinsloo and Breier (1996) comment on the Social Uses of Literacy Project (SoUL). They indicate that that a purpose needs to be created in order for people to want to read, and that the texts in most ABET classes were in fact irrelevant for the daily needs of the adult students. The project showed that people manage to get by without reading, and that they often do not see the reason for reading. In identifying multiple literacies, the project identified supposedly "illiterate" people who could perform difficult tasks requiring abstraction, transferral, and spatial cognition, while "literate" people, often women, were pushed into employment which required only the performance of menial tasks which needed none of these competencies, and little or no engagement with the written word (*ibid.*, p. 31). For these women, their technical ability to read was not reinforced by the social context in which they lived and worked.

Gibson (1996) in her research on literacy and farm labourers in the Western Cape, found that the farm workers prized skills such as common sense and 'local knowledge' much higher than the ability to read and write. The farm workers did not see the benefit of literacy and, in fact, literacy or book and school knowledge was seen to be a female pursuit that occurred outside of work. As they had no purpose for reading, the basic reading foundation was not built upon, and the learners never became fluent, nor did they take reading as a practice into their everyday lives as a meaningful practice (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996).

Course facilitators C2 and C3, however, noted that students do master some literacies. However, they do not master the academic literacies required by the courses. This can be seen in the statement by respondent C2, who said she believed that the Level 4 students were “functionally” literate, as “they are managing in their schools, they are writing letters to the funders, and they are managing their schools so there is something they can do.” This was met with agreement with respondent C3, who noted that the students could also, “write letters to the parents” and “write assessment reports based on the children’s progress and development”. These comments related to Street’s ideological nature of literacy, which acknowledged multiple literacies. It also seems to indicate that the respondent was making reference to different genres in texts.

#### **4.2.1.3 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation/assessment reports**

The pervasive influence of the autonomous model of literacy was also found in the B.Ed assessment report, written by the course facilitators. The report was discussing writing, and aimed at encouraging and motivating the students. It notes that writing;

*is hard to do in the beginning. It gets easier the more you do it. It is like sewing or knitting or driving a car. It is not easy to begin. The more you sew, the faster you get at sewing. The more you sew, the more you learn, the better you get at sewing. Writing is not different.*

This statement seems to indicate not only the autonomous model of literacy, which believes that reading and writing is made up of a number of skills, but it also expounds the belief that these skills can be improved upon and perfected through practice. This can be a sound educational language practice if the practice is meaningful and the students are able to see the sense and purpose in their everyday lives, and that it is not limited to, and related only to schooling.

#### **4.2.1.4 Individual interviews with students**

The autonomous model of literacy was also mentioned by students. Respondent S5 maintained that reading and writing helped improve her grammar. The autonomous perception of literacy was also referred to by respondent S10, who recognized that she needed to “improve my grammar, reading and writing, to improve my grammar”.

Respondent S10 also commented that her reading had improved because she had been practising and reading all the time. These two students clearly saw literacy as consisting of

skills that could be improved with practice. The ideological model does subscribe to students having to practise to learn to read fluently; however it emphasises that practice is ideological and specific to context. The ideological model, also sees practice as underpinned by values, related to which texts should be read or written, and how they should be read and written. This means that the acquisition of academic literacy is dependent on students gaining access to these values (which are related to what can count as knowledge, and how that knowledge can be acquired. Respondent S10 was also using the discourse of the Received Tradition of Literacy which, as stated above, ascribes to grammatical accuracy and learning.

#### **4.2.1.5 Summary**

The discourse was noted on numerous occasions by the course facilitators, who viewed literacy as reading and writing in a neutral sense, focusing on the encoding and decoding of print. Respondents 2 and 3, however, did acknowledge that various literacies exist. The ideological model of literacy was not a dominant discourse discussed by the students, but was referred to by two students and one course facilitator. As the course facilitators, in particular, and the students, to a lesser extent, viewed literacy as reading and writing which was made up of a number of skills that needed to be mastered, this relates to the way academic literacy is likely to be taught and learned.

#### **4.2.2 The Bantu Education Discourse**

In Chapter 2, I outlined the different educational opportunities for different racial groups in South Africa, with the unequal disparity in quality, curriculum and resources. The apartheid government implemented inferior language and curriculum policies in Bantu Education, which consequently, “became the vehicles for the intellectual dispossession [of the majority of South Africans] that characterised apartheid” (Chisholm, 2004, p.18). The Bantu Education Discourse, therefore, draws on the idea that the schooling that Black students received under the apartheid regime was inferior, and as a result they will not, and do not, achieve academically at university. The Bantu Education discourse is a deficit discourse, as the students are perceived as not having the ability to succeed, owing to the poor educational foundation from their schooling during the apartheid era. It is without a doubt that Bantu Education provided an inferior education to many students in South Africa.

However, schooling alone does not provide for the development of academic literacies. As Geisler (1993) shows, school-based literacies are very different from academic literacies. Also Heath (1983) and Scollon and Scollon (1981) note that home-based literacies are critically important, firstly, in preparing for and supporting schooling, and, secondly, in preparing students for critical literacies (i.e. academic literacies). The home-based literacies are vital, given the large proportion of time that students spend at home, compared with the time spent at school.

The Bantu Education deficit discourse extended to students' home language learning, as well as learning in their additional language (the additional language discourse will be discussed later in this chapter).

#### **4.2.2.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

During the individual interviews with the course facilitators, the deficit discourse of Apartheid schooling was mentioned by two respondents. Course facilitator, C7, made a statement about the students' general literacy ability. She noted that "some of them (*students*) are illiterate" and, "we need to simplify the work" because the readings were too difficult. Implicit in these statements was that the students' primary education was lacking and therefore the technical ability to deal with written texts was wanting. This technical ability is usually achieved through formal schooling. In addition, respondent C7 noted her students' lack of knowledge of what constituted a story. It does not seem possible that students were unaware of what constituted a story, especially as isiXhosa literature is steeped in a rich oral story tradition. Given the oral story isiXhosa tradition it seems more likely that the students had not been exposed to the western dominant genre of the story in writing. The respondent's suggested solution to this dilemma was to encourage her Level 4 students to watch Taklani Sesame (on TV) in the morning so that they could get an idea of what a story was. This respondent was making reference to the autonomous nature of literacy, as well as the narrow view of literacy constructed by the autonomous model. The perception was that the students' educational past was inferior, therefore their literacy abilities were inadequate.

Respondent C8 also believed that students have varying abilities, but there were some students, “who make mistakes, even though they are writing their own language”. She believed that students should be encouraged to go to ABET classes to improve their reading and writing. The comment about students attending ABET classes implied that the students’ initial education under Bantu Education was lacking even in the instruction that they received in their mother-tongue, and therefore ABET classes were required. This comment also relates to students’ academic literacy. This respondent did not take into account Street’s ideological nature of literacy, which focuses on the concept of multiple literacies.

In addition, Respondent C8 saw ABET as being the panacea for all literacy ills. However, research from the SoUL project, which looks at policy debates surrounding adult literacy (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996) shows that what was taught in the ABET classes did not articulate with other domains studied within the community, nor did it fulfil any of the reasons as to why the adult learner enrolled in such programmes (Kell, 1996).

#### **4.2.2.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

Respondent C5 remarked upon the poor performance of students. Two other staff members (respondents C3 and C1) concurred, and stated that this was because of the poor education the students had received in the past. This clearly outlined the discourse that the students’ academic progress was hampered by their apartheid educational past. These respondents did not take into consideration the home-based literacies and the limited time spent at school, versus the time spent at home and in the community.

The lack of expectations of Bantu Education for students was summed up by respondent C5 during the focus group interview, when she summarised a fellow respondent’s comments by stating: “I think it is what you were saying there it’s their expectations that have been given them throughout their lives they might have just been able to do that and now they are expected to do more”.

One respondent (C1) commented that she thought the students could read and write, but then amended her statement to agree with a colleague (respondent C3) who said,

“they (referring to the students) can read and write up to a point.” This, once again, seemed to point to the Bantu Education discourse in which apartheid education failed to educate some students, while others were educated up to a point. Once again, the ideological nature of literacy was not taken into consideration.

This concept was also voiced by respondent C2, who stated that she believed that the Level 4 students were literate as , “they are managing in their schools, they are writing letters to the funders and they are managing their schools, so there is something they can do.” While this comment reflects the notion that more than literacy exists (as I have discussed in the discourse above) it also refers to the students’ past schooling. The respondent’s comment, “so there is something they can do” seems to indicate that she questions that the students’ literacy abilities are yet sufficiently proficient to cope with the academic literacy required on the course.

#### **4.2.2.3 Individual interviews with students**

During the individual interview, respondent S6 revealed that she believed she had not received an adequate education under apartheid. She contended that her lack of academic progress on the course was owing to her initial education. She mentioned the following, “even though my English is good, my spelling and grammar in my writing is poor. I blame that on apartheid. I did not get a good education like you Whites”. This student was also drawing on the autonomous nature of literacy, and ignored the social context, as well as the discursive nature, of literacy. This student can also be seen to distinguish between Cummins’s theory of BICS and CALPS that I discussed in Chapter 2. Cummins’ research showed that children learn basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) more readily than cognitive academic language proficiency skills (CALP), and that it is often mistakenly believed by teachers that, just because a student is proficient in English, this will automatically translate to their written and academic ability.

Respondent S6’s comments were in contrast to those of respondent S5, who indicated that she had not found it difficult to do her Level 4 course in English because, when she attended a township school, all her classes were conducted in English. This student did not

perceive the use of English as an additional language to be an issue for her, personally, at all.

#### **4.2.2.4 Summary**

The responses from the both the course facilitators and the students revealed that the deficit discourse surrounding students educated under the apartheid Bantu Education system was still prevalent. In comments reflecting this discourse, most of the course facilitators, and the students made reference to the autonomous nature of language, and the concept of being literate or illiterate, as well as viewing literacy as only reading and writing. The belief that the students' education under apartheid was so poor, relates directly to their inability to perform in the HEI classes.

Furthermore, the Bantu Education Discourse raises the issue: To what extent can school prepare students for HEI, given that school-based literacies are different to academic literacies? Banda (2003) and other theorists (Geisler, 1994, Johns, 1997) point out that there is a difference between school-based and academic literacies, as well as between school and community-based literacies.

Also, given the fact that students are at school for only a few hours a day, to what extent can the time at school overcome the influence of home-based literacies?

#### **4.2.3 The Failing Education Discourse**

This discourse is similar to that described in the Bantu Education discourse; however the Failing Education Discourse describes the education system at present, and subscribes to the belief that the education system in post-apartheid South Africa is worse than it was before the end of apartheid in 1994. Please see Chapter 2 for further information on education, in South Africa, before, during and after the apartheid era. Although there is no doubt that the South African schooling system faces enormous challenges, the way this discourse overlaps and intersects with other discourses identified in my study, is important.

#### **4.2.3.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

One respondent overtly presented the discourse on the deterioration and continued failure of the present education system. This was during an individual interview with respondent C8. This respondent commented that she believed that, in the past, children who passed standard 6<sup>13</sup> had a higher quality of education than a present day matriculant<sup>14</sup>. She noted that, “our education is going down – it’s as if it can’t be changed...” The respondent notes that, “it seems as though the teachers in the past, maybe they are better, now we’re not doing it correctly”. She voiced the opinion that the teachers are just passing the students because, during the next academic year they have to have a new group of students, and did not want to deal with students who had failed. She mentions, “they (*teachers*) were just passing the buck”.

#### **4.2.3.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

Three course facilitators commented on the Failing Education discourse during the focus group interview.

One of the course facilitators, respondent C5, during the focus group interview, stated that, “even those who have got Grade 12 (*most*) of them (*students*) are battling in writing and you will discover that even though the other one has got Grade 10 she is doing much better than the one who’s got Grade 12”. When questioned why she perceived the present education system to be failing, respondent C5 stated that it was owing to lack of commitment by teachers and students. The rest of her response was lost, as respondent C2 interjected with the comment, “and poor education from their schools”. Respondent C5 agreed with respondent C2 and repeated, “and poor education from their schools”.

Respondent C6, remarked that the basic comprehension skills required at school do not prepare the students to read, make inferences and critically reflect on what they read, as is required of academic literacy at tertiary level. This respondent’s comment seems to indicate a belief in the inability of the present education system to equip students with critical literacy

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<sup>13</sup> Standard 6 refers to the eighth year of a possible 12 years of schooling.

<sup>14</sup> A matriculant is a person who is doing, or has completed, the 12<sup>th</sup> year of schooling.

skills required at HEI. Furthermore, this comment notes that multiple literacies exist, and therefore draws on the ideological nature of literacy.

Respondent C2 was optimistic that the new curriculum changes in South Africa will result in positive educational results, as she said, “teachers are happy, feel happy about CAPS (*Curriculum and Policy Statements which is the South African curriculum*) programme. So, hopefully, education is going to be changed and our kids will also change”.

#### **4.2.3.3 Summary**

The discourse of the continuing failure of the education system was only discussed by the course facilitators. This was interesting to note, as the students are all teachers teaching in either ECD centres or in a Foundation Phase classroom, but they did not mention that they believed the education system was failing students at present. Respondent C2 was more optimistic about the future of education in South Africa, especially with the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) that were introduced into the Foundation Phase in 2012. This discourse shows the persisting belief that students received inadequate education which has a direct bearing on their academic literacy and performance at tertiary level.

This discourse also draws on the autonomous model of literacy. It does not take into account that literacy is socially embedded, and that both schools and universities are distinct social institutions. The literacies that are taught at schools are not comparable with the academic literacies, and therefore, like the Bantu Education Discourse, it raises the question, which I have indicated before, regarding the extent to which schools do, and can, prepare students for academic literacies. Johns (1997) suggests that, at school, the only academic reading that students are exposed to is in textbooks, and that the kind of writing that they do is merely summarising of facts from a text book, which, in essence, is a regurgitation of the text book.

This discourse does not take into account home literacies which are a dominant force in a student’s life, and the fact that students spend a limited amount of time at school, and therefore, home, rather than school-based literacies, should be investigated.

#### **4.2.4 English as an Additional Language Problem Discourse (EAL)**

English as an Additional Language (EAL) problem discourse, ascribes the problems that students encounter on the course, including those surrounding academic literacy, to the status of EAL in their language repertoires. The assumption is that literacy problems would disappear if the students were more proficient in English, and did not have to use an additional language as a language of learning and teaching. This discourse was evident in interviews conducted with most of the students and the course facilitators. One course facilitator (C11) noted that she did not believe that the language issue was related to race, but to all speakers of English as an additional language.

##### **4.2.4.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

Course facilitator respondent C7 highlighted the discourse around the language status of students in her comment, “we must not give them (*students*) too much readings... readings should be there but it is a lot. Another thing I think those readings are so academic for some of them. We need to use simple English so that they understand what is written. We need to simplify our work”. The course facilitator was implying that the students, owing to their ability in English, were unable to cope with the level of readings that were expected of them in their course. This discourse draws on Christie’s ‘model of language as an instrument of communication’ which she views as a superficial model of language, in that it understands thought to be independent of language. Language is, therefore, seen as merely a channel for communicating ‘pre-made’ thoughts to others (Christie, 1985). As I indicated earlier in this thesis, Christie contrasts this with a ‘model of language as a resource’ which sees language use as involving choices which are informed by context. The context, in turn, is informed by belief systems and values. Academic literacy draws on beliefs and values relating to what can count as knowledge, and how it can be acquired. These beliefs, then, inform language choices. For example, the belief that objectivity is important in knowledge creation would lead to the use of the passive rather than the active.

In addition, respondent C 11 alludes to the language issue and, when discussing activities that she does to assist students with academic literacy, she notes that, “it’s all to do with English teaching, I suppose, and I am not an English teacher”. This respondent is also

viewing 'language as an instrument of communication' as it does not take into consideration the student's cultural and social context.

#### **4.2.4.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

During the focus group interviews, respondent C6 expressed the opinion that translation of specialised educational terms and key concepts was necessary, because students were speakers of English, as an additional language. Later in the interview, respondent C6 stated that, "one of the problems is English, they (*the students*) are not teaching (*the medium of instruction in their own classes*) in English so they are not getting exposure to English all day...". As the students were not exposed to speaking and hearing English constantly, the respondent believed that, "they are reading in their weaker language in a way". This once again illustrated the autonomous model of literacy as being discrete skills, and it does not take into consideration Cummins's 'dual iceberg hypothesis' (see Chapter 2) that indicates that students would be able to draw on language resources built via the home language, as they used additional languages. In addition, this comment appears to draw on a belief that students have not had the opportunity to develop and use BICS in English. Bertram identified a similar belief in research (2006, p. 12) which showed that the developers of an Honours course expected the Black students, who were teaching in the Foundation Phase, to not achieve as well, academically, as they had when teaching in their home language, and therefore did not have an opportunity to use English on a daily basis.

The comment by C6 also reflects Bertram's (2006) findings that course facilitators did not expect students to do well in a course, as they were using English as an additional language. However, respondent C6 does not make a direct correlation between this and their academic ability, but only their reading competence.

The EAL discourse was once again commented upon by respondent C6. This respondent states that she encouraged students to use a Xhosa-English Dictionary so that they could understand the vocabulary terms used in her course. The students were encouraged to translate the English terminology into their home language, so that they could understand the concepts. The respondent also elaborated on another teaching strategy that she used to help the students learn the English terms. All these teaching methods did not take into account the ideological nature of literacy, but were focused on the autonomous model of

literacy which constructs literacy as a set of technical skills. The respondent was, however, drawing on Cummins's theory of students having a CUP in their home language on which to build, to learn the additional language, as well as the concept of scaffolding (see Chapter 2).

In the focus group interviews, respondent C5 also comments upon the language ability of students. She summed up comments made by other respondents thus:

*...it seems that in the Level 4 what we are actually doing is introducing the students to reading and writing. We are trying to sort of get them used to English reading and writing (murmurs of agreement from three other respondents). .. you are starting at a very basic level (murmur of agreement from one respondent) with students at different levels of competence in English as a second language and in reading and writing English. You are trying to build up on that (respondent C1 interjects with Yes). You need to do that before you can even start or even think about doing any academic writing with the students.*

In addition to students' English language competence, the respondent was highlighting her belief that academic literacy hinges on proficiency in English, and was therefore drawing on the autonomous model of literacy and model of 'language as an instrument of communication'.

The EAL issue was also referred to in the Level 4 assignment report. The report noted that the students' English is not of an adequate standard, and that often the students would write in isiXhosa rather than in English. This report was drawing on the model of language as an instrument of communication.

#### **4.2.4.3 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation/assessment reports**

This particular report seems to have been addressed to the students in general. The response to the B.Ed assignment report was the following: "Think in your own language. Think first, write later. Write in your mother tongue. Translate. Write in English. Get people to read it for meaning..." Further comments, in the same report, indicated that, even if students were speakers of English as a home language, academic literacy was a different 'language'. This can be seen in the following comment:

*This (the assignment) is difficult. You may not understand academic English well. You may not be used to reading a lot. You may not be used to thinking academically in English, which is different from thinking in everyday life English when you are chatting to a friend. So even though you speak English from birth, this is a new English to learn in many ways. So in many ways, you are also a second language speaker!*

This comment in the report shows dissonance in the report writer's thinking. The report clearly indicates the autonomous model of literacy when it states that academic reading and writing tends to be more difficult for speakers of English as an additional language, because they are reading and writing in a language that is not familiar to them. But this extract also reveals that academic literacy is the secondary Discourse of all students – a statement which resonates with the ideological model of literacy.

The EAL issue was also mentioned in the Level 4 assignment report. The report notes that the students' English is not of an adequate standard, and that often the students would write in isiXhosa rather than in English. This statement is based on the theory that 'language is an instrument of communication'. It does not take into consideration Cummins's dual iceberg theory, discussed in Chapter 2 (see 2.4.2).

#### **4.2.4.4 Individual interviews with students**

During the individual interviews, one of the respondents (S8) drew on the EAL discourse on several occasions. The student attributed her perceived lack of academic success in writing, to her poor ability in English. She stated that, "...sometimes you do understand what is needed (*in an academic assignment*) but to put it down, put it in other words now it is not the exact thing you wanted because this is the L2".

Respondent S8 also reflected on her own status as a speaker of English as an additional language, and said, "It wasn't easy for me because I am Afrikaans speaking and was now learning in English. I found that it was difficult for me to write in English, also to know how to write". Later in the interview respondent S8 commented on the readings in her course: "sometimes they were not easy readings and I didn't understand them because my language is Afrikaans". These statements seem to indicate that she perceived that the academic challenges she experienced were owing to her language status. The statements made by S8 reflects Christies' 'model of language as a means of communication' as the student does not take into consideration that literacy involves more than just the ability to master a language. I discuss this point more in Chapter 5 (see 5.2.1).

However, not all the students found the need to use English as the language of learning and teaching, to be an issue. Respondent S 5 remarked that she had not found it difficult to learn in English when she was doing her schooling: “most of our subjects were in English in our location so it is not a problem”.

#### **4.2.4.5 Focus group interview with students**

The EAL discourse was recounted, by student S1, during the focus interview. She advocated that students who were English additional language speakers needed to be assisted by tutors as they needed, “a bit of language support” that a tutor could provide.

During the focus group interview, one of the English home language students (S1) commented: “you have to take into consideration a lot of students are L2. It’s not their home language. If I was to do a B.Ed in Xhosa or Afrikaans I would be in so much trouble...” This comment was met with murmurs of consent from three other students: two speakers of English as an additional language and one speaker of English as a home language. Respondent S1 also referred to the EAL issue in her statement: “and for second language speakers who are trying to read and write in their second language it went over their heads a bit”. Furthermore, respondent S2 also observed that her English writing had improved, which was an achievement, as, “I am Afrikaans I am a second language speaker”.

In her research, Thomson (2008) found that teachers who participated in her study and for whom English was an additional language experienced difficulty in reading texts which had been translated into their home language of isiZulu, as they were used to reading academic texts in English. These findings were similar to those of Banda (2003), where the students found it difficult to translate a piece of text from English (their additional language) into isiXhosa (their home language), and that students elected to read a text in English rather than one written in an African language. This problem is attributed by Thomson (*ibid*) to students’ lack of familiarity with the elevated discourse of academic texts in their home language. For Thomson, therefore, the problem is one of discourse rather than language.

The perceived lack of language ability was also commented upon by respondent S3. This respondent reported that she found the course difficult at times, particularly when she did

not understand the question. In these instances, she referred to one of the English home language speaking students for assistance.

Respondent S1, commenting on an academic literacy session, conducted by the academic literacy specialist in the Faculty of Education, noted that the course was too difficult, “ for second language speakers who are trying to read and write in their second language. It went over one’s heads a bit”. This respondent also voiced her belief that the readings on the course were of a high academic standard, and that the speakers of English, as an additional language, would spend so much time encoding and decoding the text that they would be unable to put the theory into practice.

The EAL discourse was also evident in her comment on an aspect of the course she found helpful, which was designed to help the students with their academic literacy, “I found it useful, even though I am first language speaker”. This comment, and the previous comments, seem to suggest that academic literacy and academic success on the course was linked to the students’ proficiency in English. All the comments made by the students, during individual interviews, reflect on the model of ‘language as an instrument of communication’.

#### **4.2.4.6 Summary**

The EAL discourse was drawn on by two of the course facilitators during individual interviews, and by one of the course facilitators during the focus group interview. That means that three out of the five course facilitators thought that the students’ poor academic literacy was as a result of their status as speakers of English as an additional language. The students also made mention of their status and ability as speakers of English as an additional language.

As I have indicated throughout this section, this discourse also draws heavily on Christie’s ‘model of language as an instrument of communication’ rather than a ‘model of language as a resource’. Literacy is embedded in, and depends on, the situation and cultural context. Literacy involves more than the ability to master a language, as it also requires an understanding of what systemicists call the immediate ‘context of situation’ and the

broader 'context of culture' (Halliday, 1985). The 'context of situation' involves what is been written or spoken about (field), who is taking part in the interaction (tenor) and how of the written and spoken language, that is, the role language, plays in an interaction (mode). The 'context of situation' is always constrained by the 'context of culture' which determines what kind of written or spoken language is appropriate (genre). Eggins (1994, p.2) says that the purpose of language is to make meaning, and that the meaning is influenced by the 'context of situation', and the 'context of culture', which will also determine how appropriate it was. Christie's theory and the systemic functional theory of language, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 in 5.2.1.

#### **4.2.5 The Dictionary Discourse**

A discourse that was discussed by both the course facilitators and the students, was the use of dictionaries. Both course facilitators and students emphasised the importance of using dictionaries in the classroom. Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasises that language is not culturally free, and that language is acquired through socially mediated experiences. While the use of the dictionary can be seen as a socially mediated activity, and an activity which assists the students in learning an individual word, it does not mean that they have accessed the discourse of the institution or course, nor does it mean that they will be able to reproduce the word in a socially accepted manner, later on in the course. In addition, the dictionary discourse is based on the perception of 'language as an instrument of communication' that I have described earlier on in this chapter.

In the data, mention is made of "errors". In academic literacies, error-free texts are important. However, errors do not necessarily interfere with the making of meaning. The omission of the 's' at the end of the third person in the present simple tense, for example, as in the phrase 'She speak' does not interfere with the construction of the meaning. In many cases, therefore, errors function as 'social affronts' rather than as impediments to communication.

#### 4.2.5.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators

In the individual interviews, respondent C8 said that, if students do not understand a reading text, they may use a dictionary. The students have access to dictionaries in class, provided by the course facilitator. But the facilitator has also:

*encouraged them to buy their own dictionaries that they can use at home or in at school. That is the only way they can learn the meaning of the words and I always say to them when they are reading and try to get the meaning of the word from the dictionary, they have to read carefully because sometimes it does not mean what they think it means.*

Course facilitator C8 further elaborated that she used dictionary work as an exercise in class, when students asked her the meaning of words. The dictionary was therefore used as a teaching tool, and formed part of her pedagogy. In this statement, the course facilitator was stating that students needed to improve their vocabulary, and that this was the only means of doing so, as she stated, "That is the only way they can learn...". Vocabulary is only one component of literacy. These statements draw on the 'model of language as an instrument of communication' and the idea that meanings are 'translated' into language which then 'contains' the meaning.

The use of dictionaries, during the individual interviews, was also alluded to by respondent C10. Like respondent C8, she, too, saw the need for students to use a dictionary when they read, as this was a way of making the students independent readers. The respondent remarked:

*We also provide them with dictionaries if they do not understand something, or some words. We do not tell them the meaning of the word because we need to scaffold them to understand, because if you tell them the meaning of the word they will rely on you all the time.*

This course facilitator was discussing scaffolding students' learning in order to make them self-sufficient. However, the lack of understanding of one or two words does not mean that students would not understand the essence of the reading. Research shows (Johns,1980) that only when 50 to 700 words are unknown would this be an issue, as this would mean that there is insufficient context to allow the student to successfully 'guess' the meaning of the word from the reading context. It is not likely that a single reading on the B.Ed has more than 700 unknown words for the students. The focus, therefore, appears to be on 'language

as an instrument of communication' and the autonomous models that have been mentioned throughout this chapter.

#### **4.2.5.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

In the Focus Group interview with the course facilitators, all five of the respondents emphasised that they encouraged the students to make use of dictionaries during their courses.

The dictionary discourse was particularly evident in respondent C6's responses. The respondent explained how she had a session on dictionaries and their uses before she gave the students the first assignment. She went so far as to discuss what characterised a good dictionary, and brought "good" dictionaries to show the students which ones they needed to purchase. The respondent defined a good dictionary as one that shows, "the words being pronounced, and it often gives you grammar exercises. But the important thing is that those dictionaries have simple clear definitions. They write the explanations within a 2000 word vocabulary." This statement shows how the respondent saw the correct pronunciation of words and their grammatical use as important. This statement, once again, reflects the autonomous model of literacy, and the 'model of language as an instrument of communication', as well as the Received Tradition of language teaching which regards grammatical correctness as important.

Respondent C6 also stated that the majority of students had cell phones with internet access. The students could therefore access a dictionary on their cell phone. She also encouraged the use of a vocabulary book to keep a list of words and specialised vocabulary for the purpose of their studies. This respondent said that, when working with struggling students, she has, "both the Xhosa-English Dictionary and a good learner's dictionary so that they can work between the two, and expand their Xhosa vocabulary as well". This respondent, furthermore, indicated that she made use of vocabulary lists and put up new terms on separate sheets of coloured paper, and unpacked the new vocabulary in class. While the respondent was illustrating how she encouraged the mastery of a specialised vocabulary, which is central to academic discourses, and assisted the students in its acquisition, her words also illustrate a discourse which emphasises the importance of

knowing and using the correct word. This, once again, reflects the autonomous model of literacy, and the 'model of language as an instrument of communication'. Therefore, while respondent C6 was verbalising good teaching practice, the rest of her statement seemed to indicate a very narrow view of literacy.

In addition, respondent C2 acknowledged that she did not expect the students to submit assignments with spelling errors, as they could make use of dictionaries. She also noted that, "I am really encouraging them to make use of dictionaries. As a result, some of the students have their own dictionaries now." This comment was met with murmurs of agreement from respondents C6 and C3. Respondent C2 mentioned that students needed to hand in error-free work. While this is a practice that needs to be encouraged, it is not clear, from her statement, whether her encouragement of the use of dictionaries was so that students could eliminate errors because these interfered with meaning-making, or because she understood that errors, in an academic context, effectively constitute a social 'affront'.

Respondent C3 furthermore reported that dictionaries were encouraged in her class when students were reading an article, to encourage their comprehension and understanding of what they were reading. Later in the interview she noted that, when students are writing an assignment, they must provide "Proper wording and they must use a dictionary a lot. If they don't understand the meaning of the word they must use the dictionary a lot". This respondent seemed to be drawing on the theory that spelling is important for academic literacy, and texts need to be error free. Again, however, it is not clear whether she is drawing on an understanding of errors as an affront to the social context of the academy, or because she believes they impede meaning-making.

The concept of dictionaries was also discussed by respondent C1. This respondent noted that she encourages her students to read, and if they do not know what a word means they could look it up in the dictionary. She mentions that sometimes the definition in the dictionary is not the same as the context in which the word is being used. This can be seen in her comment, "If she hasn't got a dictionary then that person can give her a clear understanding of . . . because even sometimes from the dictionary you will get the meaning of the word but not in the context ... which you are using it. This is something that they need

to clear whenever they are looking for the meaning (*Respondent C5 prompts “it gives them the wrong meaning”*). Ja, it can have another meaning.” The respondent seemed to be indicating that language means different things in different social contexts, which would appear to lean towards the ideological nature of literacy. It also highlights that, in academic literacies, vocabulary sometimes assumes very specific meanings, and therefore dictionaries are unlikely to be able to explain the meaning, properly, in that particular reading. Furthermore, dictionaries rely largely on the assumption that language can transfer across contexts, but this is not always possible.

The comments made by these respondents during the focus group interview, all draw on the idea that language is made up of a number of skills, and on the ‘model of language as an instrument of communication’.

#### **4.2.5.3 Assignment Briefs**

The Level 4 assignment brief has the use of dictionaries as one of the assessment criteria on which course facilitators can base the assignment mark. The assignment brief, therefore, seems to be indicating to students the importance of error-free written work, as well as the need to improve vocabulary. Again, however, it is not clear whether this is because facilitators understand that errors are a social affront, or because they believe they impede meaning-making.

#### **4.2.5.4 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation /assessment reports**

The use, or lack of use, of dictionaries was commented upon in the course facilitator reports from all three levels, that is: Level 4, Level 5 and the B.Ed assessment report.

The Level 4 general assessment report (not handed out to students) identified that the body of the assignments were “not well done”, and that students had not used a dictionary. The report notes that the students, “must buy a dictionary” to assist them with their assignments. The Level 5 assessment report to the students encourages them to, “Use the dictionary to look up words that you are not sure about the spelling of”. The B.Ed assessment report (written to the students) states “Get a dictionary. Use it.” All the reports drew on the autonomous nature of literacy and all illustrated Christie’s ‘model of language as a means of

communication'. Furthermore, the course facilitators were mandating a social practice without giving students access to the value of accuracy which underpins it. This means that the social practice will not necessarily have meaning for students.

#### **4.2.5.5 Individual interviews with students**

The use of dictionaries, and the importance of knowing words that were being read and/or spelling words correctly in assignments, was mentioned by five students during the individual interviews. They saw the use of dictionaries as assisting their academic development. This can be seen in respondent S5's comment, "When we do our assignments we are always informed we must always check our spellings, consult the dictionaries if we do not know the meaning of the words or the spelling". This comment shows that students subscribe to the discourse of course facilitators.

The use of dictionaries was also noted by respondent S9, in her comment, "Sometimes the readings were so difficult that I didn't understand a lot of the words. We had dictionaries in class to look up words we didn't know." She also reports on the use of coloured paper and discussing each word in order to understand the readings. This comment describes the legitimate need to understand specialised vocabulary, but draws on the 'autonomous nature of literacy' as it sees the meaning as 'translated' into language, which then 'contains' the meaning. It is interesting that students did not comment on using strategies to work out the meanings of words from context or clues in the text.

Respondent S7 gave an account of the use of dictionaries and cell phones to look up words. She stated, "I also bought my own dictionary, and so, at home I could look up words again. Some of the students didn't have dictionaries. They just used to use their cell phones in class and at home to look up words on the internet". The respondent also commented on the need to use a dictionary when writing assignments, "write if you are not sure about a word you look up in the dictionary". The comments from the students about their need to buy a dictionary, as they did not have one at home, indicates that the use of a dictionary is not necessary or relevant in the students' primary Discourses. Also, the comment about the use of cell phones to look up words is significant, as it makes a commentary about new emergent literacies. The use of the cell phone to look up words also seems to indicate that

students value the cell phone more than the dictionary, and are prepared to buy an expensive phone (on their limited salary as discussed in Chapter 1) which has internet access.

The use of dictionaries in understanding academic articles was remarked upon by respondent S8, and confirmed the teaching practice that the course facilitator had mentioned. This respondent related that the course facilitator “would make us look up words in the dictionary that we didn’t understand”.

Furthermore, respondent S6 revealed that, during the course, “the notes we get in class there are a lot of new words for us... And I think it is necessary to have a dictionary to do research on the meaning of certain words because there are a lot of words we don’t know and then we do research on the words we don’t know to have a better understanding about the words.” She also related how she would come across certain words, and then have to go back to the dictionary to reflect on what the word means, as, “you understand it a lot more”. From personal experience, working and observing students tackling academic texts and using a dictionary to do so, the constant use of the dictionary increases the amount of time the students’ take to read a text. Often, the looking through the pages and pages of the dictionary is time consuming, and results in the loss of understanding of the entirety of the text, as students are so focused on understanding each individual word.

The comment by respondent S6 also indicates that the use of the dictionary, and looking up a word, illustrates the use of the word ‘research’ in the student’s Discourse. For the students, ‘research’ means ‘looking something up’ or ‘finding information’.

#### **4.2.5.6 Focus group interview with students**

During the focus group interview, only one respondent made mention of the use of dictionaries. Respondent S3 noted that, when she did readings at home, she had to make use of the dictionary, and had one ready at all times.

#### **4.2.5.7 Summary**

The dictionary discourse was related to the L2 discourse, in so far as the students and course facilitators thought that the students would not be able to cope with the course unless they looked up words in a dictionary. This discourse is also part of the deficit discourse. Research conducted by (Fraser, 2005, p. 82; Dayong, 2005) on dictionary use showed that dictionaries do help to increase vocabulary, and the act of stopping to look up a word did not, in fact, impede comprehension. However, a mere increase in vocabulary does not necessarily lead to the development of CALP, and one could argue that the focus on dictionary usage, on the part of the facilitators, meant that students were less likely to try to work out the meanings of words from context.

Also, the fact that a dictionary might not provide definitions related to specialised usage in academic discourse, needs to be taken into account. Fraser (*ibid.*) did note in her research that the act of stopping to look up the word in the dictionary increased the amount of time that the students needed to spend reading. She concluded that, while dictionaries did help students increase their vocabulary, this was only one strategy to use.

In addition, the use of the dictionary is based on the 'model of language as an instrument' of communication'. The fact that language is merely a conduit to transfer the meanings it contains to others, came through quite clearly. This model of literacy is an outdated model. Contemporary models (for example, Systemic Functional Linguistics) refer to language as a sign system, that is, a system of clues which are used to construct meaning. Comments showed that one of the functions of using the dictionary was so that the texts which the students produced were error-free. While the need to eliminate errors is important, errors do not necessarily impede communication, given the nature of reading as a process involving 'top down', as well as 'bottom up' processing (Carrell, 1988).

#### **4.2.6 The Discourse of the 'Other' (1)**

In the next two sections, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5, a discussion of two discourses which focus on the 'other' is provided. The discourse of the 'other' was a discourse, drawn on predominantly by speakers of English as a home language, when commenting on their peers who use English as an additional language. In South Africa, language status is used as a proxy for race and social class. If you are a speaker of English as an additional language (L2), and your home

language is not Afrikaans, then, given the demographics of the country, it is probable that you are Black and working class. In this section, I discuss the arguments for the need for additional tuition for students perceived to be ‘at risk’ because of their language status. McKenna (2004a) found that lecturers constructed a discourse of students who were ‘at risk’ owing to their language ‘problems’, – that is the students who were perceived to be ‘at risk’ because of their status as speakers of English as an additional language.

#### 4.2.6.1 Focus group interviews with students

The need for a tutoring for “at risk students” was a suggestion made by one of the White students during the focus group interview (S1). She commented that:

*Maybe even a tutor system like they have at Rhodes where you have the tutor groups where you would take your assignment to them. And you would take your first draft – because the B.Ed, because it is part time, you don’t have the time in your sessions to redo and redo. But if you had, like, a tut group that met outside of your lecture sessions and you could hand in your essays and said “this is how far I have got am I on the right track? Am I understanding this correctly” – a bit of language support you know – that sort of thing but with a tutor...*

Respondent S1 made it clear that she was referring to ‘other’ students and not to herself (a White student), by going on to note, “and you have to take into consideration a lot of students are second language, it’s not their home language. If I was to do a B.Ed in Xhosa or Afrikaans I would be in so much trouble”.

Respondent S1 later extended the notion of providing support to students to include classes for those who were “at risk”:

*I don’t know I think I think extra support should be given such as, like maybe, if you assess the students within the first few weeks or months and then you say, alright, ok, this one is not at the level we need them to be at so take them for separate classes and things like that. Because you can’t have a whole weekend session<sup>15</sup> devoted to academic reading and writing when you have some of your students who are first language (English speaking) and don’t need that extra support you know like definitely hands on...*

Student S1 was supported by another White student, S2, in making this comment. Both students S1 and S2 (in her support of S1’s statements) are drawing on the assumption that

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<sup>15</sup> Some of the part time students’ lectures were held on week-ends to avoid taking teachers out of class during the week.

literacy is context-embedded and that, as outlined in Chapter 2, students need to be acculturated or apprenticed into literacy practices by the course facilitators. S1 was a mature student who had initially begun her Bachelor of Journalism degree at RU. From the interview it seems that tutor groups were a feature of her experience at university. It may well have been the case that she had been a student during a period when academic support in the form of specialized tutorials was offered at the University.

The concept of tutor groups and additional add-on classes was not a concept that was discussed by the course facilitators teaching the various CSD courses, possibly, because of the demise of the academic support system at the University, in favour of a move towards institutional development, involving staff and curriculum development.

#### **4.2.6.2 Summary**

The discourse of the 'other' (1) was a discourse entered into by a White middle class first language English speaking student, and was strongly supported by another White middle class first language Afrikaans speaking student. These students did not seem to group themselves with the rest of their peers who were Black, and of whom the majority were not speakers of English as an additional language. These two White middle class students considered the 'other' students to be at risk and in need of development. The concept of the 'other' is a very White concept that dates back to colonialism in South Africa, when the Black inhabitants of South Africa were always seen as the 'other'. This concept was further entrenched during the apartheid period. During the apartheid dispensation the Black inhabitants of South Africa were not seen as educable, and were not provided with adequate schooling (as outlined in Chapter 2), in order to provide a cheap labour force.

Furthermore, historically, access to universities was reserved for the elite, which, initially, did not include Black social groups in South Africa. The 'other' discourse entered into by the White middle class English speaking students seems to perpetuate the stereotype that only White students are able to succeed in higher education. This supports Fairclough's (1989, p. 58) notion that language is the primary means of social domination, power and control.

The concept of the 'other' was evident in comments made during the focus group interview, and it is interesting to note that none of the other students, who were being 'tarred' as the 'other', objected or made contrary indications, which seemed to suggest that they too "bought into" this discourse. This seemed to indicate that it was a discourse not only accepted by the White students, but by those whom it constructed.

This discourse fails to perceive that literacy is context-embedded, and can only be developed in relation to mainstream learning.

#### **4.2.7 The Discourse of the 'Other' (2)**

In the data, I identified another discourse, related to that I have termed 'Other' (1) which I term 'Other' (2). While the 'Other'(1) discourse was mainly a discourse entered into by respondents who considered that extra assistance was required for 'other' students, 'Other' (2) was subscribed to by the course facilitators. This discourse is similar to the discourse 'Other' (1), as it draws on the idea of othering. However, it is distinctive as it also draws on the idea that literacy is a socially embedded phenomenon. This discourse also draws on ideas related to the construct of a primary Discourse and its associated literacy practices that the students experienced at home and in the community.

##### **4.2.7.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

A Level 4 course facilitator stated that the students do not read at home, and it is not because they are unable to do so. A, Level 5 course facilitator (C10) then noted that, "culturally, we as Blacks, we don't read we are scared to be seen reading a book in public." This comment seems to suggest that to be seen reading a book sets themselves up as different to their peers in Black communities, and, in a sense, be seen as considering themselves superior. This comment also draws on the notion of multiple literacies and literacy practices and, therefore, on the ideological model of literacy as outlined by Street.

Lazere (1991, p. 88) voiced the opinion that:

*Black oral culture as the cause of Blacks' difficulties in schooling is reductive, isolating matters of oral and written language from matters of vocabulary and subject matter – as well as from the larger social context in which learning does or does not take place.*

Literacy education was denied to Black communities through the apartheid period, and consequently it appears that this has resulted in some literacy practices (i.e. reading books) being seen as problematic. This is also closely related to identity and race, and the belief that the Black culture has an historically oral tradition. The issue of not reading in public could also be owing to the fact that the apartheid era impoverished Black South Africans, and therefore the purchase of books was a luxury that was not entertained, especially as the negative educational experiences of apartheid education did not encourage this practice. Banda's (2004) research found that newspapers were not always accessible to students, and, even when they were available, they were not purchased owing to the cost involved.

#### **4.2.7.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

The focus interview included (C5) comments which also draw on the 'Other' (2) discourse such as:

*But I also think it's part of the way they live. They haven't got used to just picking up a newspaper and just reading it (murmurs of agreement from 2 other course facilitators) and they rather watch tv than read the newspaper.*

The use of informal cell phone language was raised by a course facilitator (C3) during the focus group interview. She noted that the use of informal text used during Mixit (*a cell phone application used for writing messages to another cell phone user*) was often used by students when they wrote exams and assignments.

Both these comments highlighted different literacy practices, such as watching television, reading newspapers and communicating via technology, and were thus referring to the fact that literacy occurs in different ways and times, which resonates with Street's ideological nature of literacy. However, the literacies which students had mastered were, nonetheless, constructed as inferior to dominant literacies practised in White communities. The students are able and quick to learn, and to use 'Mixit language' and, therefore, there should be no reason why they cannot learn to use language in academic contexts. The use of Mixit as a literacy practice is, presumably, condoned in the social groups to which students belong, while other practices related to academic literacy are frowned upon. This points to the need

for a 'social' approach to understanding literacy development, and not one which simply rests on the teaching of 'skills'.

#### **4.2.7.3 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation /assessment reports**

The B.Ed assignment report written to students noted that, "You may not understand academic English well. You may not be used to reading a lot. You may not be used to thinking academically in English, which is different from thinking in everyday life English when you are chatting to a friend". This seems to indicate that the course facilitator acknowledged that literacy occurred in a variety of social contexts, and was making reference to the ideological nature of language. At the same time, the report draws on the idea of the 'Other' through its use of the term 'you'.

#### **4.2.7.4 Summary**

The 'Other' (2) discourse was only commented upon, as noted above, by the course facilitators. The course facilitators' belief that literacy extends beyond the classroom into the students' home environments, was evident, as well as the fact that literacy occurs in different social contexts, and through a variety of media. This discourse draws on the ideological nature of literacy, which is in contrast with many other discourses that were evident in the data. It is interesting to consider why the ideological model of literacy emerges here, only in relation to the 'other'.

Also, this discourse raises the issue of access and success that I alluded to in Chapter 2. The students at the CSD have been provided with access to the various courses. However, the course facilitators, in their discourse of the 'Other' (2), show decided elements of construing that the Black students are not 'suitable' for higher education. For me, this raises the issue of whether or not we have provided the students with a dream of access and hope of a better future. Yet, the course facilitators themselves do not have confidence in the students' abilities, and will convey this negative construction to the students during their lectures. This has further ramifications on their identity, as identity is constructed through discourse (Parkinson & Crouch, 2011, p. 84). Furthermore, some of the teaching methods that have been identified in this chapter, for example, looking up individual words in a

dictionary without taking the existence of specialised meaning and context of the text into consideration, all show that epistemological access is, in fact, impeded.

#### **4.2.8 You Need To Read Discourse**

In this discourse, the idea that reading is an activity that develops language and improves writing, predominates. Reading is perceived as being made up of a set of skills which through practice could be improved, and this would, therefore, translate into better written ability. The discourse also notes the fact that some social groups do not read written texts, such as books and articles. This discourse could, therefore, also be construed as drawing, to a certain extent, on some of the ideas evident in what I have termed the discourse of the 'other'.

Although there is no doubt that reading practice improves reading fluency, this discourse takes no account of the notion of reading as a *social* and socially *sanctioned* practice, as identified in Section 4.2.7 above.

##### **4.2.8.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

Course facilitator Respondent C10 noted that the students “need to read a lot. They need to read all the books and the newspapers they come up with, so they get used to reading. The more they read the more they get knowledge and the more they develop their skills in order to read and write.” She also stated that students struggle with reading, and that the reading of an academic article took a large amount of time. She also believed that the students do not read with meaning and understanding. Respondent C8 thought that sending students to ABET classes was a solution, and that they should be encouraged to make use of the local library, and fellow colleagues. The use of ABET classes is not a sensible suggestion, given the ideological nature of literacy. Clearly students can read and write. What is at stake is not their 'basic' literacy, but rather the ability to function in academic contexts.

Furthermore, respondent C10 reported that she believed that the students:

*they need to acquire a standard of writing, a high standard of writing, number 1 they need to read with confidence they need to read all the books they are given they need to read at home because it is not happening either they only read when they are at the classes they don't read when they get back home...*

In the discourse of the 'other' (2), I noted that the course facilitators commented that Black people are reluctant to read in their home contexts, and that reading is not a cultural practice that appears at home. This comment by course facilitator C10 is stating that the students must read at home, and, therefore, she is implying that the students need to adopt a different set of practices in their home contexts which, if the course facilitator who noted that 'we as Blacks ... are scared to read' is to be believed, could be alienating. Thomson (2009, p.803) refers to research she carried out on the lived experiences of teachers attending an academic literacy course, and how the students' home contexts were not supportive of text-based literacies. The research outlines how the respondents experienced a sense of displacement in learning and ascribing to the secondary Discourse, as they had to sacrifice their family, time, and primary Discourse in order to become a member of the secondary Discourse. The feeling of alienation and displacement could also be relevant in the CSD context, where students who do not have a culture of reading in their primary Discourse will have to sacrifice their cultural and family practices in order to prescribe to the secondary Discourse and become a Discourse member. In the case of the CSD, as the students do not read at home, it can be assumed that they are either electing not to discard their primary Discourse, or it has not been made explicit that this is required of them in the secondary Discourse. This is significant as the majority of Black students' educational experiences have not prepared them for HEI, and strong reading and literacy practices are not an integral part of their lives. This therefore impacts on their reading competencies (Bertram, 2006, p.12).

Respondent C11 also said that she believes that students' academic success lies in their ability to read basic articles at a reasonable speed. Like respondent C5, she believed that the students read slowly, and that reading is a time consuming exercise. This could be compounded by the fact that students do not read at home, and will not 'practise' reading at home as their home environment does not support a reading culture. This comment was made by a respondent during the focus group interview (C2), but for the purposes of this discussion I mention it here. Respondent C2 commented that the lack of a reading culture at home hinders the students from improving their reading and writing skills. The lack of support from the home environment and culture could potentially mean that the students continue to fall further and further behind in class, and in their academic work, and

ultimately drop out, or take a considerably longer period to complete the particular course. This will also have a negative effect on their identity and their concept of themselves, in relation to academic work and studying in general. Furthermore, it could also widen the gap between the academic performance of speakers of English as a home language, and those who use English as an additional language, thus perpetuating the deficit discourses that have been discussed in this chapter.

#### **4.2.8.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

The 'you need to read' discourse constructs reading as central to academic literacy and course success. This was evident as six course facilitators referred to reading as part of academic literacy, during the focus group interviews. As I have indicated above, in relation to my analysis of the discourse of 'Other (2)' above, one of the course facilitators C2, who used English as an additional language, made the statement that, "Culturally, we as Blacks, we don't read we are scared to be seen reading a book in public ". This once again reflects the point made above that the majority of the students did not have a culture and routine of reading at home, neither for leisure, nor for academic purposes.

Respondent C6 clearly stated that the students need to improve their reading over the 3 years of the course. She said that assisting the students in their development of reading, "...this is what academic literacy is all about".

The perceived importance of reading for academic literacy was stated by course facilitator C1, during the focus group interview. She stated that for the students:

*to read it's difficult more especially with the material and the assignments we have got. So that they can just boost their understanding therefore they must have a background of reading, to listen at the same time hear or hear the way the words are...*

Respondent C1 was making reference to hearing and listening to words which are based on a phonetic approach to reading. Respondent C3 also acknowledged that the students needed, "to improve their reading and writing skills". However, reading is made up of several component skills, including the use of background knowledge and decoding, which are also referred to as the 'top down' or 'bottom up' processing. Top down processing involves using background information about the content area of a text, and the knowledge

about the way in which texts are conventionally organized, stored as cognitive schemata or frameworks (Carrell, 1987). Carrell refers to these two components as being the 'content schemata' and 'formal schemata'. The 'content schemata' contain the information that the learner brings to the text while the 'formal schemata' constitute the reader's background knowledge of, and experience with, textual organization. The component of reading, referred to by these respondents, is the decoding component of reading (Pretorius, 2008, p. 170). The decoding process is a 'bottom up' process as it uses data from the text itself. Reading is considered to be an interactive process which uses both 'top down' and 'bottom up' processing. Both processes are necessary for reading (Carrell, 1988). If the course facilitators view reading as only involving the decoding 'bottom up' skills, they deny and neglect using the background knowledge that the student brings to the text, and are therefore making the reading process less efficient, and more difficult for the students.

Respondent C6 notes that students need to be aware that, "reading academically, or actually any kind of reading, is more than that .... And I think what I find is that learners um students are not specific enough in their reading...". She mentions that the basic comprehension skills required at school do not prepare the students to read, make inferences and critically reflect on what they read, which is required of academic literacy at Tertiary level. In this comment, the respondent was making reference to multiple literacies.

Respondent C6 also notes that the students read too slowly. This respondent thought that English was a cause of the problem. She said, "they (*the students*) are not getting exposure to English all day, so they are reading in their weaker language in a way".

The Course facilitators also offered solutions for students to improve their reading. Respondent C6 thought that setting up reading clubs for the students was a good idea, as well as letting them listen to audio-cassettes while following the story in a book. She also ventured the opinion that students can begin to get familiar with academic reading, by reading "easier" texts. She notes:

*they have come up and through the levels they could sort of read like a newspaper or something like that something that is sort of everyday kind of text. That is something that we can build on but I think one has got to see it very much as a starting point.*

In this chapter, I have discussed the fact that, for many students on the CSD courses, reading is not a 'normal' cultural practice. As a result, this respondent can be seen to be ignoring the reality of the students' lives, where reading a newspaper is not an 'everyday' practice. In addition, many of the students live and work in remote rural areas and, even if the reading of a newspaper was a part of their cultural practices, they would most probably not have access to one.

Respondent C6's comments were also echoed by respondent C4, who said that students need to practise their reading daily. The comment made by respondent C4 is indicative of the autonomous model of literacy.

Respondent C6 also thought that the students needed scaffolding and practice in summarising what they had read, without having access to the actual text. The idea of getting students to summarise as part of academic development, was shared by respondent C5. This respondent said that the students can be supported in their reading endeavours by, "giving them opportunities to read and to use dictionaries". The comments made by these two respondents, regarding summarising, are interesting, as academic literacy does not require a summary to be made for the sake of having a summary. Academic literacy only requires a student to summarise so that the writer can elaborate upon, and/or critique the text.

Respondent C5 furthermore said that she also finds that the students read slowly and that she "breaks up a text and then gives each section to a group and then that group is the expert group that teaches it to the rest of the groups". In this way, the respondent says that she reduces the monotony and length of the reading time.

In addition, respondent C2 thought that the course materials which encouraged reading as a group, as well as individually, helped to improve the students' reading and writing. Respondent C4 also provided a solution. She said, "I see the only way to improve reading and writing is by giving them lots of reading and written tasks to do in the Level 5".

### 4.2.8.3 Assignment Tasks

Reading was also an academic requirement emphasised in the B.Ed assignment task that I used for my data analysis. The task clearly notes that students need to use the readings provided in class to answer the various tasks. In addition the assignment tasks has “wide reading” as one of the assessment criteria for the assignment.

### 4.2.8.4 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation /assessment reports

The B.Ed assignment report (aimed at providing students with feedback) states that the students need to read, and that this is not an easy task, as the students might not be used to academic reading, and reading in an L2. The report also outlines some suggestions on how students can improve their reading, for example, use of a dictionary to assist with understanding the reading and underlining.

The Level 4 Assignment Report is general in nature and notes that students had not done the required reading. This was evident in the students’ assignments.

### 4.2.8.5 Individual interviews with students

During the individual interviews, respondent S9 stated that she felt that the readings in Level 5 were of a lower level, and that the degree of difficulty increased the further she progressed in her academic career. She said, “I mean we really weren’t expected to do much reading and we sort of didn’t really bother with referencing..”. She notes that during her B.Ed degree, her lecturer wanted extra readings, and said, “she (*referring to the course facilitator*) was comments I mean she commented on my extra reading. I found that once I did this (*extra reading*) my marks always improved.”

This respondent (S9) also explained that she was:

*always so scared of reading academic books. I didn’t feel that I would cope but now..... now I feel so confident I know that even if the book is difficult I can take it and read it and it doesn’t always matter if I don’t understand everything as long as I get the main idea.”*

She believed that it was the use of reading in groups that helped her develop confidence:

*... sometimes they made us read in groups first we had to read silently and then we highlighted and then discussed it in our group to see if we had read the right thing and if we understood the reading. Sometimes the readings were so difficult that I didn’t understand a lot of the words...*

But she began to understand the reading by discussing it with the group. The benefits of reading and discussing articles in groups was also noted by respondent S8.

Respondent S5 also thought that reading was highly prized by the course facilitators. She said that, “there has been quite a lot of reading here in the class and you know that it is helping us a lot.” She elaborated that this has helped her vocabulary considerably as:

*I am reading all the time and they (course facilitators/facilitators) encouraging us to read all the time even at home we must start looking at newspapers even our manuals, books, magazines, everything to improve our vocab. And to understand and I mean to know the spelling – the grammar so it has been helping a lot. It's been helping a lot...*

Gough (2000) showed that because learners rely so heavily on their primary Discourse they have difficulty coping with the academic literacy, as it involves the acquisition of a new secondary Discourse. But the comments from the student, stated above, seem to indicate their growing awareness that the discourse of reading is commented upon and prized by the course facilitators, and therefore they are beginning to ‘read’, their way into the discourse community. This understanding of the discourse community will result in them becoming ‘apprenticed’ into the discourse community, and will allow them to begin to master the literacy. As noted earlier, reading does not feature heavily as part of the students’ primary Discourse practices. The primary Discourse is related to the students’ social identity in their home community (Gee, 1996, p. 137). This primary Discourse has its own way of thinking, being, believing, and valuing , which is in conflict with the secondary Discourse required by the course facilitators, in whom resides the power to pass or fail a student. This does not take the students’ lived experiences into consideration, and the fact that practices related to the secondary Discourse, when introduced into the context of the primary Discourse, may well impact on the way they are perceived by members of the primary Discourse. In her research, Thomson (2008, p.802) found that, in acquiring the secondary Discourse, the students experienced shame, self-doubt, loneliness, confusion, fear and anxiety, and that a tension exists as the powerful secondary Discourse, “impacts more and more on the fabric of the participants’ lives, they eat into, and erode, critical opportunities for the type of participation in their primary Discourses that ensure continued ‘recognition’ as a member of that Discourse, that ‘culture’ that community”.

Twice respondent S5 notes that reading has improved her grammar and spelling. During the interview she also revealed that reading is important, as it is a skill that is carried over into the workplace and increases her status in the community. She said that, “they (*parents and community members*) place you on a higher level, so by reading and writing that helps a lot when dealing with people.” She, furthermore, reported that reading helped one to participate in class work.

This comment by the student S5 is particularly relevant, as it highlights the elevated status that reading and learning have in the community. It also indicates the high regard that Black communities have for people with educational qualifications, and the status that is ascribed to you as a ‘learned’ person, but, at the same time, it is contrasted with the comment by the course facilitator C2 who said that, culturally, Black people are afraid to read in public. The apparent dissonance in these two statements could be because reading is viewed as an ‘elevated’ activity, and to do so in public is seen as a display of superiority over the rest of the community. This comment could also possibly reflect on the course facilitator’s community associating reading as not only an ‘elevated’ practice, but also associated with White people. This could mean that a person reading in the community could be perceived as being a ‘token’ White person, and as taking on ‘White’ practices.

Respondent S6 explained that, in her opinion, the reading in Level 5 was more prolific than in Level 4. She also stated that she thought that academic reading was given more emphasis than writing.

The emphasis on reading was also commented on by respondent S8, who said:

*Sometimes I thought that I would never get through all the reading and And (shu) the reading, you just made me remember all the reading, all the hand-outs and readings (shu). Sometimes I was working all weekend and couldn't go out with my friends.*

This is the same scenario as that mentioned by respondents in Thomson’s (2008) research. The students reported that they had to sacrifice family, peer time and community obligations. This meant that they feared that, when they required community support, it would not be forthcoming, owing to the perceived lack of support from them at other community events. They feared that their community would not understand that their studies

took a large portion of their time, and they had to make sacrifices in order to cope with the course.

Respondent S7 that reading assisted her with spelling and vocabulary. She also saw reading as important, and not only for academic purposes. She highlighted that it was part of her social upbringing. She said:

*I like reading so it helps me a lot like um when I was studying at an early age we were not taught in English so I taught myself to read. Like my father was a gardener so he brings the newspaper all the time. So I look and I read and make sure that I read those newspapers even though there was a word that I did not understand...*

The comment by respondent S7 was significant, as she was the first student who commented that she read at home, and it revealed that reading, and reading of the newspaper in particular, was of importance in her primary Discourse. Even though her father had been a gardener, which is generally perceived to be a low status job, and people employed in such positions are not ascribed with sophisticated literacy practices and abilities, reading a newspaper was part of his literacy practices, which had impacted on her, and had consequently become part of her primary Discourse. This, however, was not true of the other student respondents participating in this study.

#### **4.2.8.6 Focus group interview with students**

Reading was also constructed as central to academic literacy by the students, during the focus group and individual interviews. Respondent S1 said that students needed support as it was impossible for them to, “have a whole weekend session devoted to academic reading and writing...”. She also does not consider giving students extra readings as the way to improve academic reading. She also stated that a lot of the feedback comments on her assignments were around how her reading and writing could be improved. At a different point in the interview, she did concede that, “I think a lot of time was spent on academic readings...”.

The importance placed on reading was also supported by respondent S2, as she linked reading with the ability to be able to do the assignment. She noted that, when she did more, and further, background reading, this helped her, not only in her assignments, but, practically, in her classroom too.

Respondent S3 voiced the opinion that reading needed to be linked with the practical, and that students needed to be helped with reading in class. She said, “not only reading, but doing in the classroom...so if you do not understand the reading you can reread it and have enough time to understand when you do it practically in the classroom”.

Respondent 2, 3 and 4 all stated that reading was important, and it was not enough to do the reading in the classroom. Respondent 2 said that she noticed this when she was writing an assignment and then had to enlist the help of her fellow classmates to help understand the reading. Respondents 3 and 4 thought that the readings were too difficult for her, and that the use of study groups and discussing the readings in the group helped her to understand them, and helped her to write her assignments. Respondent 3 mentioned, however, that reading in class assisted her as the course facilitator would stop and emphasise and elaborate on points.

#### **4.2.8.7 Summary**

The ‘You need to read’ discourse was subscribed to by both the course facilitators and the students. From comments made by both students and staff, it is evident that reading is considered to be central to academic literacy, and to the ability to succeed on the course. It is interesting to note that these students are perceived, not to be ‘good’ readers by the course facilitators, and the students are doing a part time course which has elements of distance learning embedded in it. As a result, the course relies strongly on students’ ability to read independently. This point was also noted by Bertram (2006, p 5), who pointed out that teachers who were upgrading their qualifications, mostly did so through distance education, in spite of the fact that many were, “not prepared for academic study and its focus on reading to learn”. Their lack of technical reading competence which, in turn, is related to the fact that reading practices are not part of their primary Discourses, has a direct bearing on their ability to engage with the texts, which ultimately reflects on their success. Reading is a powerful tool which enables students to access information, be able to make meaning, and to acquire new knowledge (Pretorius, 2000, p. 35). This means that students were disadvantaged by the very form of education they were pursuing.

In addition, this discourse reveals a discursive clash between staff and students and the social contexts in which they live. The staff strongly advocating reading as a means of achieving learning and academic success, along with the emphasis on reading practices in the design of the course, because of its part time nature. However, reading is not necessarily so easy for students to adopt as a social practice, given the social contexts of the communities in which they live. The notion of literacy being part of the 'White' culture was highlighted in research on literacy practices in South Africa (Banda, 2003), which revealed that the practices of reading a book, newspaper, going to a library were all perceived to be White cultural practices.

The challenging nature of reading as a social practice did not mean that the students did not see the benefit of written texts. However, literacy is social and cultural and thus implicates a person's history, their present knowledge, their identity (Banda, 2003).

#### **4.2.9 The 'Form Matters' Discourse**

The 'form matters' discourse is based on the belief that the style of academic text is important, and that students need to master the appropriate formula for producing academic texts, as this will help them succeed on the course. 'Form matters' is a discourse that most educational institutions and faculties subscribe to, as evidenced by proscriptions rules about form in numerous course handbooks and guides. The form of the text is, of course, important. However, elaborating on, and teaching the form out of context, without teaching the underpinning values, will not necessarily lead students to adopting the social practices which allow them to produce a text with the desired form.

The mention of the importance of form, and the use of standard English language, emerged repeatedly in the data. Over the years, a great deal of research (see, for example, Gough, 1996, de Klerk, 1996) has explored a variety of English spoken by Black South Africans, which has become known as Black South African English (BSAE) or Black Vernacular English (BVE). In South Africa, English has gone through a process of indigenization whereby the language has been adapted to the situation, by the cultural group using it. (Gough, 1996). For example, varieties of BSAE do not acknowledge the 's' in the third person of the present simple tense (de Klerk & Gough, 2000, p. 7). This is because the 's'

is actually redundant as its number is indicated by the pronouns he/she/it/they, or by the plural of the noun in the subject position. Maintaining the 's' is a social practice which draws on a set of values, about what constitutes 'proper' English. However, for many students, this practice is not meaningful, as the English around them 'loses' the 's'. This is a single example of the way BVE (a dialect) is in conflict with academic literacy, which draws on another dialect.

#### **4.2.9.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

Respondent C11 notes that she assisted the students in developing the appropriate formula for producing academic texts, by, "looking at a paragraph and breaking it down into sentences and giving them a whole lot of sentences, and then asking them if you were writing a paragraph which sentence would you put first". This comment by respondent C11 draws on the idea that the meaning resides in the text, rather than on the idea that the text is a set of clues for meaning making. Nightingale's (1988) analysis of various studies (predominantly Australian) on writing uncovered various myths about writing. One of the misconceptions to which she alludes is that of the topic sentence, and that studies conducted by Meade and Ellis (1970) on the writings of expert writers' reveal that they do not contain topic sentences. Instructions to students often include the need for topic sentences at paragraph level, yet Nightingale's research questions their role at paragraph level.

#### **4.2.9.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

The correct use of the form of language was a discourse commented upon by three course facilitators. The correct use of conventional language was an issue noted during the focus group interview, by only two of the course facilitators. Respondent C3, as I have already stated above, noted that students were using:

*. . . a lot of this new language of Mixit on the cell phone and even on their assignments (laughter from group). They even use this kind of language when they write their own assignments. So we've told them that they need to improve their reading and writing skills. Not, what could I say, not to use short words.*

She further elaborated that she believed that students need to "use the exact, the proper words". This comment reveals that the students are drawing on the values of one context

(their primary Discourse) where the use of Mixit language is appropriate, and transferring this, using Mixit in academic text where it is inappropriate to do so. This comment, therefore, reflects Fairclough's (1989, p. 24) statement that the processes of production can be inferred from all texts, and are always located in a 'context of situation' and a 'context of culture'. This is also a stance adopted by systemic functional linguists (Halliday, 1978).

Respondent C2 also remarked that spelling was a requirement that she expected from the students. She mentions that she does not expect the students to hand in work with spelling errors, as they have dictionaries. While respondent C3 comments that, when students are writing an assignment, they must provide "proper wording".

The use of "proper words" was also noted by respondent C1. She notes that the students struggle to express themselves in English, and that she encourages them, "to try, by all means, with just a few words, not long sentences but like a short sentence". This respondent, furthermore, asserted that the students mix English and isiXhosa<sup>16</sup> to make a word when they are writing. Combining languages to form words is also indicative of BSAE, which I discussed above. Respondent C1 was, therefore, drawing attention to the fact that the students were drawing on their home contexts, where a large number of words had been coined from a mix of English and their indigenous language. Examples of BSAE vocabulary which have been 'borrowed' from English are words like icoffee (coffee), and ikettle (kettle). Using these words, and other similar vocabulary, at home and in the community, is quite acceptable, but this is not acceptable in an academic context. This highlights the need for lecturers/course facilitators to make the values and discourses evident to the students, so that they know what is expected of them, and therefore are able to write in the required manner.

#### **4.2.9.3 Individual interviews with students**

During the focus group interview, students also mentioned that it was important to use the correct words in an assignment. Respondent S3 notes that it is important to put down the correct words, but that this was difficult to do as she was a speaker of English as an additional language. Respondent S1 noted that they had a session on academic literacy

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<sup>16</sup> isiXhosa is one of the indigenous African languages, and is the home language of the students.

conducted by a member of staff from the Faculty to Education, and that the person had said, “certain words are like sign posts. You know you have a stop sign and I don’t know that sign and all the rest...”. Respondent S1 also draws on the ‘form matters’ discourse when she mentions, “Using words like ‘on the other hand’, ‘consequently’, ‘secondly’”. The comments by this respondent show that she has an awareness of the forms of academic writing and, thus, of the requirements of her course, with regard to written assignments. This could be because the student has completed the B.Ed course, and, thus, this would indicate that the required academic literacy for written texts has been made explicit to this student, who had adopted the discourses of the course and the academy.

#### **4.2.9.4 Summary**

Using the correct form and words was a discourse that three course facilitators and two students discussed. These were the only respondents who overtly stated that they considered the discourse of the form and function to be part of academic literacy. The development of academic literacy is a process that occurs over time. Furthermore, the enculturation into the academic discourse is complicated owing to the social nature of literacy and the literacies that the students bring to the course. This once again highlights the social aspect of literacy.

#### **4.2.10 The ‘Use Your Own Words’ Discourse**

This discourse embodies the idea that when you write and develop academic text you are writing a series of knowledge claims. In the RU Learning guide (Boughey, 2012) designed for first year students to help them ‘crack the code’ of academic writing, it is argued that academic writing consists of a series of knowledge claims, each of which is backed up by evidence (Boughey, 2012, p. 8). The lecturers are not looking for work which paraphrases existing work, they are, in fact, wanting the writer to come to a conclusion and make evidence-based statements of their own, based on the readings they have done. In the data, a discourse which I have termed ‘Use your own words’ draws on some of the ideas explicated in the RU Learning Guide. This discourse was only drawn upon by the course facilitators.

#### **4.2.10.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

Only one course facilitator drew on this discourse in the individual interviews. Respondent C11 noted that she believed that providing students with paraphrasing exercises assisted them to use their own words and not to plagiarise. Arguably, this course facilitator respondent has an incomplete understanding of academic literacy. Paraphrasing is merely a tool in a larger process involving making statements (termed 'knowledge claims' in the RU Learning Guide). While it is important to be able to paraphrase, academic literacy requires more. The RU Learning Guide explains that the literature provides evidence for claims an author wants to make on the reading of it. Arguably, what is at stake here is an incomplete understanding of academic writing on the part of the facilitator him/herself.

Respondent C11 also stated that:

*... usually every session I'm remembering things now, we brought in some sort of academic literacy component ... like for instance paraphrasing you know, like giving them a whole lot of like giving them a paragraph and then saying now paraphrase it. Then they learnt what paraphrasing is and how to condense a paragraph into one sentence or what a summary is and in class when we had when we had a reading to do give them each a paragraph to summarise and then report back...*

#### **4.2.10.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

The idea that academic text is not about copying, but paraphrasing, was introduced in the focus group interview by respondent C5. She reported that she, "noticed with the B.Ed students they didn't have the skills of just paraphrasing and summarizing, you know, and that's got to do with listening to a story and to understand it and say it in your own words". She also mentions that paraphrasing, and not simply copying, was a practice that the speakers of English as a home language also found difficult

#### **4.2.10.3 Summary**

The "Use your own words" discourse was a discourse drawn upon by two course facilitators, but was not referred to by the students at all. This discourse is important, as students do need to use their own words, and the lecturer needs to 'hear' the students' voices in their writing. This is a literacy practice that arguably emerges as the students are conscientised to (made aware of) academic literacy.

#### **4.2.11 The Referencing Discourse**

The 'Referencing' discourse stresses the need for students to reference correctly. This discourse emerged in comments made by the course facilitators. However, only one student referred to referencing during the focus group interview, and two students, during individual interviews. The issue of referencing was commented on, predominantly, by the course facilitators during the interviews, and in the assignments and assignment reports. Referencing is important as students need to make knowledge claims in their academic writing, and need to back up the claims (Boughey, 2012). Referencing the works of others is a means of providing evidence for your own knowledge claims, and thus the accuracy of referencing is important.

##### **4.2.11.1 Individual interviews with course facilitator**

Respondent C10 commented on plagiarism, during the individual interview. She reported that, by the end of the course, only a "handful of students were getting the referencing right as well". She noted that what she looks for in a good assignment, as opposed to a "poor" assignment, is the referencing. She stated that a large amount of time is spent, "with regards to the referencing and constant reminder on how to reference and cite and so on". The respondent views the opinion that, "referencing is really a difficult thing to get right". Even though they are two distinct issues, the difference between plagiarism and referencing is often confused by students. Merely drawing students' attention to the technicalities of referencing is not enough, as it only exposes them to the technical 'how to' but does not introduce them to the social practice, and it does not induct them into the values which underpin referencing. The values related to referencing are accuracy, and the need for evidence, which can be checked in order to elevate the status of knowledge claims.

##### **4.2.11.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

The first mention of plagiarism by the students occurred when respondent C3 interjected, while respondent C5 was mentioning the academic conventions that she expected in assignments written by students. Respondent C5 thereafter recognized that citing and referencing were issues that the students "battled with" throughout the course.

#### **4.2.11.3 Assignment Tasks**

The importance placed on referencing and citing was also highlighted in the B.Ed assignment task. One of the assessment criteria in the Assignment rubric is referencing and citing.

#### **4.2.11.4 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation /assessment reports**

Two assessment reports commented on referencing: the B.Ed and the Level 5 assignment reports. The Level 5 assignment report states that students need to reference properly, and must refer to their reference guide and the activities focusing on referencing in class. Also the Level 5 assignment reminds students to reference, as it states, “Whenever you use any words or ideas from these books and readings, cite them exactly like this: (author date: page number)”.

The B.Ed report provides a heading for referencing and citing, and reiterates that students need to make use of citing and referencing, and to do so correctly.

#### **4.2.11.5 Individual interviews with students**

The issue of referencing was also noted by respondents S8 and S9, during the individual interviews. Respondent 8 noted that what helped her write an assignment, was the focus on referencing during her course:

*I never seemed to get that right. I always had comments on my assignments that I needed to reference properly. I struggled with it but it's like a maths formula you have to know how to do it and then you can so it's ok but you have to learn it.*

Lea and Street (1998, p. 167) found that students expressed anxiety around the issue of referencing, and felt that the texts were authoritative, but they themselves, as novice academics, had very little to say. The students had difficulty in understanding, “the implicit relationship between acknowledging the source of the text, and acknowledging the authority of the text”. On the issue of referencing, academics require evidence, and then they reference, but what is more important is the knowledge claims and evidence, rather than the referencing itself (Boughey, 2012).

Respondent 8 also stated that she believed that one of the criteria that the course facilitators looked for in a “good” assignment, was referencing and evidence of research on a topic.

Respondent 9 stated that what helped her to do her assignments, was the referencing guide. She commented that, during her course, “we did some exercises on referencing”. She also mentioned that more referencing preparation could have been done in the Level 5 course, to help students proceeding to B.Ed level. She also noted that:

*Lecturer X and Lecturer Y were always mentioning it and I was always losing marks because of it. But you know then I realised this I began to really concentrate on referencing. I also went onto the internet and the Rhodes library and found other books and sources and I would use them. This was in my second year. I found that I got much better marks especially from Lecturer X. She would also always comment in my assignment that my referencing had been done better and that she was comments I mean she commented on my extra reading. I found that once I did this my marks always improved.*

The emphasis on referencing is explained by McKenna (2004a) whose research found that lecturers often penalized students for referencing, because referencing is easy to identify and “see”. There may be more fundamental things wrong with the writing, but lecturers either cannot work out what those things are, or are not interested in addressing them.

#### **4.2.11.6 Focus group interview with students**

Respondent S2 was the only student in the focus group interview, to mention plagiarism, and comment that emphasis was placed on teaching referencing in her course. The respondent reported that, “In my second year I finally got it (*referencing*) right and I found that my marks went up by as much as 10%”. She also reported that more could have done to prepare students in Level 5, so that referencing was not an issue in the B.Ed course.

#### **4.2.11.7 Summary**

The referencing discourse emerged consistently in all the data collected. The referencing discourse was drawn upon by the course facilitators and the students, and informs the criteria for assessing assignments. Arguably, the dominance of this discourse can be related to the fact that referencing is one of the most identifiable features of academic texts. The extent to which facilitators appreciated the role of referencing is, however,

questionable, given the way it was consistently related to plagiarism, and not to processes of knowledge making.

#### **4.2.12 The Received Tradition Discourse**

This discourse of 'Received Tradition' privileges the mastery of grammar, punctuation and spelling. It suggests that, if students were provided with a conscious knowledge of rules related to these areas, then problems with students' writing would disappear.

The 'Received Tradition of English Teaching' was a term coined by Francis Christie (1993), and refers to a set of English teaching practices which emerged in 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain, following rapid processes of urbanisation. Christie notes that, historically, the teaching of English had focused on teaching individuals to make persuasive meanings in speech. Once written, texts became widely available. It became possible to analyse the language which had been 'captured' on paper, and, as a result, the first grammars appeared along with rules for standardising spelling. Once these grammars and other sets of rules, became available, the focus in teaching shifted towards them. This process coincided with the growth of the cities and the development of 'unruly' populations. Schooling then became a means of socialising the masses into inferior and dominated positions in society, and the teaching of grammar became a tool for achieving this. Christie, whose background is in Systemic Functional Linguistics, criticises the tradition because of its focus on form, at the expense of introducing students to processes and powerful ways of meaning making, involving genre.

This discourse is similar to an autonomous model of literacy which considers language to be made up of reading and normative technical skills. As I have already stated, the Received Tradition is viewed (Pennycook, 2004) as a means of maintaining the social structures, and precludes students from learning about powerful ways of making meaning. This concept was also referred to by Halliday (1978), who argued that language rules are not ideologically free, but reflect the meaning imposed by the dominant group. Further reference to this is made in Chapter 5. The data indicates that the Received Tradition was drawn upon only once, by a course facilitator, during the individual interviews. During the focus group interviews, the B.Ed course facilitator alluded to grammar. The Level 5 course facilitator said that spelling needed to be taken into consideration when marking assignments, but that grammar was not an issue.

The B.Ed assignment had “clear effective sentence structure” as one of the assessment requirements. The assessment report, which was compiled after the Level 4 and Level 5 assignments had been marked, specified that students need to improve their spelling. While four of the students mentioned the issue of spelling during their individual interviews, only 2 students identified grammar or sentence construction as an issue.

#### **4.2.12.1 Individual interviews with course facilitators**

Respondent C8 noted that one of the challenges in marking student’s assignments is that,

*you can’t even guess what the person wants to say in the assignment – you know those are the difficulties we encounter. And the spelling errors, the grammar even though I am not an English teacher. We notice such things.*

In the individual interview, respondent C8 also noted that, if time permitted, “we can start teaching them this and that in the form of grammar, spelling etc. They (*students*) need lessons, a few lessons...to upgrade their level of knowledge because really we are experiencing problems”.

#### **4.2.12.2 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

In the focus group interview, only one mention of grammar was made by respondent C6 who is one of the Level 4 course facilitators. Respondent C6, while not explicitly stating that grammar and structural errors needed attention, alluded to the fact that, when she shows students dictionaries, she chooses those that provide assistance with pronunciation, as well as grammatical exercises.

One of the Level 5 course facilitators, respondent C10, stated that a checklist is used to determine if students have followed the instructions for the assignment. Assessment criteria on the checklist are, “simple sentences, the structure is adequate – things like, spelling errors, things like that”. Unlike respondent C6, the Level 5 course facilitator noted, “But we don’t focus too much on grammar”.

#### **4.2.12.3 Assignment Tasks**

The Level 4 assignment task highlights that one of the assessment criteria for marking is that “Spelling and grammar is correct”. The course facilitator, therefore, have to assess the Level 4 students’ use of correct spelling and grammar in the hand-in assignment task. The assignment task clearly states that the students’ assignment task, or essay, “must be written in full sentences, with correct grammar”.

The use of full sentences was an assessment criterion laid out in the B.Ed, and the Level 5 assignment requirements. The Level 5 assignment assessment criterion for marking the assignment is: “Meaning of written text clear and simple using full sentences and adequate sentence structure”. The B.Ed assessment criterion is the following, “Clear effective sentence structure”. I have already noted that McKenna (2004a) mentioned that in her research, lecturers tended to focus on surface grammar errors rather than larger structural issues in an assignment, as the surface errors were easy to see and to mark. This seems to be parallel with the comments also made in the assignment tasks.

#### **4.2.12.4 Assignment Reports**

The assignment report for Level 4 notes that, in the assignments, “the sentences were poor. They had a lot of spelling mistakes”. The poor spelling in assignments was also noted in the Level 5 report, that students must, “please proofread your assignment, or give it to a fellow student to read and make comments on, before you submit it. Use the dictionary to look up words that you are not sure about the spelling”.

#### **4.2.12.5 Individual interviews with students**

Respondent S10 referred to spelling and grammar several times during the individual interview. She stated that the readings on the course, in addition to being encouraged to read at home, have assisted her with her vocabulary and understanding and, “to know the spelling – the grammar so it has been helping a lot. It’s been helping a lot”. This respondent noted that the reading has also helped her when she writes her assignments, as she says, “the task sheets so that it means we are writing there, the task sheets, writing assignments you know and that’s also helping a lot you know to do the spelling”. She noted that development of awareness of spelling from reading can be carried onto the written

assignment. However, she made little reference to the meaning of the language in this context.

Respondent S10 furthermore reported that, in order to write a “good” assignment, she needs to, “improve my grammar, reading and writing, to improve my grammar. You know, to know the spelling of the names”. During the interview, the respondent also noted that, when writing an assignment, “you know ... that they the facilitators are looking at your spelling”. Respondent S10 also noted that, “when we do our assignments we are always informed we must always check our spellings, consult the dictionaries if we do not know the meaning of the words or the spelling”. This comment once again resonates with the discourse of English as an additional language, and with Christie’s model of ‘language as an instrument of communication’.

The issue of spelling was also raised by respondent S8. She stated that she improved her assignments as she, “also used the computer and the spell check. This helped me with my spelling, especially the English spelling”.

The issue of spelling and sentence construction was a topic that respondent S7 mentioned during the interview. She noted that the challenge she has with writing an assignment is spelling. She commented,

*I have learnt how to spell more like ah pronouncing words without writing them down is more easier than writing them so I find that it is challenging. Like I will use a c instead of an s so even if I pronounce that word I still pronounce it right but writing down is different. So I find my spelling has improved and also how to structure my sentences*

Respondent S9 also said that vocabulary and spelling are important. The respondent noted, “I think my vocabulary has got much better but I’m not sure about my spelling.” Respondent S10, while not commenting on surface errors such as grammar and structural issues, saw neatness as a prerequisite in writing a “good” assignment. Once again this respondent was merely mentioning the technicalities of language.

#### **4.2.12.6 Summary**

The discourse of the Received Tradition of Language Teaching clearly influences the facilitators and, through them, impacts on students’ understanding of what it means to be

academically literate. Arguably, the facilitators have been inducted into the discourse as a result of their own experiences of being taught language, which in turn impacts on what they perceive as appropriate instruction to students.

The focus of the course facilitators on minor details, such as the grammatical surface errors, in students' assignments, will impact negatively on the students' growth and development as writers (Orr, 1995, p. 63), as it fixates on surface errors and does not assist students with the more complex processes involved in writing. While it is important to have error free text, this sort of focus arguably does not teach students how to write a 'better' assignment.

#### **4.2.13 The Assignment Format Discourse**

This discourse states that academic writing has a particular format, and way of setting out and developing the written text. The Assignment Format discourse came through very strongly in the data. The three most emphasised features of an academic text are the 'introduction', the 'body' and the 'conclusion'

This discourse actually draws on the construct of genre. I have outlined genre theory in Chapter 2, but provide a brief synopsis in this section too. The genre approach to teaching writing is based on Halliday's systemic functional model of language. Martin (1984, p. 25) in Eggins (1994, p. 26) defines a genre as "a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture". Genre theory, thus, describes how language functions to make meanings in ways that take the writer's purpose, and the specific context, into consideration. The written academic assignment is one form of genre that is accepted by most academic disciplines. Eggins (1994) states that most disciplines draw on the same structure for their academic assignments involving: i) the presentation of evidence, ii) the dismissal of counter evidence, iii) a summary of evidence and iv) a restating of the thesis statement. Clearly, Eggins' analysis is very different to the facilitators' identification of the stages of 'introduction', 'body' and 'conclusion'.

#### **4.2.13.1 Course facilitators' comments from individual interviews**

One course facilitator, C11, reported that she believed that students needed to master the “basic structure” of the assignment. She went on to note that students could not construct a written critical argument. In addition, she stated that, “there were so many of them that needed help writing just the basics of the essays”.

This respondent (C11) was the only course facilitator to mention the structure and introduction to the assignment, in the individual interviews. She highlighted her view of the structure of a piece of academic text as follows:

*...they would start off their introduction by saying I am going to write about blah blah blah and I am going to start off by defining these words then I am going to do this. I left it as this as I thought that this was a good way to start writing essays before you get into sort of more critical thinking and critical writing.*

#### **4.2.13.2 Assignment Tasks**

##### Level 4 Assignment Task and Criterion

The assignment task for Level 4 provides the students with detailed instructions on how to compile their written task. The instructions note that, “Introduction – only one introduction, of 2 or 3 lines, outlining the contents of the whole assignment, which covers all 5 essays”. It also draws students’ attention to what is termed the ‘body’ of an assignment, and the number of sentences appropriate to a conclusion

The assignment criteria for Level 4 clearly highlight the need for an ‘introduction’, ‘body’ and ‘conclusion’. The assignment criteria document, as I have indicated, even outlines the number of lines required for the introduction. While the assignment brief was clear on how to set out the assignment, it did not help the students in learning how to develop and structure an academic argument. The RU Learning Guide (Boughey, 2012, p. 12) outlines, for students, how to write an academic assignment, and notes that while the layout is important, what is more important is the knowledge claims, and support of the knowledge claims in an appropriate manner.

##### Level 5 Assignment Task and Criterion

The Level 5 assignment criterion provides the students with a formula that the introduction needs to follow. According to the document, the introduction needs to include a purpose,

and to indicate the structure of the assignment. The assignment task further briefly unpacks what is meant by the structure and purpose components of the introduction.

The Level 5 assessment criterion also outlines what is required of the body of the assignment, as well as the conclusion. A brief comment on what students could, or needed to, include in the conclusion, is provided.

#### B.Ed Assignment Task and Criterion

The B.Ed assignment task begins with a checklist that students could use to ensure that they have the proper format for their assignment. The checklist (amongst other things) points students towards the need for an 'introduction', a 'body' and a 'conclusion'.

#### **4.2.13.3 Comments from course facilitators on evaluation /assessment reports**

The assignment reports for the B.Ed, Level 4 and Level 5, all comment on the structure of the assignment, and how students needed to improve in these areas.

#### **4.2.13.4 Focus group interview with course facilitators**

Respondent C5 noted in the focus group interviews that, "the thing that the B.Ed students battled with also was just structuring the essay, you know, like the introduction, the body . . .". Before respondent C5 could complete her sentence respondents C1 and C2 both simultaneously said, "and conclusion".

The 'assignment format' also emerged in a comment made by course facilitator C5 about the general feedback given to students on their written work. She remarked that, " the general feedback that we were giving to them, the way they have written the assignments they must have introduction and body and a conclusion".

#### **4.2.13.5 Individual interviews with students**

The 'assignment format' discourse also emerged in comments made by two students, during the individual interviews. Respondent S7 remarked that for the task to be complete, "[you] do an introduction, the introduction must be there, the conclusion must be there and the body of the assignment". Respondent S8 not only commented on the introduction, but

also on the use of paragraphs in the written texts. This can be seen in her remark that, “we really learnt how to write an introduction. This was not easy for me. I didn’t know how to write an introduction properly but I find that this really helped me. Also how to write a paragraph...”

#### **4.2.13.6 Focus group interview with students**

The structure of the assignment was commented upon three times by students, during the focus group interview. The statement on the structure of written text from respondent S2 was that, “Of course you had to write using an introduction, body and conclusion”. Her comment was echoed by respondent S4, who referred to the structure when she said, “we had to write an introduction, body and conclusion.” Respondent S4 also stated that she believed that this was the structure that the course facilitators wanted. This can be seen in her words, “And also the structure of the assignment, because that is what they were also looking for, how did you write your assignment? Do you have... introduction...and conclusion”.\_ Respondent S4 in her comments, showed how she is attempting to learn the discourse of academic literacy from the course facilitators.

It was interesting to note that respondent S2 was the only respondent to question why the introduction was important in learning how to teach. She mentioned that learning how to teach counting is important. She states, “When you have a grade R class you need to know that (*teaching counting*), you don’t need to know how to write an introduction”.

#### **4.2.13.7 Summary**

The ‘assignment format’ discourse emerged very clearly, especially in the course facilitators’ interviews, as well as in rubric related to course assignments. The assignment format discourse was also drawn on by four students.

The ‘assignment format’ discourse, as noted above, can be related to the genre theory. The academic assignment is one form of genre, specific to the academy, regardless of discipline. The academic assignment is more than merely getting the correct format of the introduction, body and conclusion. It involves the presentation of evidence, dismissal of counter evidence, summary of evidence and a restating of the thesis statement (Eggin,

1994). Arguably, the 'assignment format' discourse in the data related to this study, is indicative of a much debased understanding of the genre. The extent to which it can assist the development of students' writing is therefore questionable. Making the genre explicit to the CSD students, and showing how language is used to achieve this, and how to achieve their own voices, would be more useful than merely the structural outline of the assignment.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have analysed all the data that I have collected during my research. As my research focused on discourse in academic literacy, after analysing the data I noticed particular patterns and discourses emerging. I then sorted the various comments and materials into the broad discourse categories. In the final chapter, I discuss the finding of the research, and relate the discourses that emerged from the data to the literature and make recommendations based on the discourses that emerged.

## **CHAPTER 5      Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The research reported in this thesis was based on the assumptions that:

- Academic literacy is highly prized by HEIs, and is a determiner of students' success.
- Literacy is a multiple phenomenon, and that academic literacy is one among many literacies.
- Following Gee (1989, p.6), literacy can also be understood as the ability to demonstrate mastery of a 'Discourse' or 'saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combination' and that, from this perspective, literacy involves more than the ability to read and write, and encompasses a 'role' that students need to play.
- The way both students and facilitators construct literacy discursively has a direct bearing on their academic success, on the various courses.

As a result, the questions that this research sought to answer were:

1. What do students construct as academic literacy?
2. What do staff construct as the concept of academic literacy?

This, therefore, restates the goals and questions in this research study.

This chapter looks at the discourses evident in the data, as discussed in Chapter 4, and outlines whether or not these were the same for the course facilitators and the students. These Discourses are then related to the literature, outlined predominantly in Chapter 2. Thereafter, discussion and conclusions are made. These conclusions and recommendations are specific to the CSD, their students, courses and course facilitators, as the number of research respondents was small, and limited to the CSD. However, the findings could be used to initiate dialogue and discussions around the academic literacies evident in the NQF Levels 4 and 5 courses that are conducted by other providers. Furthermore, the recommendations and conclusions could be instrumental in improving the CSD courses, teaching methodology, and curriculum/course content, inter alia.

## **5.2 Summary and Conclusions**

### **5.2.1 The Autonomous model of Literacy Discourse**

This discourse centred on Street's (1984) autonomous model of literacy, and was evident in the research data collected.

#### **5.2.1.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was entered into by both the course facilitators and students. However, the discourse was more predominant amongst the course facilitators. The perception that one was either literate or illiterate was also prevalent, as too was the idea that literacy is merely the coding and encoding of print. While the discourse of the autonomous model of literacy dominated with comments made by the course facilitators, both during the various interviews and the assignment reports, this was interspersed with comments from two course facilitators relating to the ideological nature of literacy.

A deconstruction of the discourse by drawing on relevant literature is provided. Firstly, a discussion on Street's autonomous view of literacy is discussed. This will be contrasted with the ideological model of literacy and followed by looking at what is meant by literacy.

#### **Street's autonomous view of literacy**

Street (1984) viewed literacy as a socially embedded phenomenon. The autonomous view of literacy is based on the assumption that literacy is itself autonomous of the social context in which it is practised (Street, 2003, p. 77). The autonomous model is also viewed as unitary, and consisting of a set of technological 'skills' focused on the generic encoding and decoding of the printed text. Street (1984, p.44) notes that Goody and Watt, some of the earliest proponents of the autonomous model of literacy, viewed people who were "literate" as being superior. They believed that literacy had evolved, and this had had an effect on the social structure and the cognitive abilities of the people who were literate. The autonomous model, thus, believes that, if you introduce literacy to people then you, in effect, enhance, "their cognitive skills, improving their economic prospects, making them better citizens" (Street, 1984). If teachers base their fundamental pedagogical practice on the autonomous model, then they will teach reading and writing as a set of discrete skills, with

the implication that, if the student does not succeed, then the abilities of the student are to blame (Lawrence, 2002). In contrast to the autonomous model, is the ideological model of literacy.

### **Street's ideological view of literacy**

In Chapter 2, I described how the NLS was a strong proponent of the ideological model of literacy. The ideological model is a more culturally sensitive view of literacy, as it identifies multiple literacies. It views literacy as a social practice, and not merely a technical and neutral skill. We, therefore, cannot view literacy without considering the social context (Ballard & Clanchey, 1988, p. 7), and indeed the broader cultural context, in which it is used (Fairclough, 1992). For the purpose of this research the context would be the RU, the Faculty of Education and the CSD.

### **Literacy consists of reading and writing**

As I have indicated above, the discourse of the autonomous model of literacy constructs literacy as solely involving the encoding and decoding of print. In contrast, the NLS argue that reading and writing make sense only when viewed in the context of the social and cultural practices from which they emerge (Gee, 1996). Furthermore, literacy is more than just reading and writing (Ballard & Clanchey 1988, p. 7), and here Gee's construct of Discourse (deliberately capitalised) is particularly useful. Gee sees Discourse as

*...a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful role" (1990, p. 143).*

Gee (1990) considers Discourse as a kind of 'identity kit' that needs to be adopted. The students need to adopt the Discourse, or identity kit of the HEI which, for most students, differs from their primary Discourse. Gee (*ibid.*) would see the Discourse of the HEI as one of a number of secondary Discourses (all Discourses additional to the primary Discourse are referred to as 'secondary Discourses'). The epistemological practices of the disciplines and the institution need to be taken into consideration (Street, 1996b; Gee, 2004) when considering both literacy and Discourse. The institution will privilege particular genres,

which, in turn, will shape the literacy, language and Discourse used in the faculty and/or institution (Bhatia, 1993).

#### **5.2.1.2 Recommendations for own practice**

As noted above, Street's autonomous model of literacy predominated in discourses to which both the course facilitators and the students subscribed. In many respects, the adoption of the autonomous view of literacy absolves the course facilitator of any responsibility for perceived underachievement or failures by the students, since their failure is seen to lie in their inability to master simple encoding and decoding processes. It is my opinion that the facilitators were not identifying the 'problem' correctly. As a result, the feedback and instruction that was provided to the students adhered to the autonomous model of literacy. The students were, therefore, provided with access to the course, but not with epistemological access, as the autonomous model does not facilitate access to the academic Discourses, which is a requirement for epistemological access.

The course facilitators should be involved in discussions and seminars surrounding these issues, in order to be exposed to international and national thinking around academic literacy, and in order to clarify academic literacy for themselves. This would ensure that a consistent discourse of the ideological nature of literacy is adopted and used. Furthermore, the RU Learning Guide (2012), which is underpinned by the ideological concept of literacy, needs to be made, provided and read, and/or workshopped with the course facilitators.

As the B.Ed falls under the auspices of the RU Faculty of Education, a closer working relationship with the Faculty of Education and the CSD needs to be facilitated, in order to have a shared and common understanding of the requirements from students, particularly with regards to academic literacy. The research brought to the fore that the Faculty of Education staff member with the academic literacy portfolio had been to the CSD and provided the students with a single lecture. The fact that the Education Faculty has a staff member with the portfolio of academic literacy 'lecturer' is problematic. In Chapters 2 and 4, I have outlined that the ideological model views literacy as a socially embedded practice which is acquired through immersion in a social context. The perception that academic literacy can be acquired through a 'lecture', therefore contrasts with the ideological model.

## **5.2.2 The Bantu Education Discourse**

The Bantu Education discourse was based on the belief in the inferior nature of the education provided to the majority of South Africans during the apartheid era. This discourse also argues that it is the school's role to prepare students for university, and to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enter into HEI. As the unequal apartheid system provided sub-standard education for the majority of students enrolled on the course, this meant that these students were not prepared for HEI.

### **5.2.2.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was found in responses from students and course facilitators during the interviews, but not in the written data, analysed for the purposes of this research. The statements made by both the students and the course facilitators showed that both groups subscribed to this discourse, which carried with it the perception that the students' academic literacy had been negatively affected by the inability of Bantu Education to prepare the students sufficiently for HEI.

This discourse raises the issue of, to what extent schools can prepare students for HEI, given that school-based literacies are different to academic literacies? As students are only at school for a few hours a day, to what extent can the time at school overcome the influence of home-based literacies? Relevant literature, pertaining to this discourse is now provided.

It is undeniable that education, under apartheid, was discriminatory for Black, Indian and Coloured students. Students educated under this dispensation, at best, received a mediocre education, as education was a political tool used to indoctrinate the students into accepting the status quo, and for preparing an unskilled workforce (Asmal & James, 2002). However, this discourse once again draws on Street's (1984) autonomous view of literacy, in that it privileges the encoding and decoding processes taught at school. It also does not encompass the understanding that the literacies of schools differ from academic literacies, since schools and universities are different social spaces, underpinned by different values.

### **Bantu Education Discourse, and the autonomous view of literacy**

Halyard and Olsen (1984, p.19) put forward a very strong argument against the autonomous model of literacy. They view the autonomous model as being constructed for a specific political purpose, so that, instead of literacy promoting progress, civilisation, personal liberty and social mobility (Street, 1984, p.2) this model of literacy justifies putting money into the schooling system, which perpetuates hegemony (Halyard & Olsen, 1984, p.20), as the schooling system teaches students its 'own' literacy.

While it cannot be denied that Bantu Education provided an inferior education to a large majority of students, the failure of students at HEI cannot be laid squarely on Bantu Education. The ideological model argues for a multiplicity of literacies, and emphasises the fact that school-based literacies are different from academic literacies (Geisler, 1993). This, therefore, raises the question as to the role schools (including Bantu Education) do play in developing academic literacies (*ibid.*). Gough and Bock (2001) note that schools do not prepare students for HEI; an observation which is also supported by the work of Geisler (1994).

### **Socially constructed view of literacy, and home- and school- based literacies**

HEI's and schools are both distinct kinds of social institutions. The kind and type of literacy covered in school is different to academic literacies, prominent in HEI, therefore it is not possible to compare school-based literacy to academic literacies. Given the different socially embedded literacies, it raises the question (that I posed above) of whether or not the school can, and does, prepare learners for HEI.

School-based literacies and university literacies are different (Geisler, 1994; Scollon & Scollon, 1981). School literacy practices of reading and writing are different to the requirements of HEI. Geisler (1994, p. 4) notes that students are taught that school-based texts are autonomous and have only two functions: firstly they are to be read, and "are the source and authority of the knowledge to be acquired" (*ibid.*, p. 42), and secondly, they are to be written. The students are expected to read and learn the text without questioning it. At university, students are expected to be much more critical, and to engage with the text and use the information to substantiate their own written texts (*ibid.*).

Boughey (2008) argues that this is, “referred to as ‘reading critically’” and is something prized in higher education circles. Yet, school does not prepare students to do this, and school-based literacies are in direct contrast to HEI practices (*ibid.*). School literacies, therefore, do not necessarily prepare students for the literacies required by HEI’s. As schools do not prepare students for HEI’s, all students who enter HEI’s are academically unprepared (Geisler, 1994).

As Geisler (1994) points out, schools do not prepare students for HEI. This raises the question of who, or what, prepares students for HE? Research conducted on educational attainment in 15 nations (Arum, Gamoran & Shavit, 2012) shows the role of social class in determining educational success. This work confirms earlier studies, such as that of Heath (1983), which provided an ethnographic account of child rearing practices in three communities. The work of Bourdieu (1991) also shows how family social status plays a significant role in students’ educational attainment (*ibid.*).

The idea of home-based literacies was also noted by Gee (1989) in his distinction between primary (learned from the home) and secondary Discourses (learnt from school, community and university). Gee (2003) argues that children do not only acquire literacies (of various sorts) at school, but also through experiences in the home, which occur before, and after, school. In addition, it is usually the home-based literacy, rather than the school literacy, that prepares the students for HEI (Geisler 1994, p.51).

Furthermore, Bourdieu’s (1991) concept of cultural capital also needs to be considered. As pointed out, the students on the CSD course were educated under the apartheid dispensation. Apartheid education embodied the cultural mores and ideology of the White ruling party, therefore the students who did not have this ideology as their cultural capital were at a distinct disadvantage.

### **5.2.2.2 Recommendations for own practice**

We cannot ignore the poor quality of education, that the majority of students received under apartheid, even though it might be argued that we need to look forward as our apartheid

history is an issue of the past, and that, legally, apartheid came to an end 19 years ago. However, we need to consider the socially constructed nature of literacies, and, in addition, we need to take cognisance of the fact that the effects of apartheid are still felt in our present education system. Apartheid structured South African society in such a manner that there is an overlay of social class and race. Because of the colour of their skin, some social groups were limited to inferior education and inferior labour positions. The mere fact of providing students with access to education does not reduce class inequalities in education (Arum, Gamoran & Shavit, p 15, 2012). This means that, even if the education system post-apartheid had improved significantly, the impact of social class would remain on access and success.

The Bantu education discourse raises complex issues. We cannot negate the negative effects of apartheid which continue to impact on our society and educational system. However, we still need to move away from viewing literacy in an autonomous manner, and as a set of discrete skills (Street, 1984). The autonomous view of literacy will “lock” us into the view that the students are in some manner defective, as they did not receive the proper schooling, which can be blamed on apartheid schooling. The course facilitators, institutions and course providers, therefore do not need to take responsibility for the students’ perceived lack of progress or failure.

The course facilitators need to pay more attention to developing academic literacies in the students, and making overt the Discourses, and the values underpinning the Discourse practices. This needs to be done, using Vygotsky’s concept of scaffolding, by finding out what the students know (what home literacies they bring to the course), having a solid understanding of what academic literacy entails, and helping the students through the ZPD to attain the academic literacies they require in order to succeed on the course.

This idea is supported by Broekmann and Pendelbery (2002), albeit at a higher level of the educational spectrum. Research was conducted on Black students entering post graduate programmes in HEIs in South Africa. It is acknowledged that these students often do not have the prerequisite scholarly skills (*ibid.*, p. 228), and argued for the need for students to be inducted into academic Discourses by those teaching them on the respective courses.

One of the roles of the university and the course facilitators at the CSD is to socialise the students into the specific Discourse communities (Gee, 1990; Geisler, 1994). However, in order to do so, the course facilitators need to be cognisant of their role, understand the social aspect of literacy, and not merely label the students as 'deficient', owing to their disadvantaged apartheid education.

The students were not regarded as being literate, by the facilitators. The course facilitators need to realise that the students draw on multiple literacies, not academic literacies. In light of this, course facilitators need to acknowledge students' home-based literacies, and to use these as a learning tool, and, in this way, try to enculturate them into academic literacies. In this manner, the students' strengths would be drawn upon, rather than overemphasising their weaknesses.

### **5.2.3 The Failing Education Discourse**

The Failing Education discourse is similar to the Bantu Education Discourse, discussed in 5.2.2. This discourse draws on the idea that the education system, at present, is worse than it was during the apartheid era. The course co-ordinators, therefore, acknowledge the poor quality, and crisis, in education, and see it as an on-going cause of poor student achievement. The social aspect (discussed in previous discourses) of literacy is not referred to.

The discourse, therefore, constructs the present poor education system as being responsible for the poor academic literacies of the students. This is significant, given the fact that the first "born free" children (children born in 1994) completed their schooling at the end of 2012.

#### **5.2.3.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was drawn upon by three course facilitators, but was not evident in any student data.

As this discourse is concerned with education in present day South Africa, a vast amount of literature can be found, but I merely draw on Bloch's discussion about the present education system.

Bloch (2010, p.14) points out that education in South Africa has made some significant improvements since 1994, including improved access to basic education and through-put. However, he notes that these improvements are offset against significant challenges which, after more than sixteen years post-apartheid, need to be redressed, as the education is in crisis (*ibid.*). Furthermore, the CHE note (South Africa, CHE, 2013), in a report outlining student attrition rates, that, "the quality of schooling continues to be undermined by the legacy and persistence of educational inequalities and dysfunction."

#### **5.2.3.2 Recommendations for own practice**

This discourse was significant, as it only emerged in interviews with the course facilitators, when referring to the students, who (as mentioned in Chapter 1) are all mature students, and came through apartheid education. This educational dispensation ended in 1994. Therefore the present educational system will have no bearing on their ability to develop academic literacies. The fact that this discourse was noted, seems to indicate that the course facilitators continue to see schools as preparing students for HEI. The poor performance of the students can, therefore, still be considered to be the 'fault' of the students and the schools who were not adequately preparing students for HEI.

#### **5.2.4 The Second Language problem Discourse**

The second language (L2) problem discourse relates to the fact that the students are speakers of English as an additional language, and the course is conducted in English, and this is why students do not perform well academically. Assumptions are that, if the students became more proficient in the additional language, their literacy problems would disappear. This is a complex issue, and is related to the previous discourse on apartheid education. The L2 problem discourse draws on Christie's "model of language as an instrument of communication", but can be deconstructed, using Cummins's (1984) theories of language acquisition. I have alluded to both these concepts in Chapter 4 and Chapter 2.

#### **5.2.4.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse emerged in both the individual and focus group interviews, in addition, it was also found in the comments on the evaluation/assessment reports. The discourse was not only drawn upon by the course facilitators, but also by students using English as a home language, and additional language.

#### **5.2.4.2 Recommendations for own practice**

Firstly, despite students needing to understand the values inherent in the culture of context, and the culture of situation, Cummins's research shows that the students' home language can be viewed as an asset, as it provides them with a means on which to build further language proficiency. What I have termed the 'second language problem discourse' argues that, if the students' home language is not English, then the students are seen as having a handicap. While Thomson (2008) found that the students involved in her research had not mastered academic literacies in their home language, students (regardless of their home language) do bring some proficiency in their home language, as a resource, to the course. The course facilitators can harness this proficiency to develop the underlying language proficiency through a process of scaffolding.

The process of scaffolding means that the course facilitators will need to assess the literacy practices and language proficiency developed in the home language, and to assist them, through the ZPD, into developing the kind of literacy in English that their course and RU require. This could be challenging, and based on Thomson's (2008) findings seems to suggest that the students are not acquiring or developing high levels of literacy and language proficiency in their home language. However, the challenge would be to build on existing strengths, rather than to condemn students for their weaknesses. A possible solution could be to assist and encourage students to use their home language as a support for learning in discussion groups by, for example, building glossaries which they could share with each other. .

While one could advocate multilingual pedagogies, with a huge body of literature to support this idea, this would be exceedingly challenging, given that South Africa has 11 official languages, and only Afrikaans and English are academically established. In the case of

the students pursuing courses at the CSD, however, all are speakers of isiXhosa as a home language, which makes things easier.

The course facilitators need to be aware (Geisler, 1994) that schools do not prepare students for HEI, therefore all students who enrol on the CSD course are academically unprepared, regardless of their home language. This would also change the stereotypical belief that only students using English as an additional language require help, and prevent the attitude that student S6 had, where the students with academic literacy problems were regarded as speakers only of English as an additional language.

Furthermore, this will also prevent the labelling, and racial stereotyping of students on the CSD courses. Boughey (2002, p. 296) states that, historically, relating students' problems to language problems has avoided the labelling of students problems being owing to "innate differences in cognition", which, given South Africa's apartheid ideologies, is not acceptable. Boughey points out that, recently, the understanding and investigation of the construct of language and Discourse has assisted in understanding the challenges that students face, with the result that this label can also be challenged.

In addition, the 'second language problem' discourse calls on the Christie (1985) uses of the Received Tradition of Language Teaching, in that it assumes that problems are owing to students' lack of mastery of the forms and structures of English which is why the students do not perform well academically. The assumption is that, by teaching these, in language courses, this will then solve the problem. However, as I have argued above, if students are not aware of the values embedded in the contexts (the Discourses) it does not matter. Whether they communicate in their home language or additional language, they will not make the appropriate communicative choice. The course facilitators and the students need to take into consideration the cultural context in which the students are studying, and the requirements of the CSD and RU. Once again I would like to recommend that a thorough unpacking and understanding of ideologies and discourses be introduced at the CSD. This will include the RU discourse on what constitutes academic literacies, and which is clearly defined by the Centre for Higher Education Research Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) in various publications and courses, such as the RU Learning Guide (Boughey, 2012).

## **5.2.5 The Dictionary Discourse**

The Dictionary discourse presupposes that the use of a dictionary is critical to academic literacy. In a sense, this discourse is closely related to the second language discourse, as it assumes that the students (the majority of whom are speakers of English as an additional language) will only gain the sense and meaning of the text, if they understand all the words in the text.

The Dictionary discourse incorporates aspects of another discourse, drawing on what Christie (1985) terms the 'Received Tradition of Language Teaching', the autonomous model of language and the model of language as an instrument of communication.'

### **5.2.5.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was a prominent one, drawn on by the course facilitators and the students. The discourse not only emerged during interviews, but also came across in the assignment briefs and the evaluation/assessment reports. As noted above, this discourse was reflective of the received tradition of language teaching, and language as an instrument of communication, as well as the autonomous model of literacy.

The Received Tradition of Language Teaching was explored more fully in 2.5.11. The Received Tradition of Language Teaching (Christie, 1985) views aspects of language use, such as grammatical accuracy and spelling, as paramount. By focusing on the use of dictionaries, the course facilitators and students were emphasising the correct use of the word, in the correct sentence construction.

The focus on the use of dictionaries in the Dictionary discourse also draws on the autonomous model of literacy (Street, 1984), which sees literacy as a set of neutral skills. The fact that students did not own dictionaries and had to be encouraged to buy them, is indicative of the fact that dictionary usage does not appear to be part of their home-based literacies. In many respects, therefore, the Dictionary discourse does not take into account multiple literacies, nor does it take into account the social aspect of literacy, but rather draws on an autonomous model which holds that, by teaching a set of literacy skills to the

learners, this will facilitate their communicative abilities which they will then be able to apply to all aspects of literacy.

Finally, Christie (1985) described what she termed the 'model of language as an instrument of communication', which views language as a mere conduit, carrying the meaning and message. The Dictionary discourse, with its emphasis on the need to look up the meaning of words, can be seen to draw on this model when, in fact, words are merely signs 'drawing' meaning from the context in which they are used.

#### **5.2.5.2 Recommendations for own practice**

While the use of a dictionary is important, as it assist students with development of new vocabulary, this is a very small part of literacy. As the incorrect spelling does not necessary impede meaning making, it does, however, cause a 'social affront', as academic texts are required to be always 'polished' and 'correct'. The RU Learning Guide 2012 (2012, p. 19) mentions, at the end, that students need to produce a polished piece of writing, and that spelling and terminology need to be accurate. While the accuracy of a text, because of incorrect spelling, will offend an academic reader, this does not mean that the use of dictionaries *per se* is central to meaning making in texts. Despite the role played by correct spelling in academic literacy, the course facilitators and the students should not over-emphasise the use of dictionaries as central to meaning making. Rather, time would be better spent discussing the values associated with the 'social affront' involved in being confronted by a piece of writing containing numerous errors.

#### **5.2.6 The Discourse of the other (i) and (ii)**

Both these discourses 'othered' Black students. This discourse emerged amongst White students, who saw the 'at risk' students as being speakers of English as an additional language, and who cited their need for extra tuition. The entire history of apartheid education, with the ideological belief that Black students only needed inferior education, is relevant here.

### **5.2.6.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

The 'Other' (i) discourse emerged only amongst students, and not amongst course facilitators. The students subscribing to this discourse advocated additional tuition for students who they perceived were 'at risk'.

The 'Other' (ii) discourse emerged amongst course facilitators, but was not evident in the students' interviews. This discourse related to how the 'other' students do not have a literacy tradition of reading. Interestingly, although the 'Other' (ii) discourse essentially acknowledged that different literacies existed, and was therefore making reference to the ideological nature of literacy, its function was principally to the 'other', the Black students.

### **5.2.6.2 Recommendations for own practice**

The 'Other' (i) discourse fails to take into consideration the socially embedded nature of literacy. It was also based on out-dated methods of teaching academic literacy. This discourse did not emerge in interviews with the course facilitators, possibly because separate academic support is contrary to the approach to student development at RU. I would, therefore, suggest that students be provided with on-going instruction, and that specific attention be given to the RU Learning Guide 2012 (RU, 2012).

The 'Other'(ii) discourse, identified in data generated by interviews with course facilitators, drew on the concept that the poor performance of some students was owing to their lack of the culture of reading, which impacted on their academic literacy. This, once again, goes to the concept of what constitutes academic literacy, therefore the CSD staff need to engage in discussion around what constitutes academic literacy(ies), and what is required of students.

### **5.2.7 The 'You need to read' Discourse**

This discourse is based on the idea that if students read more this will improve their language ability, and thus they will be able to translate these new abilities to their writing which will then improve. This is related to the discourse of the 'Other' (ii), discussed above, which notes that Black students do not have a reading culture at home, neither for pleasure nor for academic purposes. Also, in the apartheid era, access to books and libraries was

seen as part of the White culture, and, owing to separate development, Black and Coloured students were not expected to read (Banda, 2010). Banda (2010), also notes that the lack of reading in Black communities was entrenched during apartheid, and it will take time to change this perception, but, in the meantime, the literacies that students do bring from their homes can, and must, be used in their education.

In considering this discourse, it is also important to note that books and newspapers are comparatively expensive in South Africa. Most students' homes will not have books, and this means that, in order to access them, students will need to develop an entire new set of literacy practices, such as joining a public library. Once books have been borrowed, reading will then challenge other dominant practices in the home – and dominant beliefs about reading.

#### **5.2.7.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse emerged, both from the course facilitators, who are teaching on all the levels of courses offered by CSD, and the students. This discourse also relates to the 'Second language problem' discourse.

#### **5.2.7.2 Recommendations for own practice**

Two contradictory views of literacy were evident in this discourse. At times the discourse focused on language, as socially embedded and socially sanctioned. However, at other times, the respondents focused heavily on the autonomous model of literacy. The constant switching between the two models of literacy, as well as the lack of consistency in using only one of the models, shows lack of clarity of thinking, and literacy beliefs. This inconsistency will be applied to the thinking and construction of academic literacy by students, and, therefore, once again the recommendation that these concepts be clearly unpacked and defined by the course facilitators, needs to be made. Also, the course facilitators must take note of the challenges the 'You need to read' discourse makes to students' own understandings of themselves, and of home-based practices.

## **5.2.8 The ‘form matters’ Discourse**

This discourse focuses on the idea that the style of academic text that students produce is important. This discourse draws on the need for correct spelling, and grammatical correctness too.

### **5.2.8.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was dominant amongst the course facilitators, especially during the focus group interviews. However, the discourse could also be found in the assignment briefs and assessment reports. The discourse also emerged amongst students.

### **5.2.8.2 Recommendations for own practice**

The course facilitators need to be aware that the majority of the students are not speakers of English as a home language, and that their primary Discourse probably draws on BSAE with regard to English conventions and the form. Both the student and the course facilitator need to be aware of this, when considering the development of academic literacy.

The course facilitators drew on the concept that there is ‘proper language’ that needs to be used, and while academic texts do require the use of standard forms of language, the facilitators need to appreciate that language used in academic texts relates to students not accessing a set of *values* which underpin it. There is little point in teaching the standard forms of the language, if students do not have the benefit of using the standard forms. The students will simply not appreciate the need for the use of standard forms (even if they know them), without this value.

## **5.2.9 The ‘use your own words’ Discourse**

This discourse revolves around the concept that the production of academic text (in the form of knowledge claims supported by evidence) does not entail coping, but paraphrasing.

### **5.2.9.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was only subscribed to by the course facilitators.

### **5.2.9.2 Recommendations for own practice**

The course facilitators reported how they assisted the students to avoid plagiarism by setting them a variety of paraphrasing exercises. By getting students to paraphrase, the course facilitators were actually promoting an understanding of knowledge *reproduction*, rather than knowledge *production*. While paraphrasing is important in the production of academic text, academic literacy involves more than a simple restatement of what the author of another text states. Rather, it involves using the work of others to support claims students make in response to the rubric of an assignment. The 'Use your own words' discourse can thus be seen to be only a first step in academic literacy. Workshopping the construct of literacy with facilitators could complicate this discourse, and the practices which emerge from it.

### **5.2.10 The Referencing Discourse**

The referencing discourse is closely related to the 'Use your own words' discourse. Shi (2004, p. 173) outlines how students' assignments, and particularly those written by students who are speakers of English as an additional language, comprise a patchwork of sentences and phrases copied from other sources. This copying of work is seen as plagiarism, and referencing is seen as the panacea to prevent plagiarism.

#### **5.2.10.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

The referencing discourse emerged in data elicited from both course facilitators and students. The course facilitators expressed frustration at the students' lack of referencing and plagiarism, while the students acknowledged that referencing was important to the course facilitators.

Referencing was also cited in the assessment criteria for marking assignments, and the assignment briefs. This showed that the course facilitators had assisted the students in beginning to access academic Discourses. However, the course facilitators did not expand on this by explaining why referencing was important. One of the students noted that there was a formula that they had to learn, in order to achieve higher marks.

In discussing this discourse, a look at the importance of referencing, and the role that it plays, is necessary. Firstly, the perception that it prevents plagiarism, needs to be considered. There is much disagreement amongst academics as to what constitutes plagiarism, and how students, and in particular students who are speakers of English as an additional language, should deal with the issue (Shi, 2004). Angelil-Carter (1995, p.1) notes that referencing is a fundamental part of academic writing, and that:

*We have understood referencing as the superficial manifestation of a much deeper, elemental feature of academic writing, which is the selection from sources, and subsequent integration and synthesis of knowledge and ideas into a coherent whole.*

### **5.2.10.2 Recommendations for own practice**

The course facilitators are making an effort to provide students with access to academic Discourses, by ensuring that the students are aware of the mechanics of referencing, and using referencing as an assessment criterion. The students were provided with the technical skills of referencing knowledge, from various sources.

In her research, McKenna (2004a, p. 157) discusses one of the reasons that she had noted, on how the focus on referencing amongst participants in her study arose. She comments that, when lecturers were marking students' work, they knew instinctively that it was not correct, but were unable to determine "what was wrong" with a particular piece of writing. As a result, they often focused on surface errors such as referencing, which were easy to identify. I would recommend, therefore, that course facilitators are clear on how referencing functions in the construction of meaning in an academic text, by drawing on the work of, for example, Angelil-Carter (*ibid*). Furthermore, as I pointed out in Chapter 4 and 5.2.10.1, it is not enough to merely introduce students to the skill of referencing, without having them understand why they need to reference, and that referencing provides the students with the means of substantiating knowledge claims.

The students were not aware of the importance, and reasons for referencing, and did it merely to please the course facilitator, and achieve a higher mark. In fact, one of the students summed it up by saying that it was a formula that you had to learn. The students, therefore, while being introduced to the conventions of academic Discourses, were never told why it was important, thereby excluding them from fully accessing the Discourses.

### **5.2.11 The Received Tradition of English Teaching Discourse**

The Received Tradition discourse focuses on the technicalities and grammar of language. In this discourse, therefore, the focus on students' writing would be on their technical grammatical skills. It is believed that if the students can perfect their technical skills, then they will succeed. South African teachers have been steeped in the Received Tradition discourse, and are products themselves of the Received Tradition (Hutchings, 1989, p. 149).

#### **5.2.11.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse emerged in data elicited from both the course facilitators and the students. The facilitators made constant mention of spelling and grammatical errors. This extended to the Assignment tasks, which indicated to students that these were issues that the course facilitators would assess when marking their work. The assignment reports also referred to the poor spelling and grammatical issues in students' work.

### **5.2.12 The Assignment format Discourse**

This discourse states that academic writing has a particular format and way of setting out and developing the written text, and, therefore, the assignment. Students need to master the appropriate formula in order to succeed academically.

#### **5.2.12.1 Summary of my findings from Chapter 4**

This discourse was evident in interviews with the course facilitators, and the students too. The course facilitators attempted to make their requirements for the format of the assignment or task, specific, in the assignment briefs. The assignment reports also noted their requirements, regarding the format of the assignments. The discourse was challenged by the students, with one student questioning the relevance of the assignment format, as it would not be needed when they were teaching.

The assignment format is a genre. Genre theory (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996, p. 23) refers to the particular shaping of literacy, language and discourse that is the outcome of institutional power. As noted in Chapter 4, the written academic assignment is one form of genre that is accepted by most academic disciplines (Eggins, 1994). This is true of the Education

Faculty at RU, as they produce a booklet, which is updated annually, on the writing of assignments.

### **5.2.12.2 Recommendations for own practice**

As noted in Chapter 4.2.11 and 12, each discipline has its own rules and conventions, related to academic literacy. The course facilitators, however, must not merely teach the form without putting it into context, and teaching the underpinning values. Teaching the form exclusively will not enable students to understand why the form has been constructed in such a manner, and therefore they will not be able to understand and adopt the Discourses from which the forms emerge. In other words, the course facilitators need to make the relationship between the form and the secondary Discourse evident to the students. The students, as Gee (1994) points out, need to be enculturated into the secondary Discourse of the faculty, with regard to the form of academic reading and writing.

The course facilitators need to take cognizance of the fact that the students' primary Discourse (acquired from their home and local environment) will influence the voice used in their writing. The voice may not be appropriate to disciplinary specific Discourses.

## **5.3 Summary and conclusion**

The discourses prevalent in the data collected were, in most instances, the same for both the course facilitators and the students. This could have been owing to the emphasis placed on these discourses by the course facilitator, and consequently adopted by the students.

The course facilitators and students seemed to concentrate on viewing literacy in the autonomous mode of literacy, but sometimes vacillating to the ideological model of literacy. The lack of consistency in the course facilitators' views of literacy will impact significantly on their perception and teaching of academic literacy. Furthermore, the autonomous model of literacy which predominated the social aspect of literacy would not be taken into consideration. Therefore, the course facilitators (and the students) will not perceive the concept of Discourses and how they need to inculcate or apprentice the students into the dominant Discourses surrounding academic literacy at RU, and on the CSD courses.

The concentration on surface errors means that, firstly, the course facilitators limit their assessment to these errors, as they are not able to see the structural problems in the written task, which will mean they are unable to assist the student with the acquisition of knowledge. The students will also be able to change only the surface errors in their work, and will not be able to improve on deeper issues, such as supporting their knowledge claims.

My study suggests there is much work to be done in the CSD – work which needs to focus on the development of facilitators' understanding of literacy, and how the need to reproduce dominant forms impacts on their students' performance.

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## **Appendix A      Informed Consent Letter**

Dear Participant

I would like you to read this 'Informed Consent' document. It explains details why I am going to be doing the interview and about your rights as a participant in the interviews.

When you have finished reading it, please sign in the space indicated to show that you have read, understood and agree to the terms of your participation.

### **Purpose of the research**

I am in the process of conducting research for my Master's in Education. I am investigating how the learners and the class presenters view reading and writing with the intention of using the information on improving practice.

### **What is required of you in this research**

I will need to interview you twice: once individually and the second time with four or five of your fellow students. The duration of the interview will not be longer than about 20 minutes. The interview will be at a time and venue that is convenient for you.

All interviews will be taped. After the interview I will then transcribe (type up what was said onto the computer) the recording. Your real name will never appear in any of the documents that are made public as a result of this research and in the written Masters document. You may request copies of the transcripts of your interview(s) if you would like to do so.

Your participation in the interviews is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the interview(s) at any stage.

I, ..... (Full names in block letters), have read, understood and agree to the terms of my participation in the research for the Masters of Education as set out in this document.

Signed: .....      Date:

## **Informed Consent for Course Providers**

Dear Colleague

I would like you to read this 'Informed Consent' document. It explains details why I am going to be doing the interview, the purpose of the research and about your rights as a participant in the interviews and research process.

When you have finished reading it, please sign in the space indicated to show that you have read, understood and agree to the terms of your participation.

### **Purpose of the research**

I am in the process of conducting research for my Master's in Education. I am investigating how the learners and the course providers view reading and writing. Ultimately I am hoping that the information from the research will show us what assists the students and provides suggestions for improvement and ideas on how we can further scaffold the students. This is especially relevant as the students on our courses are ultimately aiming at doing a B.Ed degree which requires a high degree of reading and writing.

### **What will be required of the participant in the research?**

#### **Interviews**

I will need to interview you once individually and then a second time with a small group of colleagues made up of colleagues presenting the level 4, 5 and B.Ed course. It is difficult to judge how long the interview(s) will take but it should not be longer than 40 – 60 minutes. The interview(s) will be at a time and venue that is convenient for you.

All interviews will be taped. After the interview I will type up what has been said onto my computer. Your real name will never appear in any of the documents that are made public as a result of this research and in the written Masters document. You have the right to request a copy of the transcripts should you so wish.

### **Course Work and scaffolding of reading and writing.**

Your participation in each part of the research is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the interview(s) or any part of the research at any stage.

I, ..... (Full names in block letters), have read, understood and agree to the terms of my participation in the research for the Masters of Education as set out in this document.

Signed: ..... Date:

## Appendix B Interview Schedule

Individual Interviews		
Date	Time	Respondent
11/10	8:30	S5
11/10	14:00	S6
15/10	11:00	S7
27/10	13:000	S8
27/10	18:00	S9
28/10	9:30	C8
28/10	16:15	C10
29/10	10:00	C11
Focus Group Interview: Course Facilitators		
9/11	9:00	C1, C2,C3,C4,C5, C6
Focus Group Interview: Course Facilitators		
15/11	14:00	S1, S2, S3, S4

**Appendix C Individual interview transcripts: Course Facilitators**  
**Interview with Course Facilitator C8**

<b>K</b>	<b>What group are you teaching now?</b>
C8	ECD Level 4
<b>K</b>	<b>What do students need to do to get into Level 4?</b>
C8	They need to apply for the course and they need to in our office that they have at least standard 9 Grade 10 or 11 I think
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the students need to do with regards to reading and writing on the course?</b>
C8	Our students really differ. There are those who can read and write even though there are mistakes more especially as they are not writing their own language. But there are those who make mistakes even though they are writing their own language ne and Mna I think the trainers, in fact not the trainers as we do not have time, not enough time to educate everyone to be able to read and write. I think in fact, what I do is to encourage them to go and attend eABET classes so as to get more education like in the form of reading and writing because these are the skills that they will need more especially when they are teachers obvious that they have to write mos every now and again, they need to plan for the activities they are doing for the learners. And also in our things in our modules we did efundamentals on reading and writing and they were tasks then they were supposed to go and do. I have observed some they are trying their best but I haven't been able to be see about some of the students.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the students can do at the moment in reading and writing?</b>
C8	Now, there are those who can read and write now and they must keep on reading so as to get better understanding, they can read the magazines, they can watch the tv, they can go to the schools like ABET classes. They can go and find help to other people, colleagues or friends. They can make use of other teachers. And fortunately there are libraries in the areas like Grahamstown even in Bathurst there is a library where they are allowed to go and read. In the Level 4 course there are a lot of written tasks to do. We do some of them in the classroom as classwork. They work in pairs or groups so that they can help each other and they have to go and finish the task at home during their spare time.

<b>K</b>	<b>To do the task(s) successfully what do they need to do?</b>
C8	I like to say they should read with understanding. Ne, If they don't understand a word they can make use the dictionary in our training room and I have encouraged them to buy their own dictionaries they can use at home or in at school. That is the only way they can learn the meaning of the words and I always say to them when they are reading and try to get the meaning of the word from the dictionary ne, they have to read carefully because sometimes it does not mean what they think it means. They have to choose the best word to explain the word in that particular sentence (short pause) to make meaning.
<b>K</b>	<b>If you get two assignments. What makes the one a good assignment and the other not a good assignment?</b>
C8	Mna, what I have discovered is that children of now a days are really not writing the way we used to write. In the past although there were things that were not accepted ne, we used to write things that can be read you know by somebody even if its wrong you can know its wrong nowadays you can see to it you can't even guess what the person wants to say in the assignment you know those are the difficulties we encounter. And the spelling errors, the grammar even though I am not an English teacher. We notice such things.
<b>K</b>	<b>Hmm. Sharing a joke about mixit.</b>
C8	Then if the assignment is good ne and you as the reader or the marker you really understand you have to get a picture of what the person is saying. I am not saying 100 percent there will be errors ne but you understand what the person wants to say and you do have an idea of what the person is saying
<b>K</b>	<b>How do you think you can help the students improve their reading and writing?</b>
C8	Dictionaries, libraries, and their modules (course content) they have to read because there are things there to give them information. When you use a word here you can use it there. It is a way of focusing on the book so as to get information.
<b>K</b>	<b>How do you think your teaching helps them to improve their reading and writing?</b>
C8	My teachers?

<b>K</b>	<b>Your own teaching.</b>
C8	I am a Xhosa speaker, I read in English and then translate it makes things easier for them. At the same time I don't want to spoil them. I read and read then I ask them a word and who can tell me the meaning of that particular word and its when we go through the dictionary and get the meaning of the word. I want them to understand that nobody is 100%. I can't be the facilitator. There are things they know that I don't know. There are things I know and they don't know. So we need to share the information all the time.
<b>K</b>	<b>What could you do differently or improve upon in helping the students do reading and writing?</b>
C8	I think if there can be enough time we can start teaching them this and that in the form of grammar, spelling etc etc. They need lessons a few lessons for real to upgrade their level of knowledge because really we are experiencing problems.
<b>K</b>	<b>What kinds of problems?</b>
C8	Writing skills (ah ah) they are poor. I am not good but they are poor, very poor really. Sometimes I don't know it's careless mistakes or they don't read and re-read what they have written. It's good to write write then read. Sometimes you can see that there is no sequence in their assignments. And sometimes I don't think they do follow the instructions although we explain things in the training room situation because we talk about assignment brief etc etc. but you can see that they are making mistakes. And there are those who like to although they are writing assignments they are writing in point form. These are the things that we are still working on with them with the group. And if they are answering some of the questions you can see that this is not enough. It is as though as standard one boy or girl has been answering this.
<b>K</b>	<b>This is one of your Level 4 assessment rubrics. Explain what you look for in the assignment?</b>
C8	You can see we look for cleanliness, lots, understanding, lots of other things.  I sure wish that CSD or our teachers can attend lessons in order to be able to read and write. Or else what can be done to my thinking is that I think we need to work hand in hand with the primary teachers. And the primary teachers need to work hand in hand with the high school teachers. Because the children of now a days who have matric don't perform like a standard 6 person an

	<p>old standard 6 person. Our education is going down and down it's as if it can't be changed. I have been blaming this continuous assessment all the time. It seems as though the teachers in the past, maybe they are better now, were not doing it correctly. Because they were just passing the buck. Although I have to pass because I have to take another group. I don't think they monitor from the word go up to the end and plan according to the learner's needs. Because to me that is what continuous assessment means. You observe daily so as to have the child or children get information.</p>
K	<b>Thank you</b>

## Interview with Course Facilitator C10

<b>K</b>	<b>What group are you teaching now?</b>
C10	I am teaching the level 5 group
<b>K</b>	<b>What do students need to do to get into Level 5?</b>
C10	They need a Grade 12.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the students need to do with regards to reading and writing on the course? What reading and writing do they need to do in order to achieve on the level 5 course?</b>
C10	They need to read a lot. They need to read all the books and the newspaper they come up with so they get used to reading the more they read the more they get knowledge and the more they develop their skills in order to read and write.
<b>K</b>	<b>What reading do you expect them to do on the course?</b>
C10	When they are given some readings what I see is that they struggle a lot they take such a long time to read those articles they are given. They need to read with meaning. We also provide them with dictionaries if they do not understand something or some words we do not tell them the meaning of the word because we need to scaffold them to understand because if you tell them the meaning of the word they will rely on you all the time. Writing in another thing because when they write they don't make research they just write they don't proof read what they have written. The only thing is that they complain about lots of work to be done and a lot of writing to be done. I think using relevant books and information will help them.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the students can do at the moment/now in reading and writing?</b>
C10	I think when they need to acquire a standard of writing – a high standard of writing, number 1 they need to read with confidence they need to read all the books they are given they need to read at home because that is not happening either they only read when they are at the classes they don't read when they are back at home. And culturally, we as blacks, we don't read we are scared to be seen reading a book in public. I think that hinders them from improving their skills in terms of reading and writing.
<b>K</b>	<b>How do you think you can help the students improve their reading and writing?</b>

C10	What I do when I am marking their assignments I don't give them answers all the time. If it is tense I just write "t". If they don't know the grammar I help them as well. If I know they won't be able to understand what I am trying to do I give them some at least some information or answers so that they don't repeat the mistakes they have done.
<b>K</b>	<b>What could you do differently or improve upon in helping the students do reading and writing?</b>
C10	I think we must not give them too much reading. Yes, reading should be there but it is a lot. Another thing I think those readings are so academic for some of them. We need to use simple English so that they understand what is written. We need to simplify our work. We must give them more than enough writing. They must write a lot in order to improve.
<b>K</b>	<b>Brings out a rubric and assignment. What do you look for/what do you give marks for when you are marking an assignment?</b>
C10	Like for instance you are given this checklist you need to see if a learner has followed the instructions because you are told simple sentences, the structure is adequate things like, spelling errors things like that. But we don't focus too much on grammar.
<b>K</b>	<b>So what do you look for then?</b>
C10	You look for the structure of the assignment. We look to see if they have understood the required task as well.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the students think we expect of them with regards to reading and writing?</b>
C10	At least at this level they should be able to read and write fluently because they are doing level 5. And we expect them to write simple English something that is understandable and has a meaning sometimes you find that their sentences have no meaning at all.  When students are writing you encourage them not to plagiarize you encourage them to write in their own words they must learn to read with understanding and write using their own words.
<b>K</b>	<b>Anything else you want to say?</b>
C10	No I think I have said everything.

## Interview with Course Facilitator C 11

<b>K</b>	<b>Tell me a little bit about the learners that you are teaching?</b>
C11	<p>Most of them are students who had been through the CSD they did two years on the level 4 course and then two years on the level 5 course. Then we started the B.Ed course. The youngest was about 25 and the oldest 50 when they had finished the B.Ed, all females, all teaching in the Eastern Cape in Rural or semi-rural areas if you can call Grahamstown a sort of semi-rural area. Some of them teaching in Grade R classes most of them started off teaching in Grade R classes but many of them by the time they had finished the course had got posts in Grade 1 or 2 classes. There were 5 of the students were white women the rest were black or coloured. Some of them started in level 5 and then went on to do the B.Ed some of them had an NPDE and then went straight into doing the B.Ed but these were teachers who had been teaching for quite a few years already in primary schools.</p>
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the students need to do with regards to reading and writing on the course in order to do the course successfully?</b>
C11	<p>I think we didn't require them to be able to do research or anything like that but we encouraged them to use the library but I think they found that quite daunting. We should have done more work in helping them use the library although they did have an orientation day there I don't think many of them never ever went back after that. We sort of ran out of time for that sort of activity. At one stage I thought it would be good to given them a list of books to go and look for in the library and to be able to use those books or just read those books. But now I am getting away from the question.</p> <p>I think just be able to read basically not a high level of academic reading but just be able to read articles and also read at a certain speed. They are very very slow at reading and this makes everything take so much longer and those students who are fast at reading find it boring to wait and wait for the rest of the class who are battling through the article. So I don't know, right from level 5 I know the facilitators always encourage the students to read articles, newspapers but I don't know how much of that goes on though. If only our students could be real readers before they actually start the course but I don't know how we would be able to do that I suppose they would have to start from when they are at school.</p> <p>I mean writing yes they are required to have a matric to get into the level 5 you need to have a matric but many of them you know I don't think they some of them had a matric exemption and had a high standard of their matric but others was very very poor and you could</p>

	<p>see that their comprehension skills were quite poor and when they needed to write they found it quite difficult as well. But I must say the students improved enormously. Every time the students wrote an assignment Margaret marked them and a letter was written to the students pointing out where the general errors were and were they could improve they really did come on enormously from their first year and third year they were so much better by then. They found it difficult to construct a critical argument I found. They sort of and I suppose that's what happens when you learn a pattern to do something they would start off their introduction by saying I am going to write about blah blah blah and I am going to start off by defining these words then I am going to do this. I left it as this as I thought that this was a good way to start writing essays before you get into sort of more critical thinking and critical writing. But some of them could have been taken further but we weren't able to do this as there were so many of them that needed help writing just the basics of the essays.</p>
<b>K</b>	<b>What kinds of basics?</b>
C11	<p>The sorts of things. Just structuring the essay instead of saying I am going to present a different point of view and this is how I am going to do it. I know when Lara wanted to teach the Development Practice Course she looked at some of my students essay and she said "Oh no! they are not even being critical here, they are using this same pattern every essay". But I thought at least they are doing that. At least they are managing to do that. I thought it was a good start anyway.</p>
<b>K</b>	<b>So how did you help the students acquire the pattern and help them improve their writing and reading?</b>
C11	<p>As I was saying we sent those letters after each assignment we looked at common errors and then sometimes sent them a letter about those errors reminding them about for instance how you have one idea per paragraph, having the introduction and having the conclusion and sometimes little grammatical things and then sometimes just generally after the lecture after an assignment we would look at some of the things were people had made mistakes and general things. During the first year of the B.Ed Rob Kraft did one or two sessions on academic development. He also did things like constructing an argument and looking at a newspaper article, seeing the structure of that and how to put it together as well. And it was nice for them to have somebody else as well to come in and do something for them. I don't know if computer skills come into it as well because we also did a computer course with them because so many of them were so weak regarding computer skills and you know that really helps you to do more research, I mean the students who were able to use computers did far more internet research, sometimes just looking things up on Wikipedia but I felt that's not what you should be doing as an academic but I thought well it's a</p>

	<p>start you know. It's better than nothing. Umm, what else. I mean just marking essays and giving comments that's all feedback and support and help as well and then sometimes students that I could see where battling with an assignment I would let them come and see me and then go through it with them and they would redo it and get a better mark the next time. I don't know what else, how else we sort of helped them. Obviously it would have been better to have all kinds sorts of support. Of course one of the major problems was the shortage of the time you have with the students. If you have them full time you can do all kinds of support with them.</p>
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think you would do differently or improve upon for this next bunch of B.Ed students?</b>
C11	<p>As I was saying doing something with the library would be good. Like giving them each a book to go and find in the library, simple books on education and early childhood education and matters regarding early childhood and let them find the book, maybe do a short review on it or something just so that they feel a little bit at home using the library because I think that's the first step to really reading and writing and throughout their lives they could come and use that library or other libraries they had so little experience with that and coming into a huge library like that the new one at Rhodes, I mean it's very daunting especially if you don't know libraries. And I think just spending more time hmm ja it's difficult because there is a certain standard that you are trying to achieve and you want them to read at a certain standard and do their assignments right from the beginning at a certain standard but and there isn't that much time to spend on the support that you could give the students. Ja, I don't know what else you do.</p>
<b>K</b>	<b>How do you students to use their own voice?</b>
C11	<p>That's what I mean about like critical writing. Just presenting their own argument and I know one of the recommendations for writing that Margaret put in you know you do the introduction and then each paragraph about the topic and each paragraph has its own idea and then at the end you write recommendations for yourself so that sort of bringing in your own voice I suppose because then you are saying what you would do in this context and how you would put this into practice and then have the conclusion after that. So I suppose that is a way of starting to get them to use their own voice and also not to plagiarize as well. Not to.. obviously ,Sorry I'm going back to the other one now because right in the beginning of the course we gave them a session on plagiarism and how it works and all that and usually every session I'm remembering things now, we brought in some sort of academic literacy component like umm now I'm just thinking, like for instance paraphrasing you know, like giving them a whole lot of like giving them a paragraph and then saying now paraphrase it. Then they</p>

	<p>learnt what paraphrasing is and how to condense a paragraph into one sentence or what a summary is and in class when we had when we had a reading to do give them each a paragraph to summarise and then report back in that way so that it made the reading go quicker and it also gave them practice in summarizing things and then giving them like looking at a paragraph and breaking it down into sentences and giving them a whole lot of sentences and then asking them if you were writing a paragraph which sentence would you put first. Like the general one and then after that put the ones that go into more detail about what you have just stated so those are also just more support things and its all to do with English teaching I suppose and I am not an English teacher.</p>
<p><b>K</b></p>	<p><b>What do you think makes the difference between a good assignment and a bad assignment? What would you look for in the ideal assignment?</b></p>
<p>C11</p>	<p>Well I would look at whether they understand what they were talking about. Whether they done the reading that you had given them, you know they ... only a handful of students would do extra research and only right (<i>emphasis on the word right</i>) at the end where a handful of students getting the referencing right as well. So then I would look at whether they are actually talking about the topic that you have given them to talk about because this was also a problem just sort of going off the topic and talking about something else. And then just keeping to the topic and then also giving their own experiences talking about what is happening in there context not just about what happens out there. You know and what should happen and then sort of brining it all together in a conclusion at the end I suppose. Ja, then obviously the work that we also did with regards to the referencing and constant reminder on how to reference and cite and so on. But I think the referencing is really a difficult thing to get right. Really. I can't think of anything else now but I probably will later.</p> <p>We also used to have regular tests because Margaret thought that this would help the students write quickly you know and just get them into the practice of doing that and researching the topic, you know, giving them the topic before hand and then when they come to the lesson they just have to write the test for an hour and um that's just another way of just giving them more practice in writing I suppose. And obviously marking them, grammatical errors don't really matter that much but then sometimes I would just show them where they are going wrong all the time but I wouldn't mark them down because of it.</p> <p>You asked about the ... you know we also said that the essay should be four pages but sometimes they were only 1 page. This is also a skill that they need to develop and what I found with the students also because most of them are hand written they don't use the computers</p>

	<p>then its far more difficult to cut and paste and all that so they don't write one draft, read it through, write another draft and another draft as it should be done you know on a computer you would write it and then read it and fix it up and do it again and again if you are going to hand in an essay but I could see that sometimes students would just write you know and what ever came into their head, whatever ideas, whenever and some of them were good at that and others weren't but you see that's why I think with computers and computer skills or just having computers at home of course that would help a lot to develop their skills that would really enable them to write their essays far better. That's all. I can't think of anything more.</p>
<b>K</b>	<b>Thank you very much.</b>

**Appendix D Individual Interview Transcripts: Students**  
**Interview with Student S5 – Level 4 student**

K	Where do you teach?
S5	At xxx pre-school
K	<b>Ah at xxxx that's a really nice school. How long have you been there?</b>
S5	2 ½ years
K	<b>2 ½ years that's quite a long time</b>
S5	Yes, I started there as a cook
K	<b>Oh really (<i>surprise</i>)</b>
S5	Yes
K	<b>What age group are you teaching now</b>
S5	4 ½ years old actually I am an assistant teacher now until I get my certificate. XXX (name of school) is under child welfare so they promoted me from being a cook to an assistant teacher
K	<b>Ahhh. But you want to be a teacher</b>
S5	I want ( <i>emphasis</i> ) to be a teacher
K	And the level 4 course is this your first year or second year?
S5	It's my second year now
K	I know that there are a lot of readings in the level 4 course. Tell me about the readings
S5	Yes, there has been quite a lot of reading here in the class and you know that it is helping us a lot. Because as you can see I am a little bit old. I have been out of school for quite some time now. Now my vocab is not quite that good but since I have been here I have been improving because I am reading all the time and they (course co-ordinators/facilitators) encouraging us to read all the time even at home we must start looking at newspapers even our manuals, books, magaS5ines, everything to improve our vocab. And to understand and I mean to know the spelling – the grammar so it has been helping a lot. It's been helping a lot.
K	What reading and writing do you do on the course? You have spoken a bit about the reading but tell me more and especially the writing
S5	Yes, we read the manuals, the tasks sheets we do, the task sheets so

	that it means we are writing there, the task sheets, writing assignments you know and that's also helping a lot you know to do the spelling and whatever
K	What do you think on the course has helped you do reading and writing?
S5	Firstly, as I have mentioned before ( <i>K:Hmmm</i> ) to improve my grammar, reading and writing to improve my grammar. You know, to know the spelling of the names you know because you as you know I am not an English speaker you know so it is very important now especially if you are going to be in the public eye like being a teacher. Because when you are being a teacher even though we are teaching small kids we are also dealing with grownups like parents you know we do meetings with the parents. So there are the meetings, before you do the meeting you are going to prepare an agenda and you are going to ( <i>K: Hmm – encouraging</i> ) distribute those papers to the parents. When they look at that agenda they must because they see you as the teacher so they must be able to see that this is a teacher who has been writing here. You know, you must be sure that you don't have mistakes when doing those things because they are seeing you, they are putting you ( <i>K:Hmm</i> ) on a higher level so by reading and writing that helps a lot when dealing with people. And also when you are at pre-school you are going to do some fundraising and sometimes you are going to ask some shops or whoever for the sponsorships you are going to write letters not only by talking to a person sometimes you are going to write letters you know. That (emphasis) person must see that you are really done a professional that person through reading (emphasis) what you have written
K	So what writing on the level 4 course do you have to do?
S5	Mostly assignments the writing that we do is mostly assignments
K	And what do you think makes a good assignment and what makes a bad assignment?
S5	I think a good assignment there when we are writing an assignment you must first understand what you have been asked to do and do exactly that. I think that is a good assignment. That's a good assignment to understand and to be able to umm to give the person who is going to read that assignment that you know exactly what you are talking about you know because most of the time let's say I'm writing an assignment and the person is going to read the assignment is not my assessor or facilitator who knows this I am going to send this assignment of mine to the person who maybe whose the manager at Shopright Checkers ( <i>K:Hmm mmm m</i> ). So that man at Shopright Checkers doesn't know anything about teaching the children or doing whatever so when he or she reads that assignment they must get that thing. "Oh this person knows what they are talking about because they because I do understand what she is saying in here."
K	Er, if, for example if I if... what is one of the assignments that you have had to do in your level 4 course?
S5	Ow, the assignment was about what er about dealing with parents

K	OK..
S5 interrupts	How to communicate with the parents
K	Now let's say I am marking that assignment (S5: <i>hmm</i> ) and someone's got 60% and someone's got 40% (S5: <i>hmm</i> ). What do you, why, er what do you think made the difference? Why did the one get 40% and the other 60%? What do you think the assessors look for?
S5	I think the content
K	<b>Anything else besides content</b>
S5	Besides content..(pause). Firstly, the neatness of the assignment must be, when you are writing the assignment in order for you not to make mistakes you must write the assignments on the scrap paper. Then (emphasis) then read it after you have written it do some corrections and then after some corrections do the actual thing, the right thing. The one that you are going to start neat you know those are the things that they the facilitators are looking at, your spelling, you know your reflection, your references because sometimes you find out that some other assignments er when you are writing your assignments you have collected some other people to for help or the libraries or your manuals you must put that down. They must know that this information, where did you get this information. They must get a clear you know they must see that you are not a lazy person because if you are a lazy person then you will not have the references then your marks will be a little bit low because of that you did not reference. So you must, they must see that you are, you know, an active and creative person (K: <i>hmm</i> ) because you have collected so many sources when writing.
K	<b>Wow, S5. you sound like you are a hard working student. How do you think the CSD can do in the classroom to give extra help to the the students to be better at reading and writing?</b>
S5	You know as I have been saying before, since I have been here I've gained a lot. I don't think that there is much that CSD can do more because they are good. (K: <i>hmm</i> ) Because I am a shy person – really
K	<b>Really?</b>
S5	I am a shy person it is not easy for me to go and stand in there and in front of the class and say whatever but now I am able to do that because of CSD. You know they are teaching us how to be confident. (K: <i>hmm</i> ) and we are now. You can see that now we are getting to be teachers we are going to be real teachers. You know they are equipping us in many ways not only by writing (K: <i>hmm</i> ). Even by giving us, like watching the dvds so what they are telling us to do we can actually see it but only see it but as ere r I'm from the class now (it was a level 4 session and she had come out to be interviewed) we are

	<p>busy now doing some creatives so they are helping a lot not only be reading but also by some creatives by seeing something by talking to us so they are good really there is not much they can do because they are good, they are very good because they I have seen some improvement in me so that is why I am saying they are good</p>
<b>K</b>	<p><b>That is such an interesting thing. And I was thinking while you were talking what skills of reading and writing did you have before you came to the class?</b></p>
S5	<p>Not really, because I have got matric so I don't have much skills really. And I er er I left school in 1999 before I have only got matric. So that's what I am saying, when I came here I was nervous, blank you know and as I was saying before I am a shy person you know I was so tense even in the class because I was afraid that if I speak somebody is going to laugh at me because I was going to say something. But because of the encouragement of the facilitators because ah ah they are such encouragement "it doesn't matter whatever you say there is no wrong or right answer just say what you think (<i>K: hmm</i>). We are here to help you all of us are students and facilitators" (<i>this was said In voice of the facilitator – as if they were speaking</i>). And even in our assignments er er at our homes they encourage us to call them and say, " I have a problem please help me here and there". You know they are really good.</p>
<b>K.</b>	<p><b>Hmm they are brilliant and kind</b></p>
S5	<p>They are really very good.</p>
<b>K</b>	<p><b>What reading and writing did you do after matric – anything?</b></p>
S5	<p>I went to a university for only one year. So there is nothing much that I have been doing. But I stopped...</p>
<b>K</b>	<p><b>What did you do at university? What course did you take?</b></p>
S5	<p>There?</p>
<b>K</b>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
S5	<p>A B.A.</p>
<b>K</b>	<p><b>Where?</b></p>
S5	<p>At Vista University in Port EliS5abeth. But because of financial problems and all of that problems at some so I couldn't I had to leave the school and go to work look for the job. So I was stuck in looking for a job and as you know most of the jobs don't pay that much. So it's not</p>

	that easy we have to even help at home you know ( <i>K: hmm</i> ) with those wages. So that is why I am studying now.
<b>K</b>	<b>When you have finished level 4 do you think you will carry on with studying and reading and writing?</b>
S5	I am going to carry on because I want that degree that I wanted before. Even if it is teaching I am going to do it now and I am happy with the kids so I think I will pursue the teaching. So I am going to continue because now that I have been here at CSD you know my mind is now a little bit open. ( <i>k : hmm</i> ) You know. I am not that person that was in a shell because now even when I go back to my sight I even tell my colleagues what has been going on here. So we ( <i>K: hmm</i> ) so we work on those things because of CSD.
<b>K</b>	<b>Do you think there is any area that you can improve on in your reading and writing?</b>
S5	Do you mean what area to improve?
<b>K</b>	<b>I don't know – there might not be I am just asking.</b>
S5	No not really, not really because I am improving now because as I was saying as I was when we do our assignments we are always informed we must always check our spellings, consult the dictionaries if we do not know the meaning of the words or the spelling ( <i>K: hmm</i> ), ask other people for you know that is improving anyway
<b>K</b>	<b>Do you find it difficult as a second language speaker to write in English?</b>
S5	Mm mm not at all because most of our subjects were in English in our location so it is not a problem
<b>K</b>	<b>Thank you for your time and missing out on class. I appreciate your letting me speak to you today.</b>

## Interview with Student C6 – Level 4 student

<b>K</b>	<b>What course are you on at the moment?</b>
<b>S6</b>	The National Diploma in ECD and its my second year
<b>K</b>	<b>What reading and writing does the level 5 course require you to do?</b>
<b>S6</b>	I think Karin, you need to read a lot and do more and do more research as well.
<b>K</b>	<b>Explain more about the reading that you have to do.</b>
<b>S6</b>	Hmm like we do get notes in class. We have to do that and we need to do more research about what we read about in class. And also books concerning the course and books that will help you with the learners in your class as well.
<b>K</b>	<b>This is one of the assignments that you had to do. What do you think the course requires of you in order to do well on this assignment?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Hmm I wouldn't say that there is a lot of writing. The writing is all about the assignments we get. Like drafts we do before we hand in an assignment but there is not a lot of writing. I think the reading is more than the writing.
<b>K</b>	<b>So you say that the only writing you need to do are the assignments. What do they expect from you with regards to the assignments?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Um like in in the notes we get in class there are a lot of new words for us ne. And I think I is necessary to have a dictionary to do research on the meaning of certain words because there are a lot of words we don't know and then we do research on the words we don't know to have a better understanding about the words.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think you can do successfully with regards to reading and writing now that you couldn't do before you began the course?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Umm. Now I am doing a lot of reading as I said before and me myself I like to write no matter what I can rewrite a lot of stuff and I don't have a problem with writing and I am getting used to the reading part as well. Before I didn't like to read but even now I struggle to read the notes but now I do research I read a lot because I want to have a better understanding of what I am doing.
<b>K</b>	<b>What specifically do you find difficult with the reading?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Sometimes certain words in sentences then you have to go back to the dictionary and reflect on what the word means and then go back to the

	dictionary to understand it more. Or just ask someone else who knows about it or when you find out from someone who knows more about it, it makes better understanding. You understand it a lot more.
<b>K</b>	<b>So what I am hearing is that you find certain words difficult and so you don't always understand what you are reading and reading takes a longer time. And writing assignments what has helped you to write assignments?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Well I think that in writing assignment the only thing that has helped me is writing and then writing it again. To be honest I get my brother to check the assignment for me. He helps me more. I don't really understand what the facilitator writes on my assignments. I do not find them helpful maybe that is just me that I just don't understand.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think makes a good assignment? What do the teachers look for in a good assignment?</b>
<b>S6</b>	I think they want you to look at the question, like overview of all the question. Then you structure it then you go and do research. Then you write a first draft. I have a computer at home and that helps me with the correct spelling and grammar. I think they look for spelling and grammar. That's a problem for me because even though my English is good my spelling and grammar in my writing is poor. I blame that on apartheid. I did not get a good education like you whites.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the teachers could do differently, improve on or do more of to help you in reading and writing?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Ah, I don't know. Sometimes I'm really confused. I read what they want. They do help us by telling us in the class and we discuss it but by the time I get home I have forgotten. Then I ask my brother to help. Sometimes my cousin's brother helps me too. I think they can give us more readings and readings which are easy.
<b>K</b>	<b>Which assignment and/or reading did you enjoy the most and why?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Ahh. I think the ones that we make things. That I like making things with my hands. I also like the assignments where you have to do things with the children in your class.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think you have learned the most about reading and writing on the level 5 course?</b>
<b>S6</b>	Ah, for me I have learned a lot. I have learned that I can read but sometimes it is difficult for me especially when the print is too small. I find that I read things sometimes three times but then I ask my brother or my cousins brother if I don't understand. I know that I can get help. I am now

	not so scared of reading like I used to be before the course because we blacks didn't get a good education. We were not encouraged to carry on with our education.
<b>K</b>	<b>Anything else?</b>
<b>S6</b>	No I think that is everything

## Interview with Student S7 Level 5 student

<b>K</b>	<b>What course are you on at the moment?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I am doing ECD level 5
<b>K</b>	<b>And where are you teaching at the moment?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I am teaching at Rhodes Day Care Centre
<b>K</b>	<b>What course or courses had you done before you started the level 5?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I did level 4 with Intec correspondence.
<b>K</b>	<b>Is there any difference between the level 4 and level 5 courses? What are the differences?</b>
<b>S7</b>	Not really, I find things that I did on level 4 where on the same course that I am doing now. ( <i>Student is obviously talking about course content only</i> )
<b>K</b>	<b>What reading and writing does the level 5 course require you to do?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I think it needs more reading and writing because you do assignments so you must be able to read and write if you are not sure about a word you look up in the dictionary.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think you need to do to successfully read and write? You mentioned looking up in the dictionary. Anything else?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I like reading so it helps me a lot like um when I was studying at an early age we were not taught in English so I taught myself to read like my father was a gardener so he brings the newspaper all the time so I look and I read and make sure that I read those newspapers even though there was a word that I did not understand. Ah, I watch a lot of cartoons. A lot of the words that I use now I get them from those cartoons so that's how I get my vocabulary. And working at Rhodes Day Care Centre with English people and children I get more words and how to use them in a sentence.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the teachers on the level 4 and 5 course could do or do now to help you be better readers and writers?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I think we struggle a lot – like we are not English speaking people. Sometimes we don't understand a word like the meaning of the word so the teachers tell us if you don't understand something ask,

	don't go home not understanding what is happening in the class. You can ask someone next to you. If they don't understand the teacher is always there to help like if you don't understand they tell us to ask because they are there to help us.
<b>K</b>	<b>And writing assignments what has helped you to write assignments?</b>
<b>S7</b>	Well we have got study groups. They are also there if you don't understand and the teachers give you there cell numbers or come to your centre if you are struggling with something. They are really there to help us. Like even if you write the assignment and you didn't do well you get an opportunity to rewrite the assignment with better understanding because they write down where you can do more or where you see you didn't understand what was asked of you in the assignment.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think makes a good assignment? What do the teachers look for in a good assignment?</b>
<b>S7</b>	I think they want you to look at the question, like overview of all the question. Then you structure it, like cover all the aspects of the question. Like if you are asked to do an introduction the introduction must be there, the conclusion must be there and the body of the assignment. You mustn't go out of the context you answer what is asked of the question and add more of your own experience and other things that you know concerning the question that is on the assignment.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the teachers could do differently, improve on or do more of to help you in reading and writing?</b>
<b>S7</b>	Ah, I think the teachers are trying to explain as much as they can but we also need to go and find more help like research but the teachers are there and they provide us with reading material on where to look out for answers and I think there is really not more that they can do because they provide us with what we need for the course.
<b>K</b>	<b>Which assignment and/or reading did you enjoy the most and why ?</b>
<b>S7</b>	Ahh. I think the assignment that I did about myself and the one about literacy and Numeracy because I didn't like maths at school so I find it challenging how to teach children to count and all that stuff.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think you have learned the most about reading and writing on the level 5 course?</b>

<b>S7</b>	Ah, for me or the children? For me? Well I think for me I have learnt how to spell more like ah pronouncing words without writing them down is more easier than writing them so I find that it is challenging. Like I will use a c instead of an s so even if I pronounce that word I still pronounce it right but writing down is different. So I find my spelling has improved and also how to structure my sentences
<b>K</b>	<b>Do you think your reading and writing has improved? How has it improved?</b>
<b>S7</b>	Yes, I think so, I think so because at the beginning I didn't know what was expected of me. So now I can see what can I do and where can I improve.

## Interview with Student S8 -B.Ed student

K	<b>XXX (respondent's name), you did you B.Ed last year and you graduated this year?</b>
S8	Yes. I finished the course in 2010
K	<b>What in particular did you enjoy about the course?</b>
S8	I was just so excited about been given the opportunity to do a course. You know I always felt unhappy at the school because the other teachers all have a degree and I always felt they looked down on me because I only had a diploma and wasn't properly qualified. Now I can hold my head high and my family is so proud of me. I also think that it helped me a lot as a teacher.
K	<b>Tell me a bit more about that.</b>
S8	It gave me practical ideas on how to teach things. Like Glynnis Suttly she really helped us she taught us how to teach maths. I didn't like maths and it was always badly taught in my class now I am so good and because I like maths the kids in my class also like maths.
K	<b>Was there anything that you didn't like about the B.Ed course or that you found challenging?</b>
S8	Not really.
K	<b>Did the B.Ed require you to do a lot of reading and writing?</b>
S8	Oh ja, lots and lots. Sometimes I thought that I would never get through all the reading. Especially in first year in the beginning we had so many assignments to write on human beings. I found that difficult to do. It wasn't easy for me because I am Afrikaans speaking and was now learning in English. I found that it was difficult for me to write in English. Also to know how to write.
K	<b>Was there anything done on the course to help you with reading and writing?</b>
S8	Hmmm. Ja, hmm. Let me think it was a long time ago now <i>(both laughing)</i> . I think we really learnt how to write an introduction. This was not easy for me. I didn't know how to write an introduction properly but I find that this really helped me. Also how to write a paragraph and oh ja of course the referencing. I never seemed to get that right. I always had comments on my assignments that I needed to reference properly. I struggled with it but it's like a maths formula you have to know how to do it and then you can so its ok but you have to learn it.

<b>K</b>	<b>And ...</b>
S8	And shoo the reading, you just made me remember all the reading all the hand outs and readings shoo. Sometimes I was working all weekend and couldn't go out with my friends.
<b>K</b>	<b>So there was a lot of reading to be done for the course?</b>
S8	Ja, lots and lots.
<b>K</b>	<b>Was it one particular lecturer or all the lectures? Was it like that for all the years of the B.Ed course?</b>
S8	Ja, hmm umm I think that every year we had lots of readings and I think that it was more for Jean and for Sarah in maths we had some but it wasn't so much.
<b>K</b>	<b>Did you learn anything on the course that would help you with the reading?</b>
S8	I think that we sometimes umm we had to umm read articles together. This helped me a lot because we could then help each other and when I didn't understand then I could ask my group and they could help me. Umm we helped each other. Also of course Jean would make us look up words in the dictionary that we didn't understand. Umm sometimes they were not easy readings and I didn't understand them because my language is Afrikaans. Ja, I also think we were told to highlight important points. Ja, that's all I can think of.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the lecturers looked for in an assignment? What made a good assignment and what made a poor or bad assignment?</b>
S8	Er I think that they wanted to see referencing. They wanted to see if you know your readings if you have done the work. Oh, ja um and they wanted you to do research on the topic.
<b>K</b>	<b>Which assignments did you enjoy doing the most?</b>
S8	I always did well in the practical assignments, especially the maths assignments. I liked doing them and I liked doing them with my class. I have a Grade 3 class and I did the maths assignment and then we had to reflect on it. But I didn't like the reflection part. But I did ok in them. They were my good marks. But the reflections they helped me think about my teaching and be a better teacher. Also Glynnis helped by giving me some good ideas and suggestions on my assignment.
<b>K</b>	<b>How did the other lectures help you in doing their assignments?</b>

S8	Ja, all the lecturers they were all good. They er they used to always say you could come and ask them questions. If you came and asked them they would help you. Also I think they would explain the assignment to you before you did it. This helped me a lot. Sometimes just reading what the assignment wanted when you were at home this did not help me I learned more from the lecturer and what they wanted when they went through the assignment with us.
<b>K</b>	<b>Anything else?</b>
S8	Hmm, umm. Ja, I think that in our first year they would let us write the assignment and then they would always let us right it again and again until we got it right. I didn't like this but umm I think that it did help me.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think made a good assignment and a bad assignment?</b>
S8	Ja, as I've said they wanted different things from us. Glynnis wanted us only to do practical things using what she taught us and putting it into practice but then Sarah she would want us to do lots and lots of reading and then she also let us do practical assignments but not so much. Jean made us do reading too and then she would give us an assignment on the reading and sometimes she let us do something in the class and reflect on it. I didn't like the assignment that Jean gave us that we had to do in a group. The other people in my group were not serious. They didn't work hard and we didn't do well so I didn't like that.
<b>K</b>	<b>You mentioned that you had to do a lot of reading for assignments besides reading in a group what else helped you to do all the reading?</b>
S8	Hmm, I think um I think um that Jean gave us time in class to discuss and then she would let us report back oh ja and one time she gave each of us a piece of the reading to do then we had to make a report on newsprint about the reading that we had and oh ja now I am just remembering that in first year when we had to do reading on the history of South Africa then we all er did a piece and we had to summarise and put it on newsprint or was it an overhead thing er I can't remember now but I think it was on overhead projector.
<b>K</b>	<b>Do you think your reading and writing improved during the B.Ed and how?</b>
S8	Ja, it definitely did. In first year especially in the beginning I did not do well I had to do assignments again and again. I was almost thinking of not doing the course anymore. But then it began to get better because as I say my home language is Afrikaans but ja things got better and I got better at writing. I think I did this by referencing but doing shorter paragraphs they were always moaning that my paragraphs were too long but afterwards I got better.

K	What did you do to improve your paragraphs? Why do you think it got better?
S8	I think they got better because what's that man....
K	<b>XX ?</b>
S8	Ja, XX came and he gave us a talk I understood the bit about paragraphs but yhew some of the other stuff I just listened. But the paragraphs that was good. Ja, and you know what also helped I was helped by one of the students they would read my assignment before I handed it in and they really helped by reading it and then telling me how I can get better. They were English speaking so this helped me a lot.
K	<b>So one of the other B.Ed students would read through your stuff and tell you how to improve.</b>
S8	Ja, but it wasn't plagiarism I did read her stuff but I didn't copy it.
K	<b>Don't worry I wasn't thinking that it is called peer review when someone looks at your work and helps you.</b>
S8	Ja, well they really worked. It helped me but in the end we got so busy sometimes they couldn't help me but it was ok.
K	<b>Anything else?</b>
S8	I think because I lived in Grahamstown and could go to the library that helped me. I also used the computer and the spell check. This helped me with my spelling especially the English spelling. Hmm ja, I think that's it.
K	<b>Anything else?</b>
S8	Not that I can think of now.
K	<b>Thank you very much for your time.</b>
S8	Phew that's over did I say the right things?
K	<b>Perfect thank you.</b>

## Interview with Student S9 – B.Ed student

<b>K</b>	<b>Congratulations on completing your course. How do you feel now after the course</b>
S9	Wow, I can't believe it. It felt like it would never never never end. I started with CSD doing my level 5 for 2 years and that was long and then we were told we could do an ACE but then after our first year they told us that we had to do another 2 years to get a B.Ed that was good but it made it so long. It gets difficult telling your friends and family that you can't do something because you have a course and also all the Saturdays.... But now that it's finished I am glad and I think I can be proud.
<b>K</b>	<b>What in particular did you enjoy about the course?</b>
S9	As I've said I didn't like studying for all those years and years. It was 5 years to get my degree but now I have it. What I think was good was that I made good friends and these will always be my friends. We have studied for 5 years together and I think that is special. One of them got married and I was a bride's maid. Also the course helped me get a job at XX school. I don't think I would have got the job if it wasn't for the course. Also I learnt a lot. It really helped me be a good teacher. I learnt how to teach from 0 years up until Grade 3. This helped me and will help me when I am a mother. It also is helping me in my class. As I said I now have a job at XX and I used to teach Grade R but now I am teaching Grade 3 and doing this B.Ed helped me as I am now able to teach Grade 3. I feel confident in the Maths but I know how to teach reading but I am finding that a challenge. I think the B.Ed should be more practical and not so many assignments with readings. I would also have liked to make more equipment so that I was really prepared to teach.
<b>K</b>	<b>You said you had to do a lot of assignments and reading. Tell me more about this.</b>
S9	Yes, all our lecturers wanted us to do assignments that was the main way we were assessed and also we sometimes wrote tests and of course there were the exams.
<b>K</b>	<b>If you were assessed using assignments what helped you to do the assignments? Was there anything in the course that helped you?</b>
S9	I think the lecturers were all good. They gave you a piece of paper with the assignment question. Also all of them but especially Xx and Xy they gave you a rubric which showed how they were going to mark it also they gave you some guidelines I think Xx gave us a checklist that we could tick to say we had include everything in our assignment. I found that helped me because sometimes you don't know if what you are doing is the right thing when you are sitting at home doing our assignment but if you just look at the checklist then this helps you and you can do the assignment.

<b>K</b>	<b>So you found having the rubric helpful because it gave you an indication of what the lecturers were looking for in a good assignment.</b>
S9	Yes.
<b>K</b>	<b>Was there anything done on the course to help you with writing assignments?</b>
S9	Hmm, yes, ja I think that especially in our first year when we started in 2008 they really made us write and write and write. I think we had about 10 assignments to write and they had to be about 8 pages each I think. We then had to give them to the Xx and I think also Xzwas there. They then took them made comments and gave them back. We then had to rewrite the assignments. Lucky I can type and have a computer at home but some of the other students really suffered and were not happy. But we learned we learned a lot from the comments and re-doing the assignments. But it wasn't a good way to start but I suppose it really did help us. Things got better after that.
<b>K</b>	<b>Did anything in level 5 help you to write an assignment?</b>
S9	I think er maybe we were given how to write an assignment. What the structure could be but not much else. I think Colleen did a bit but I don't know if it was enough to help me in the B.Ed. Yes, now I remember we did get a reference guide and we did some exercises on referencing but there wasn't much opportunity to do extra reading and referencing in level 5. I mean we really weren't expected to do much reading and we sort of didn't really bother with referencing. I think more can be done in level 5 to help us with writing assignments for B.Ed. We should have done more to help us.
<b>K</b>	<b>I agree with you. What do you think could be done?</b>
S9	Hmm. I'm not sure but it's a lot to learn when you are in the B.Ed. I think maybe more referencing.
<b>K</b>	<b>You seemed to mention referencing a lot. Was this something you found challenging?</b>
S9	Yes, I am mentioning it because in the beginning I really didn't do it so well. Xx and Margaret were always mentioning it and I was always losing marks because of it. But you know then I realised this I began to really concentrate on referencing. I also went onto the internet and the Rhodes library and found other books and sources and I would use them. This was in my second year. I found that I got much better marks especially from Xx. She would also always comment in my assignment that my referencing had been done better and that she was comments I mean she commented on my extra reading. I found that once I did this my marks always improved.

<b>K</b>	<b>What about the other lecturers?</b>
S9	You know it's like er like er the teachers in high school. Not all the teachers are looking for the same things they are all different and want different things. I think it was like that the B.Ed course too. Xx wanted it done like this but Xxx really didn't care about that. She was more interested in could we teach maths in the classroom. I think Sarah was a bit more like Xx but also she er I'm not sure what to say or how to say this... she commented on referencing and things like that but she didn't take marks off if you didn't do it. You just had to find out what each one wanted. But it also depended on the course. Like Xx did life skills and then she did care about how we taught in the class. I don't mean to say she wasn't practical she was she made us do some lessons in the class and then reflect and write about it.
<b>K</b>	<b>Anything else help you to do better in your assignments?</b>
S9	No, I think I have said it all.
<b>K</b>	<b>What about the reading? You said you had lots of reading to do on the B.Ed and also that you went to the library.</b>
S9	Yes, this is er when I think um perhaps level 5 did help a bit. We were taught how to read a passage. We had to underline the important points with our highlighters. Umm after that umm we had to we had to make a summary of it. We were given short things to do at first and then more and more longer readings. This helped me in the B.ED it helped me look for important parts and then do a summary. We also had to do this in the B.Ed and sometimes they made us read in groups first we had to read silently and then we highlighted and then discussed it in our group to see if we had read the right thing and if we understood the reading. Sometimes the readings were so difficult that I didn't understand a lot of the words. We had dictionaries in class to look up words we didn't know. We were also given coloured paper by Sarah and we wrote up the difficult words. We then discussed the words and next time we would talk about them again. She put them up for the next lecture so we would remember them. I think my vocabulary has got much better but I'm not sure about my spelling. I also bought my own dictionary and so at home I could look up words again. Some of the students didn't have dictionaries they just used to use their cell phones in class and at home to look up words on the internet.
<b>K</b>	<b>Anything else help with reading?</b>
S9	No, I think I have said everything except maybe that in level 5 we were forced to have study groups this helped me as I had some people to discuss things with. I didn't find that so much in the B.Ed.
<b>K</b>	<b>What do you think the lecturers looked for in an assignment? What</b>

	<b>made a good assignment and what made a poor or bad assignment?</b>
S9	As I've said I think they looked for referencing and the structure, the layout of the assignment.
<b>K</b>	<b>Which assignments did you enjoy doing the most?</b>
S9	I enjoyed the ones where you had to go and do research. I love reading and going to the library although I didn't always find the time to do this. I also liked finding out about things that I didn't know sometimes one of the lecturers would mention something that I didn't know and then I would go and look it up and research it. I think I really improved from Level 5 to the end of my B.Ed with writing assignments. I got better as I said.
<b>K</b>	<b>Do you think you will do your Honours and Masters?</b>
S9	I don't know. Not now maybe in a year or 2 but after studying for 5 years I like not having to do an assignment all the time I like having so much free time but maybe after 2 years. <i>(K and S9: laughing)</i>
<b>K</b>	<b>You mention writing, what about your reading?</b>
S9	Oh, yes definitely you know before this I was always so scared of reading academic books. I didn't feel that I would cope but now..... now I feel so confident I know that even if the book is difficult I can take it and read it and it doesn't always matter if I don't understand everything as long as I get the main idea.
<b>K</b>	<b>Do you think the lecturers on the B.Ed could do anything to help the students improve in their reading and writing?</b>
S9	No, I think we had some very good lecturers you really felt that they cared about you. Especially Xx even though we didn't see much of her in our 4 <sup>th</sup> year you knew she was there. I think they really tried their best to help us and give us a good B.Ed.
<b>K</b>	<b>Anything else?</b>
S9	No
<b>K</b>	<b>Thank you so much for your time and answering all my questions. I really appreciate it.</b>

## Appendix E Focus Group Interview Transcripts: Course Facilitators

<b>K</b>	Most of the questions are about academic literacy, reading and writing on the course. We have got level 4 and level 5 as well as B.Ed as well. So what do you think your students do now with regards to reading and writing
<b>C5</b>	What they can do at the end of the course?
<b>K</b>	What they can do now, if you are in the middle or end of the course – what can they do now?
<b>C2</b>	My group, I mean our group ( <i>two groups had merged and there were 2 facilitators</i> ) I feel that there is a lot more that they need to do in the form of reading. They have to keep on reading so that they can improve their writing skills because most of them I wanted to say are black but I wont mention race it does not matter there can be coloured one because they are Afrikaans speakers are still struggling with certain things.
<b>K</b>	What sorts of things?
<b>C2</b>	For example if they write there they don't differentiate between there and their. There are such careless mistakes that they are doing so they still need to practice reading. Because once they can read their writing skills will also be improved.
<b>C3</b>	Karin, I think they use a lot of this new language of mixIt on the cell phone and even on their assignments (laughter from group) they even use this kind of language when they write their own assignments. So we've told them that they need to improve their reading and writing skills. Not, what could I say, not to use short words.
<b>K</b>	Abbreviations
<b>C5</b>	Ja, They must use the exact words, the proper words
<b>C1</b>	Proper wording
<b>C5</b>	Ja. Proper wording and they must use a dictionary a lot. If they don't understand the meaning of the word they must use the dictionary a lot.
<b>C2</b>	Heke.
<b>C6</b>	We did a session on the dictionaries. This is the first time I have taught the current group of B.Ed students so I don't really know that much about them and I am not familiar with their writing because they only just doing their first assignment for me. But one of the things we did this weekend was we took dictionaries with us and we showed them what are the good dictionaries because it is very important that students choose um you know the right dictionary because you can waste a lot of money if you just buy pocket oxford dictionary or something because the definitions are so difficult in it so you need a language learner's dictionary. You know the Oxford advanced learner's dictionary or the Longman dictionary of Contemporary English or Collins Cobalt English Dictionary and they often nowadays have a CD in them as well so you can listen to the words being pronounced and it often gives you grammar exercises. But the important thing is that those dictionaries have simple clear definitions they write the explanations within a 2000 word vocabulary. So that was one thing we emphasized. The other thing we emphasized was keeping a vocabulary book for key concepts

	and key terms and quite a few teachers said that they had access to the internet on their cell phones, probably about $\frac{3}{4}$ of them had, you know, blackberries and things. So you can use that Longman Dictionary on line. You can just google Longman online dictionary and it's its one of those very good dictionaries and you can hear the word being pronounced and it's a very simple definition. It tells you about grammatical things you need to know to use the word. Hmm then we also talked about having a Xhosa English Dictionary and an Afrikaans Xhosa Dictionary because that really helps I think.
<b>C2</b>	Hmmm it does
<b>C3</b>	Yes <i>lots of consent a lot</i>
<b>C6</b>	Umm to... if I am working with students you know with struggling readers and writers I have both the Xhosa English Dictionary and good learner's dictionary so that they can work between the two and expand their (laughing) Xhosa vocabulary as well. Sorry do you think it is very important.
<b>C5(interrupting)</b>	Do you say they can't write in Xhosa correctly when they are writing Xhosa?
<b>Others</b>	Hmmm hmmm ( <i>murmurs of consent</i> )
<b>C5</b>	But I also I think it's also part of the way they live. They haven't got used to just picking up a newspaper and just reading it ( <i>murmurs of agreement from other members</i> ) and they rather watch TV than read the newspaper. And I think you know if they were just having that little practice everyday reading a newspaper or magazine article or anything they can get hold of you know that would be good
<b>C6</b>	Ja ja. That would be excellent, sorry but I am talking about solutions now rather than the topic ( <i>laughter from the group</i> ). All you were saying was very important having you know taught the previous lot and it's so important that if you understand the words and the concepts you are just going to understand the work so much better ( <i>hmm hmm. Murmurs of agreement from the group</i> ). Another thing that I think will really (emphasis on really) work so well and I have been wanting someone to do it but nobody.. well somebody called Lilly Pretorius at Unisa has now taken it over, but hmm would be to set up like umm almost a reading club for these teachers were they have to read children's books. You know that part of the problem is that teachers just, they don't know enough books for children ( <i>murmurs of agreement</i> ) and every time they came we made them do a little book review about a book for there children (hmm murmurs of consent) then they would be reading and they would be expanding their knowledge of childrens' literature
<b>K</b>	Isn't ABC doing something like this?
<b>C6</b>	She might er yes she is
<b>C1</b>	She is doing that
<b>C5</b>	Yes, that would be lovely but they don't know
<b>C1</b> Interrupting	This is the ACE group?
<b>C6</b>	Hmm
<b>C1</b>	And something else which is happening mostly some of my. I am going

	<p>to be talking about my group. Some of my group my students they are from the rural areas whereby there are no libraries and they haven't even got any books by which they will be reading for their children. But what I suggested to them is that they are supposed to use their children's books (S Hmm). They ones they are using at school when they are helping their children to read for... so they can learn those stories to have an understanding and to even ask the child to read and tell her about the story what it is about. If then she doesn't understand she can put the key words. If she can she can ask for the meaning of some of the other words and also to ask whoever is around to help her with the meaning. If she hasn't got a dictionary then that person can give her a clear understanding of because even sometimes from the dictionary you will get the meaning of the word but not in the context (<i>hmmm</i>) which you are using it this is something that they need to clear when every they are looking for the meaning (<i>C5it gives them the wrong meaning</i>). Ja it can have another meaning. And the last thing I asked them to even read the Xhosa story books. (C6:hmm) Then if she understands the Xhosa story then I will try to like if it is the 3 little bear story (C2 and C6: <i>hmmhmm</i>) I will try to bring her the English version or the Afrikaans version. So she can understand. They are having those vocabulary books whereby they will be writing the meaning of the words. That's what I have asked them to do.</p>
<b>K</b>	<p>So for your level 4 group are you find that they are not reading Xhosa at home at all.</p>
<b>C1</b>	<p>It's not about them not being able to read it but sometimes the sequence of the story they don't understand and what I have asked them to do is even to watch the TV. Sometimes there is Xho not it's not Xhosa but different languages in Takalani in the morning. I think it is starting from about half past 6 there are Xhosa, English. I have asked them to watch those those programmes in the morning. Pause so that they can have an idea like other stories some of them not all of them. Because some of them are illiterate. So for them to read it's difficult more especially now with the material we have got. So that they can just boost their understanding therefore they must have a background of reading, to listen at the same time hear or the way the words are.</p>
<b>C6</b>	<p>I wonder if it would be helpful – you know Rod Adna in the journ department (<i>some consent, some no's</i>) He does the talking books. He makes tapes for young children (<i>C5: there is a whole lot of them here</i>) ja, that might be a good thing for the teachers (<i>C5: Yes that is a good idea</i>) to listen to a tape at the same time as reading the book in both Xhosa and English and Afrikaans of course.</p>
<b>C5</b>	<p>That just made me think of another thing. I noticed with the B.Ed students they didn't have the skills of just paraphrasing and summarizing you know and that's got to do with listening to a story and to understand it and say it in your own words (<i>hmm hmm – can't hear who said hmm</i>) . any they you know if you asked them to do that they needed a lot of help with that (<i>C6: hmm</i>) and I would say that even the mother tongue English speakers found that difficult. (<i>C6:hmm</i>) and I</p>

	think that even with them they had not much practice (C6:hmm)
<b>K</b>	You've spoken a bit about reading what about writing?
<b>C6</b>	Could I just say one more thing about reading
<b>K</b>	Hmm
<b>C6</b>	Just that something that we have been thinking about – you say that they don't have books (hmm hmm) in the rural areas (C1: Yes) I wondered if you'd if you got them to do the Biblionef to get their own reading corners going? Jenny and I were talking about doing that but wondered if you had already done it.
<b>C5</b>	Well last year, last year there were 10 schools that we identified (Hmm hmm from 3 others) and they got books and one of them was single....(broke off as C1 interrupted
<b>C1</b>	In some areas they were not covered
<b>C5</b>	Yes, but I mean it happens so slowly and only now and then they might identify 10 schools and then... (interrupted)
<b>C6</b>	But then they could apply for themselves.
<b>C3</b>	Hmm
<b>C1</b>	For the books?
<b>C6 and C3</b>	Hmm and Yes
<b>K</b>	I think we do tell them but they don't always do it (C6: hmm) but then maybe we need to scaffold it a bit more.
<b>C5</b>	But then Biblionef also need like Theresa who was in the B.Ed class last year was disappointed because she applied for them and then nothing happened and I think they need an NGO like us (C6: Yes) or someone to sort of like back them up (Consent from group hmm) and that the school really does need something (Others: Hmm, C6; Ja) that's why they prefer to work through us and get it to those other schools (C6:Hmm) rather than straight to Theresa which is a bit sad in some ways as she is in a primary school and you would think that the government should be giving books and I don't know....
<b>K</b>	Pause. Anything else about reading and writing?
<b>C1</b>	About writing <i>sighs</i> it's such a difficult thing but I think the journal entries are also helping them (C6:Hmm) although some are still umm.....battling when it comes to when they are expressing themselves in English. In as much for, I have mentioned for the first 6 months we will be using the language that we are confident with but slowly slowly they are supposed to write it in English so that they can also be familiar with the language so that is the medium of instruction mostly we are using English therefore they are supposed to try by all means with just a few words not long sentences but like er a short sentence with a meaning that is what I ask them to do and to also ask their children to help them. Even if they are doing something like questions and answers in Xhosa she will tell you then you will interpret in English that's what I am doing but I have two ladies who are still having some problem with that. Fortunately her husband is working with my sister then I have spoken to him so that he can help his wife and she is getting there

	slowly but I'm patient enough.
<b>C2</b>	You have a very difficult group
<b>C1</b>	Sighing..Hmm. I don't know... sighing again
<b>C3</b>	Anything else you want to say N?
<b>C1</b>	No. No
<b>C3</b>	On writing, ja I suppose it goes hand in hand with the reading you know and then and the comprehension and everything ( <i>C1 and 1 other: Hmm</i> ). One thing that the B.Ed students battled with also was just structuring the essay you know like the introduction, the body and the...
<b>C2 and C1</b>	And the conclusion
<b>C5</b>	And the referencing
<b>C3</b>	And the conclusion and we gave them some simple ideas like having 1 idea per paragraph you know and um then the basic structure of then but er and right until the end they battled with things like that. And then of course the referencing. ( <i>C1: hmm</i> ) and citing
<b>C6</b>	You know that when I look back and at the students currently um I think that I think one has to have quite high expectations from early on and give students loads and loads of practice. I think that's what they are short of ( <i>C3: hmm</i> ) I think they should have certainly for literacy, an assignment, a written assignment you know that has to be proper academic written assignment. That's what the B.Ed is every time they come so by the end of the year they should have done 6 or 7 ( <i>C3: hmm</i> ) assignments and should have gotten feedback on them and I think assignments need to be very carefully structured too ( <i>C3: hmm</i> ) so that the assignment helps to um take them through the stages of writing and also very clear assessment criteria so that they get more and more used ( <i>C3: hmm</i> ) to what is expected umm
<b>C5</b>	Then also the opportunity to um to submit a draft ( <i>C6: Yes</i> ) And then have that marked ( <i>C6: I agree</i> ) and to rework it. But then often I found that because a lot of the students did not use computers you would just get this handwritten assignment that they had just written – the first thing that came into their heads you know ( <i>C6: Hmm agreement</i> ) nothing was structured properly ( <i>C6: Hmm</i> ) lots of repetition and then you could see that this was the first draft ( <i>C6: Hmm</i> ) but then I would say rather don't give to me the first draft you have done. Anybody who could use computers at least they could cut and paste and do things like that ( <i>C6: Yip</i> ) but when it is handwritten it is more difficult to read. ( <i>C6: Hmm</i> )( <i>C1: Hmm</i> )
<b>C6</b>	I think I think what we are really saying is that it is a question of expectations you know for the students that it requires quite a big shift in their thinking about what it means to be doing an under graduate study you know. When you are doing an undergraduate study you have got to write a good piece of writing you know. Any you have to plan it and draft it and write it but to tell students we will support you in this ( <i>C5: Hmm</i> ) but you just have to do it and you just have to get your

	head around it. But you are an undergraduate and you want to walk across that stage in 3 years' time (C6: Laughing) (C5, C3 and C1: <i>Hmmm</i> ) and this is what it takes. So ja that will be my feeling. I think my experience from last time around and to some extent this first session that I have with them is that it is quite a difficult thing for students to take on board you know this is what you are going to have to do it's not just (C5: <i>Hmm</i> )
<b>C5</b>	Ja. Because there is quite a jump between level 5 and the B.Ed
<b>C6</b>	Yes
<b>K</b>	That's what we are trying to do at the moment is to lessen the gap. We started with the level 4 and have made it quite a bit more intensive reading and writing than the students were used to in the past.
<b>C5</b>	Do you want to say something C3 about how the students have managed in level 4? How they have coped with all of that for the new level 4
<b>C2</b>	Students are different there are those who are keen and dedicated and some are really managing even the way they are writing their assignments although you will see that this and that is not right. Some are really struggling. We have told them about study groups. They are the ones again that don't meet with their (C5: <i>Hmm</i> ) study groups. They have got excuses when it is time for them to meet. And we are also encouraging them sometimes it seems as though they have written their assignments during the last minute (C6: <i>Yes</i> ) (C5: <i>Hmm</i> ) and then they don't have time to read again (C6: <i>Hmm</i> ) (C5: <i>Yes</i> ) because it is nice to read what you have written again it seems as though they don't do such things. Because we say to them that we are not expecting them to have spelling errors (C5 and C6: <i>Hmm</i> ) because they can make use of dictionaries (C5 and C6: <i>Hmm</i> ) I am really encouraging them to use a dictionary as a result some of the students have their own dictionaries now.
<b>C6</b>	Ja, I think one has to question sometimes the level of commitment you know. (C2, C1, C5: <i>Hmmm</i> ) It's not, it shouldn't be that everybody passes even though you work hard or not you know ( <i>Mummers of agreement</i> ) Do we want teachers who do everything at the last minute (C5: <i>Hmm</i> ) you know and don't work hard? No! We want teachers who work hard you know and put time and put effort into their study (C6: <i>laughing</i> )
<b>C5</b>	<i>Interrupting:</i> I think it is what you were saying there it's their expectations that have been given them throughout their lives they might have just been able to do that and now they are expected to do more.
<b>C3</b>	And Karin, even those who have got Grade 12 some of them are battling in writing and you will discover that even though the other one has got Grade 10 she is doing much better than the one who's got Grade 12.
<b>K</b>	Why do you think that is C3
<b>C3</b>	I think it is about commitment
<b>C2</b>	And poor education from their schools

<b>C3</b>	And poor education.
<b>C2</b>	It's our schools there is a problem there (C3: <i>Hmm</i> ) and I think do you remember when you were giving us the books – CAPS and I said to you this CAPS is really going to help our (emphasis on our) students
<b>C3</b>	Because it is straight forward
<b>C2</b>	It's nice and it's taking us back to the way we learnt we are also not English speakers but there are things we can manage to do in English and I heard over the radio that most of the teachers are happy feel happy about CAPS programme (C3 <i>hmm</i> ). So hopefully education is going to be changed and our kids will also change.
<b>K</b>	Now we have looked and depressed ourselves with what our students can't do what do you think our students can do at the moment with reading and writing
<b>C2</b>	I would say our students can read and write
<b>C5</b>	( <i>interrupting</i> ) Up to a certain point
<b>C2</b>	Yes because they are managing in their schools, they are writing letters for to the funders and they are managing their schools so there is something they can do.
<b>C5</b>	Hmm, they can write letters to the parents ( C2: <i>Yes</i> )
<b>C1</b>	Letters to the parents
<b>C5</b>	Yes um. Assessment reports
<b>K</b>	In class? What reading and writing can they do?
<b>C1</b>	They can do their posters, they can do their posters themselves I think this is something that shows because some people they are asking others to make their posters for them. But some you can see that she has done it herself. She is not impressing you, she has done it so that you can see that she was at point A but now she is at point B. This was something that I appreciated when I visited two of the schools and also about their reports because some of my students have to write a report to XYZ foundation. They put their reports in Xhosa but they are writing their weekly reports to me it is something.
<b>C3</b>	And also Karin, the modules that we are using they are giving them tasks to read as individuals and as a group so this is also helping them. And also they have individual tasks to do within the class so that is also helping them to improve their reading and writing.
<b>C2</b>	In their schools they can also set the book area with books they have made themselves with books they have bought and with books that have been donated to other people and they do read stories to their kids. They can plan and put their plan on paper. Meaning they can read and write.
<b>K</b>	And in the level 4 course. What are they doing now, are they doing journal writes...
<b>C3</b>	They are doing journal writes even in the class to they are doing journal writes.
<b>C1</b>	They are also supposed to do their
<b>C2</b>	They also write their assignments (C1: <i>Ja</i> )
<b>C1</b>	They do assignments and their tasks and also if there is a report to be

	done like there was a child who was sick or we call it a record book or a log book where you will be writing who ever has visited their school all those things so they are recording all those things. Even one of the ladies is a supervisor whereby she is supposed to give her SGB a report. She was asking me the way to write a report and the finances and all those thing so that she can represent it in a better manner to her SGB members.
<b>C4</b>	I am sorry I am late. The level 5's can write but they do not write well enough. They still need help structuring their assignment. I spend a lot of time each time they come to me for contact sessions helping them, showing them where they are going wrong and how they can improve. I encourage them not to be scared to write by giving them journal tasks. I am not too strict with these journal writes. I just want the student to put down their thoughts but also to reflect on their learning. I do not mark the journals but I get the other students to look and read the journal and give peer feedback. I always assume that my students are capable of much and they just need a bit of scaffolding to do much better in written tasks. I see the only way to improve reading and writing is by giving them lots of reading and written tasks to do in the level 5
<b>C3</b>	Even in their Portfolios, building up their portfolios they are developing their reading their it is part of building up their reading and writing because they have to do research. They have to read and reflect on what they have read
<b>C5</b>	And I think even building a portfolio is quite a skills ( <i>Hmm consent from all</i> ) an academic skill to be able to file things correctly and I only realized that you take so much for granted. It was only after a while that I realized that the students didn't even know how to file (emphasis on file) ( <i>Hmm consent from all</i> ) you have to tell them how to do that. So those are all important skills that they need
<b>C6</b>	I haven't had much time with this group but I can think back on the previous group of students I think what students can do at the beginning is you know because they have come up and through the levels they could sort of read like a newspaper or something like that something that is sort of everyday kind of text. That is something that we can build on but I think one has got to see it very much as a starting point. And I think the difficulty for student initially is to make them aware that reading academically or actually any kind of reading is more than that you know. And um I think what I find is that um learners um students are not um specific enough in their reading you know. At school they haven't had loads and loads of reading comprehension. So what I do is I give questions with the readings and to have some questions that are sort of basic retrieval kind of level you know "what does this mean" and so on and so on and then questions that require more inferencing and critical reflection on what they have read. And so I think they start with the basics which is good you know to show they can read you know but then you have to see that you have got a really lot of ground to make up between that level and where they have got to be at the end of the B.ED. They have got to be reading in a much

	deeper way and also they read much too slowly.
<b>C4</b>	Yes, I agree with you. I often ask them to read an article in class and it takes up so much time in the class. So now we all read it together as sort of shared reading.
<b>C6</b>	Yes they read much much much too slowly ( <i>C5: Hmmm hmm</i> ). Both these things are just a function that they have not read enough. ( <i>C5: Hmmm hmm</i> ) You actually learn to read more quickly and read in an indepth way by masses and masses of reading. Um and I think part of the problem is and this is a real (emphasis on real) problem in academic literacy is we are always giving students things that are too difficult for them to read. <i>Laughs</i> . So and so
<b>C5</b>	(Interrupts) But you want to show them the level they should be at
<b>C6</b>	Yes but one of the problems is English, they are not teaching in English so they are not getting exposure to English all day so they are reading in their weaker language in a way. Um so it's now to get them to do (emphasis on enough) enough reading at the right level to start to build up their reading speed and even the way in which they read. You know I also think that students have not had enough experience in what I would term cloze reading of text. You know when I was at school we did endless cloze reading of text, summarizing the text ( <i>C5: hmm</i> ) and all these other kinds of things. So you really look at what is in the text you know. When you ask students a question they are often inclined to answer the question from their own experience you know, it has nothing to do with the text ( <i>C5: Hmmm hmm</i> ) you know, the answer should be in the text you know. ( <i>C5: Hmmm</i> ). You have to interpret the answer so so it's like I think it's very important we are all the time modeling what we want the teachers to do with their learners you know. We want them to set challenging goals and then provide the kind of scaffolding that R was talking about to help them to achieve these goals you know. Because they are in this programme for three years they really want to develop you know ( <i>Hmmm hmm</i> ). And if they are just doing stuff like you say the night before and not reading stuff they are not using the opportunity to develop ( <i>Hmmm hmm</i> ). You can't force people to develop. ( <i>C6: Laughing, others no, no murmurs of agreement</i> ) We are giving them the opportunity and then I do think (emphasis) is on our part to make sure that it is at the right level you know. To say "Ok this is where you have to get to but we will support you in getting there". And I think this is what academic literacy is all about. And I think there writing is the other side of the coin. Going by the B.Ed students we had last time I think that by the end of the course they were writing quite well ( <i>C5: Hmmm</i> ). You know when I looked at their exam scripts you know they were not bad at all. But so ( <i>laughing</i> ) I know I am sort of speaking to ( <i>everyone laughing</i> ) the converted. You know I think ja I think it's reflected well on the course the students writing at the end. Um and I think the students that have come in like the students that are we have now, they can write you know but it's like their reading they write in everyday way and schooling is not about the everyday you know it's about trying to understanding things in more depth you know.

	Otherwise why bother to go to school you know ( <i>laughs and others laugh too</i> ).
<b>C5</b>	Or to university
<b>C6</b>	Or to university ( <i>C5laughing</i> ). So with like writing what I find with the students is the challenge is to get them to write with more with more specifically to take more of a stance and that's why getting them to do the journals might be good. ( <i>C5umm of agreement</i> ). Get them to stand back from themselves. To be able to get a critical distance from their own practice. Um and writing in a more objective way you know, it can't all be concrete stuff ( <i>C5: Uh uh (denoting agreement)</i> ). You've got to more to a more abstract level of thinking and umm when they write then need to got to you know what I find is that with students they write in a very general way ( <i>C5:Hmm</i> ) so I can't give them a good mark you know because what I say is what you've said is ok but you know it is very general ( <i>C5:Hmm</i> ) you know where is the evidence of your reading, where is the evidence of your thinking you know ( <i>C5:Hmmm. Hmmm</i> ).Um and so it's to get students to do it and to teach them to do it you know. We have all got to teach them you can't expect people to do things somewhat on their own you know ( <i>C5: Hmm</i> ) you have got to show them how to do it. So to be to address topics more specifically and in more in depth.
<b>C5</b>	And to apply what they have read to their ( <i>C6: Yes</i> ) situation ( <i>C1: To their context</i> ) to take the reading and then to say well yes that's what I am doing in my classroom and then to write about it in those terms ( <i>C1: Hmm hmm</i> ) and about why it applies to it.
<b>C6</b>	It really goes back to not enough reading ( <i>agreement from one or two people</i> ) if you don't read enough and especially if you don't read enough academic kind of text you are not getting enough modeling of that approach um so I think reading and writing is moving from the everyday kind of reading the newspaper and writing a letter to a friend to writing for the purposes of learning which is the shift that is got to happen.
<b>K</b>	<b>What else do you do in your own classroom? We have talked a bit about a few things that help the students with reading and writing but how do you help them make the shift to academic writing?</b>
<b>C1</b>	When we are doing the umm activities?
<b>K</b>	<b>Yes what do you do to help them, what do you do to scaffold them to make the shift to academic reading and writing?</b>
<b>C2</b>	They read in the class. They work in groups, they work in pairs, in small groups and in large groups they read together and afterwards we highlight the key points. Sometimes we ask them to read silently and reading with understanding so that they can understand that is the way we are trying to help them. And we have to go back, because last time sort of our participants, not some a few have asked us to give them a test when they are ready in the next session. Joyce and I decided to not use the word test and our questions were based on reflections but I wanted them to answer them on paper. We grasped their understanding, how much they have understood and what they have

	<p>grasped. It was quite interesting for us to see how much they have grasped because I also thought of the activity you did the paper on the egg. <i>(this was an activity we did during a staff workshop, where the participants put a piece of paper on their heads and took a pencil and drew an egg on the paper. A discussion about learning and retention of learning etc. then ensued). (Laughter from the other staff who were present at the workshop).</i> And they were asking me what why we did that exercise and I told them about what we had discussed</p>
<p><b>C1</b></p>	<p>I have a difficult time I have a group of students whose basic language and reading and writing skills are poor. They are almost illiterate and now I have to help them do level 4 fundamentals. It is difficult to me. I don't think they can read and write in Xhosa. I get them to read story books. They are not ready for academic reading and writing. I can't even get them to think about academic reading and writing. Also they don't have the confidence. Sometimes I do during their expectations they put them in writing like for Monday what are they expecting therefore I am giving them about three pieces of papers whereby they are writing what they would love <i>(emphasis on the word)</i> their expectations are and in the afternoon when they are supposed to be doing their reflections then I am giving them another three pieces of paper and then from the following day they are supposed to take their expectations and are supposed to give me the feedback did we cover what she had already written or if there is something she understands or if there is something she needs more clarity then before we start the after the evaluation after we start the session then they can she can give me er whatever she wants explanation with. And from there some of them are even writing down if you you have mentioned something to her she will explain and also I am giving them time when we have our tea if something is not clear enough or she doesn't feel confident to talk in a group er or whenever anyone is around then we can have a one to one we can talk about whatever is difficult for her. Those of the things that I am doing. But writing uh hu I am trying to get them to write they can put whatever they need to be done in writing and they are supposed to collect all their expectations and all their evaluations if there is things to be evaluated of what they are not sure of some times or something she did understand she must put it in the way she would love to implement it in her life. Not to say when we are doing child development to tell me all the words which we are using now she is supposed to have a picture in her mind how is she going to be using the information in her site. Therefore she is supposed to give me a picture of how she is going to do it so when she is there her planning also must be part of what we have been talking about and even if she needs help she can ask someone else to help her <i>(C5:Hmm)</i> that is the way I am trying to meet their needs and trying to show ways and means of doing things because to some of them ECD is new to them some then were not <i>(emphasis on the next two words)</i> even interested when I say they were not interested it's not what they love because you are supposed to do some things <b><i>because you love</i></b> <i>(emphasis)</i> some of them because</p>

	they could not get jobs, some of them because of financial reasons, some of them because there was this pre-school programme which they can start then they are there and stuck there but now I am trying them so that they can have other ways of doing this job but they are supposed to get it closer to their hearts. And even when but unfortunately now most of my training there are Raglan Road ( <i>a functioning pre-school and students are taken to see classrooms and methods and techniques practically implemented</i> ) therefore also to go and see something which is also helping them. Even those who were not interested in ECD they can now see and they can see other ways of doing or doing their programmes in their schools and all those things.
<b>C6</b>	Can I just add to that?
<b>K</b>	Hmm
<b>C6</b>	I mean it's not strictly speaking academic literacy its more getting teachers ready and understanding ( <i>K: Hmm</i> ) but C5and I last year ( <i>laughing</i> ) remember we used to talk about getting students into schools ( <i>C5: Hmm</i> ) to see other practice, getting experience you know ( <i>C5: Hmm</i> ) of um working in other contexts so it was ( <i>laughing</i> ) very hard ( <i>C5: Hmm</i> ) to organize. Umm but I kind of think using videos I think I have spoken to you about this before it might be one way to go you know to try and have to expose teachers to a lot of other possibilities you know and also when you talk about something like phonemic awareness or ( <i>C5:Hmm</i> ) whatever it would be some foreign concept ( <i>C5:Hmm</i> ) so that you could actually show a teacher how to teach it ( <i>C5:Hmm</i> ) and interestingly enough my PGCE's who are not even teachers say exactly the same thing and this year I have really made a lot of effort to use a lot of videos. I have to get them off u-tube or something you know ( <i>K: Hmm</i> ) and its made a big difference.
<b>C5</b>	Yes and I think even in the class things like constantly supporting their reading and giving them opportunities to read and to use dictionaries and to ask if they don't understand, to work in groups and then trying to paraphrase and just like constant repetition of what they are doing. And then I find as you were saying Sarah that they read so slowly, I ask them to break ( <i>C6:hmm</i> ) up a text and then give each section to a group and then that group is the expert group that teaches it to the rest of the groups otherwise it would be so boring and too long
<b>C1</b>	I do that too.
<b>C6</b>	I think a word wall is a good idea. For you to have the key concepts on flashcards and because anything and we use that approach with our B.Ed Honours and my master students as well you know when we go to Namibia where English is even less kind of well-known is that we put all the key concepts on flash cards and we gradually put them up and then the whole session those words are there and it's like a trigger to people's memories ( <i>C5:Hmm</i> ) and sometimes we even play games you know so that at the end everyone has to get a flash card and they have to explain what the term means.
<b>C5</b>	Hmm. That's a good idea

<b>C2</b>	Hmm
<b>C6</b>	With the previous group what I did when I first met the students but I did not keep it up. I asked for a portfolio activity they had to translate the terms into their home language so we had the key concepts in literacy and then we had them in English then Afrikaans and then Xhosa. It was interesting because the word it was easy for the Afrikaans speaking people because there was a word for phonemic awareness, phonological and syllable (C5:Hmm) and for the Xhosa speakers they did not know a term (K:Hmm) in Xhosa for those which in itself is interesting because it is not simply so easy for a Xhosa speaker to translate it into Xhosa and (emphasis) this led to a fascinating debate about what these things were so you know the difference between a sound and a syllable you know, people said “No it’s not that” , could it be this word or that word in Xhosa and then we quite often, I have them if you are interested and it would be interesting to build on this. I actually, I actually took in all the words, phrases and everything and I wrote it up and then I gave it back to them. Umm and then we discussed the fact that in Xhosa it was not so much the word but a phrase that translated the terms (C1, C2, C3: Hmm) and then I went to the Xhosa department and asked them “can you find a term for me” so that because if you don’t have a term for the word phonemic awareness you would not have such a good grasp of the concept it just catches the concept (? : Hmm). So you know I was trying to sort of define the terms (Lots of people:Hmm) and unfortunately no one has ever come back to me I think they are too busy
<b>K</b>	You might have to make up a word although the people know what the word meant
<b>C6</b>	We did have the CAPS documents but I don’t think that there was even agreement that the words as they were used in the curriculum documents were necessarily the ones that people would want to use you know. (K: Hmm) or they might even have been phrases put in rather than a term (C1 and 2 others: Hmm) but I think that it certainly did get people to start thinking about what those key concepts really mean (? : Hmm). Because I think that a lot of the reason why students don’t understand is often because (2 people:Hmm) they don’t understand these core concepts and if you don’t understand what phonemic awareness and phonological awareness how on earth are you really going to understand the things you are reading (C5&K:Hmm)
<b>K</b>	And understand the CAPS documents and the curriculum
<b>C6</b>	Exactly. They use those words all the time in the documents
<b>C1</b>	Also in my language sometimes we don’t have the meaning of the words because some words were borrowed (C6: Hmm) therefore in our generation therefore it is such a difficult thing to have the understanding of the word in the original Xhosa (C6: Hmm) because we are now mixing (C6: Ja) English and Xhosa to make a word. Such things are happening (C6: Hmm) when you are trying to interpret a word for someone in the Xhosa (C5 & C6: Hmm) it is such a difficult thing to give that person a word from Xhosa (C5: Hmm) (C6: Ja) because so many

	<p>of the words are borrowed from English or (C6: <i>English has borrowed the word from somewhere else</i>) (<i>Laughter from many</i>) <b>next words from speaker inaudible owing to laughter.</b> For example like in Xhosa we have “xa” if I am explaining it to you so that you understand it I must borrow a word from Afrikaans so that you can have an idea that is what is happening and <b>Now</b> (emphasis) we have to, it is such a difficult thing to when you are interpreting words and more especially to those people who are illiterate when you are talking to them. Some of them they have got only the original Xhosa. Some of them they have this Xhosa which you are using when you are getting married that is what is also giving us some problems. There are words you can’t use (C5 &amp; K: <i>Oh, ahh</i>) whereas now we are all on the same level of learning (C6: <i>Hmm</i>) it’s beginning to be difficult for you to understand it more especially in my generation.</p>
C5	<p>It seems that in the level 4 what we are actually doing is introducing the students to reading and writing. We are trying to sort of get them used to English reading and writing (C1, C2 and C3: <i>Hmm</i>). What I am hearing is that you are starting at a very basic level (C1: <i>Hmm</i>) with students at different of competence in English as a second language and in reading and writing English. You are trying to build up on that (C1: <i>Yes</i>). You need to do that before you can even start or even think about doing any academic writing with the students</p>
C6	<p>It seems to me that at that level it would be <b>very</b> (emphasis) good to get teachers to do <b>lots</b> of reading of children’s literature because it is the right level for them (4 x :<i>Hmm</i>) and they could enhance their practice (C5: <i>Yes</i>) so much in all three languages so that the Xhosa speakers are reading mostly in Xhosa but sometimes (C1: <i>Ja</i>) in English as well maybe and the nice thing about children’s stories is that they have pictures (C2, C1 and C3: <i>Hmm</i>) to support the (<i>laughing</i>) meaning</p>
C5	<p>And tell them to take books out of the library. (<i>Remark To C6</i>) have you looked at our books in our resource centre?</p>
K	<p>Yes our resource centre (<i>at the same time as C5is talking</i>)</p>
C6	<p>And maybe they have to do journal tasks on book reviews. Book reviews on children’s literature like and you know a little thing about you know “I read it to my children” “Did they enjoy it” and ...</p>
C5	<p>We tried to do that but I don’t think we scaffolded it enough we tried to do it with the level 5 group and what they did was they summarized the entire book for us. (C6: <i>Laughs</i>) and then ...</p>
C6	<p>Maybe you need to design a nice little form that they (C5 and K: <i>Hmm</i>) fill in. (C5: <i>Ja</i>)</p>
K	<p>Going back to academic literacy any final comments on what more we could do to help the students or what could we do differently?</p>
C5	<p>Like we have been suggesting and maybe even I don’t know how you would do it but when they hand in assignments you could even start then with um when they hand in assignments and you could actually see that they could do better then say you don’t give them marks or anything but you could say “actually I think you must redo this one, you can work harder on this and improve it” you know to get them into that</p>

	sort of work ethic of knowing that you can't just hand in the first thing they have written you know
C2	We really do comment on their assignments we try to also what correct the errors that we see like if we see there and it's not their we just write on top we don't care and we really talk to them giving them an oral report and..
C5	Do you give them each other's assignments to read? I remember Margaret ( <i>a lecturer on the B.Ed programme in 2009 and 2010</i> ) and I we used to give them their tests to peer review to give the tests to their peers to mark and I think sometimes that helps at well. (C2, C1 and C3: <i>mummers of agreement</i> ) When you are given someone else's insight even though it might not be correct then you might notice someone else's mistakes before you even notice your mistakes. Yes, Ja so that...
C2	We ask them to mark each other's too
C5	Ok, Ja
C2	Hmm.
C5	They can be quite shy about that (2 x murmurs of agreement)
C2	They are but what our group does is to ask most of them about this but they say <i>derelerellere</i> ( <i>indicates that the students make a lot of excuses</i> ). I can see they are losing confidence they want us to mark for them and although we are not there because they will ask <b>every single</b> ( <i>emphasis</i> ) question from us although once we are answering the question number 1 we throw the question to <b>them</b> so then we get answers and the other one will say that this one has said this and that and back home this one has said this and that and we have to talk about it the issues and the answers. It is nice but it takes time.
C5	Ja
C2	Yow
C6	Something that might be nice idea with people with students at that level, but I am sure you are doing it anyway, is to make books of their own writing you know like children's rhymes and start getting them to and in particular if it not much available in Xhosa (K, C1 and C5: <i>mummers of agreement</i> ) but to get them to um come with Xhosa rhymes and Xhosa stories and get them to write them (C5: <i>mummers agreement</i> ) you know. Um and get them to draft and read the drafts so that they are correct you know and you could make like little anthologies and so on um
C5	Hmm that's a good idea
C6	I find that quite motivating generally with my students they all love making their own anthologies ( <i>laughs and C5laughs</i> ) of useful songs and rhymes and things like that.
K	An interesting idea because a lot of the Xhosa tradition is very oral
C1	Yes it is
K	And there is not many Xhosa songs and rhymes written down
C1	Yes the students know the songs and rhymes from when they are children but when it comes to writing they are not good with writing. It takes time but even er to tell to tell a story you keep that story you tell your grandchildren or whoever but when it comes to writing it is difficult.

	(2x: <i>mummers of agreement</i> ). And you that is what we are trying now so that we can write everything down even in the er meeting situation you will keep on the agenda in your mind and discuss and do whatever and when it comes to evidence there is no evidence it is right in your mind therefore if it is in your mind and nothing written therefore that is what we are trying to write down ( <i>C2 and C3: mummers of agreement</i> ) with our people because they really they can keep a story up <b>there</b> ( <i>emphasis</i> ) but when it comes to writing we are poor.
<b>K</b>	C3 is there anything you would like to add?
<b>C3</b>	Ah ah. I am thinking of what C2 has said in terms of assignments. When we give them overall feedback, there was one of the students when we told them the way just a general feedback that we were giving to them, the way they have written the assignments they must have introduction and body and a conclusion, one of the students came to us later and she said “would you please give me my assignment the <b>way</b> ( <i>emphasis</i> ) ( <i>C2 and C3 laughing</i> ) I would rather redo it ( <i>others laughing</i> ). Meaning that she has grasped something she has discovered that the way she has written her assignment was not up to a standard ( <i>C5 : Ja; K: Hmm</i> ) so that they are getting there
<b>C5</b>	Progressing
<b>C1</b>	Hmm.
<b>K</b>	Anything else. Thanks everyone.

## Appendix F Focus Group Interview Transcripts: Students

K	Ok let's get started. Does anyone have an objection to me tape recording the interview
All	No.
K	I am going to ask a few questions, anyone can feel free to answer and to add to what anyone has saying. Please don't let me carry on with the next question until you have had your say. The first question is; What do you think a student on the B.Ed course needs to know about reading and writing – academic reading and writing to be successful on the course?
S1	For the student themselves
K	Ja. For yourself as a student to be able to successfully do the course.
S2	I think they must have a bit of um experience of academic um reading and writing um to be able to understand the readings and papers that you hand out.
S1	Ja and you have to take into consideration a lot of students are second language it's not their home language. If I was to do a B.Ed in Xhosa or Afrikaans I would be in so much trouble ( <i>Someone murmurs in consent</i> ). I don't know I think I think extra support should be given such as like maybe if you assess the students within the first few weeks or months and then you say, alright, ok, this one is not at the level we need them to be at so take them for separate classes and things like that because you can't have a whole weekend session devoted to academic reading and writing when you have some of your students who are first language and don't need that extra support you know like definitely hands on, I don't think you can I don't know about you ( <i>indicating other students in the focus group</i> ) but I don't think that you can just say read more ( <i>Laughs</i> ) take more readings home you know.
S3	Really because what you are saying is true because really sometimes you do understand what is needed but to put it down, put it in other words now it is not the exact thing you wanted because this is the second language.
S1	( <i>interrupting</i> ) Maybe
S3	Because really you need that support.

S1	Maybe even a tutor system like they have at Rhodes where you have the tutor groups where you would take your assignment to them and you would take your first draft because the B.Ed because it is part time you don't have the time ( <i>one murmur of consent</i> ) in your sessions to redo and redo but if you had like a tut group that met outside of your lecture sessions and you could hand in your essays and said "this is how far I have got am I on the right track? Am I understanding this correctly" a bit of language support you know that sort of thing but with a tutor because I know in level 5 we were supposed to have study groups so 5 of you would get together outside of session time and you would have study group but I mean we were all students we had no one leading us or guiding us ( <i>S3: Murmurs consent</i> ). It was sort of the blind leading the blind. If one of us misunderstood the question that was it.
S2	I agree with S1 they do need tutor groups to help them.
S4	Also ( <i>pause</i> ) I think it was too much theoretical there was not a lot of practice with us for instance, I am thinking it is difficult for those who did not have the experience of teaching the learners with us ne ( <i>on past courses</i> ) because there are special trainings that ii people get for how to teach learners for instance the Molteno Project it is very helpful so if some of the people didn't get that training with us er I mean for our schools, with our schools as our schools are very much backward and don't have resources ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ). I think it needs more practice than to be its theoretical.
K	Do you think you should be writing assignments?
S4	Yes of course assignments are needed because it is where you put everything that you know and understand and from the assignments that you write you write everything the information that you have got from the research you have made. Hmm so it's fine for assignments
S1	Maybe maybe have the assignments supported by practical assessments so have like you are doing emergent literacy so you have a topic where you write like where you go and do research and you find out about it and you do a very academic sort of paper and assignment and supported by ok " I am going to visit your classroom and actually watch you ( <i>Murmurs of agreement from all</i> ) teach emergent literacy ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) because someone might be teaching really really well and not be able to translate it onto paper or in an assignment ( <i>1 Murmur of agreement</i> ) and visa versa someone who say I might be able to you know write the most amazing academic paper and have an awful repertoire with the children in my classroom.
S2	You need both ( <i>Murmurs of agreement from all</i> )
S1	Yes you need to see both sides you need to be able to say not only the

	assignments and the academic
S2	I know you ( <i>referring to the interviewer</i> ) and I have talked about this and from our discussions there needs to be a balance you have to satisfy the faculty of education at Rhodes ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) but you still have to equip us as teachers ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> )
S1	Actually that is more important.
K	What do you think, if anything has, has helped you with your academic reading and writing in the B.Ed course?
S2	By that do you mean how has it helped us do our assignments?
K	Yes and to do all the readings
S2	Well the assignments themselves
K	In what way? Explain it a bit more
S2	Well it forced you to read more and make sure you understand what you are reading otherwise you can't do the assignment. Ja that forced me to read, get more background eventually the more I read and you didn't use all the information for the assignment but you got information for the maybe to apply in your own classroom with the readings, Ja that's how it helped me.
S4	It also helped me; the readings helped me because from the readings I did get informations such as phonemic awareness er the differences and also how people learn and how they write so all of these things were written we read them from the readings.
S1	Umm do you remember when RK ( <i>the faculty of education's academic developer for all students</i> ) came in to speak to us ( <i>S4: Hmm</i> ). ( <i>S1 clears her throat and laughter from all. Clearing of the throat was a nervous habit that the academic developer had</i> ). Um I don't know I find that for me that was urgh ( <i>made a noise as to indicate that the experience was not pleasant and onerous</i> ) because I did that ( <i>laughter in her voice</i> ) I did two years of full on university where we had all that training ( <i>the student had started journalism as a full time student but had dropped out after her second year</i> ) also I come from private schools where we have done all of that but as a second language speakers ( <i>addressing the rest of the students taking part in the interview</i> ) was that helpful? I don't know if it was helpful for you guys when he showed us how to do the...
S2	I think it was presented more than helpful. I think the way that it was done was maybe a bit hard to actually apply ja the way it was presented

	wasn't helpful.
S4 and S3	Both started talking together
S4	It was very difficult for us
K	What was his presentation on?
S4	We didn't even understand.
S1	I think the way he presented it is (S4: <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> )
S4	He was vague ( <i>interrupts</i> )
S1	And and I think a bit too theoretical and academic for them ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) he wasn't giving practical examples and everything he was giving a lecture.
S2	Ja
S4	And it was...
S1	( <i>interrupting</i> ) And for second language speaker ( <i>Murmurs of agreement from S4</i> ) who were trying to read and write in their second language it went over ones heads a little bit.
K	What was the topic? I mean what aspect was he specifically dealing with
S1	He wasn't specific he was just doing academic development with us how to write a paragraph so like he said certain words are like sign posts you know you have a stop sign and a I don't know that sign and all the rest. He said you know always start a paragraph when you are in argument and when you are in an argument present both sides and start your paragraphs afterwards...
S2	But I
S1	Using words like on the other hand, consequently, secondly
S4	Yes
S2	But I think with one lecture... it's maybe a good thing but with one lecture might not have been enough because it wasn't a very interesting topic. I think you can't make it interesting
S4	You can't judge

S2	With that thing you have to practice and practice more often than just once. ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) I think it could focus on the stuff on the stuff that the er information he gave us. Actually do an assignment and focus on the stuff that he gave us. I don't think once was enough. Not enough for people yes, for people that was... it was a bit hard if you are not used to it ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> )
S1	I think once is not enough. I think someone come in and say this is what you should be doing is great but that there should be support after that.
S2	Ja, now you do it
S1	Ja, either in the form of as I said tutors or as I said umm or something like that and even with your lectures following up on that because I find that even after that everytime I handed in an assignment I wasn't getting comments on how my writing or my reading could have been better. My comments were always, "good point" or whatever or give more examples from your classroom ( <i>laughing</i> ).
S4	Hmm hmm
S1	It wasn't really that extra support and follow up afterwards
S2	Was there a huge problem – the academic writing?
K	No, no no I'm just wanting to know so we can help the present group and you can always improve your teaching and this will help us do so.
S4	Going back to the readings also from Glynnis for Mathematics or Numeracy whatever it is there are many ideas that helped me in my classroom there also the activities because in the classroom we did the activities with her then when you are in your classroom you take the activities and turn them you also get ideas on how you could extend or expand that individual activity so the readings were very helpful. I think if I could not read them it would have been a problem but they were simple and easy enough for me to follow.
S1	Ja, maybe the types of readings we were given were good and in future lecturers need to be more conscious of the types of readings that are given. Umm I found it useful, even though I am first language, I find it very interesting ( <i>S4: Murmur of agreement</i> ) to read academic research papers. Umm I find them very interesting but I also enjoy readings about school situations and this is the teacher and they did this and this and that and this is why they did it. Rather than ( <i>S4: Murmurs agreement</i> ) have this like purely academic you know quoting all the time from the text books and the philosophers and everything you have case study and I think that's it especially for second language speakers and for bridging the gap between the practical and academic. If the

	readings that you are given are more of the case study nature then it might help with the understanding of it a bit better.
S2	And to use it and apply it, apply that theoretical basis in your classroom and we need something to apply in the classroom ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> )
S1	I found it worthwhile and fascinating reading the academic texts because that's what I am interested in. I am not just interested in my day to day teaching I am interested in the whole background and philosophy of education and how children learn and everything. So that for me was very interesting and I did not have a problem reading any of the readings. But I think that the focus needs to be on that as well as the practical readings ( <i>S4: Murmurs agreement</i> ) and case studies and everything that all types of students can get something.
S3	I agree with S4 about the reading especially with Glynnis because whatever she taught us then we can go back to the classroom and see what helps you and what works better for you. Because with Glynnis we were always doing. Not only reading but doing in the classroom so if you don't understand you have enough time to understand because we were doing the practical.
K	What do you think helped you read academic articles that the other lecturers gave you?
S1	As I said, I had no problem reading any of the readings. What about the rest of you? ( <i>Addressing the other people taking part in the interview</i> )
S2	For me, I think that reading the readings in class helped but then sometimes I found that when I got home and was doing the assignment what I thought I knew about the reading was not right. I then would read it again and call some of the people in the class to see what they had thought of the reading.
S4	Hmm, for me too. Some of the readings were difficult to me. It helped when we read them in class but sometimes I was a bit slow with my reading so I felt a bit stressed. What helped me was we would get together in like a study group and read and discuss the readings together and what we needed to do in the assignment.
S3	Yes, I also had to re-read the readings at home and there were so many that I often became confused. I found that I needed a dictionary with me all the time. I agree with Linda the reading in class and discussing it in groups helped a lot. I liked it when we read in class because the lecturer would stop us at some point and stress the point and maybe even explain it to us. But reading and re-reading. I also found that if a reading was too difficult for me I would look on the

	internet. I have a computer at the monastery school where I am teaching and I would find easier readings to help me. Then I would be able to understand the other readings too.
K	What do you think the lecturers were looking for in a good assignment? What do you think they thought made a good assignment?
S2	Of course you had to write using an introduction, body and conclusion but I think if you could show them that you understand what it was about er what the question is, what they wanted and then giving a lot of examples from your classroom (S4: <i>Murmurs agreement</i> )
S1	They definitely wanted a balance of your theory knowledge like how much you understood from the lectures and stuff and then they wanted to see if you could take what you learnt and put it into your classroom. (S4: <i>Murmurs agreement</i> ). Um which wasn't always um easy and wasn't always interesting
S3	I found it difficult for me sometimes, because sometimes I don't understand the question so when you don't understand the question then it is really a disaster because you can't answer what is needed what is expected from you. I always refer to S1. I think I know this thing ( <i>voice is higher and words emphasised</i> ) because I am doing it in the classroom but I didn't understand the question.
S4	And they also liked you to write about your prior knowledge and the knowledge you already have when writing the assignment and always relate what you are writing to your ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) implementations to your classroom
S1	I don't think they were looking for um sort of fluency (S4: <i>Murmurs agreement</i> ) in our writing as much as they were looking for understanding. <u>Which</u> ( <i>emphasis</i> ) is good I think but again I am sure that there has got to be a balance because as mentioned you have to satisfy the education department and the Rhodes university standards of academic literacy with practical teaching do you, can you teach you know but I don't think...
S3	That support thing is coming in now because you need to understand the question really
K	What did you do when you did not understand the question? Why do you think you could not understand the question?
S3	You would answer the wrong thing and the assignment would say re-do it. You don't feel good about having to redo assignments all the time.
S4	In our group when we did not understand the question we would be

	phone u-S1 ( <i>S1 laughing</i> ) or visiting S1 and sitting like this and she would explain the question to us. Then we went out understanding what was needed <u>from the</u> question.
S3	She was..
S4	She was always there for us
S1	Tell me about it they should have paid me I ( <i>laughter from all</i> )
K	Did the course require different things from you every academic year? With your academic reading and writing?
S1	Oh, it was very different. We are talking about all 5 years ( <i>The students completed 2 years part time Level 5 and then 3 years part time B.Ed. Some of them did 7 years as they did 2 years part time level 4</i> ). NDECD was very much just sort of writing from experience and putting into practice then in the first year of the B.Ed it was a lot of theory. ( <i>S4 and S3 : Murmur agreement</i> ) It wasn't a lot of practical it was a lot of but not from research but it was a lot of writing about you and your experience but it was a lot more "academic" ( <i>emphasis</i> ) a lot of reading and understanding do you remember? ( <i>addressing the other interviewees</i> ) ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ). Then in our second year it switched to what do you do in your classroom ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) and then that was very different because you had had C 6 ( <i>course facilitator</i> ) who was very much theory orientated and research orientated and the philosophy of why we do everything and then you had Glynnis who was like here is a whole bunch of activities ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) and also one of our assignments was make a game which was not academic writing at all. You know, so it's hard to say. Our first year was definitely more academic. I found it very interesting but a lot of people didn't enjoy it ( <i>laughing and S4: gave a short laugh too</i> ). A lot of people did not enjoy it.
S4	I did not enjoy it. Yes and as S1 said the different lecturers required different things.
S1	It feels like one big blur at the moment ( <i>laughter from all</i> )
S4	I did find level 4 much easier. We did not have lots of writing. We only did talking in groups and writing on newsprint. I don't think the level 4 helped me with the B.Ed at all. Even the level 5 was very different. We had to write an introduction, body and conclusion but not like the first year in our B.Ed
S2	What I found is that there was a lot of emphasis on how to teach referencing. In my second year I finally got it right and I found that my marks went up by as much as 10%. But yes, I feel the same as the others that much more could have been done in level 5 to prepare us.

S3	I only joined them when they were doing the first year of the B.Ed so really I don't know. <i>(laughing)</i>
K	And in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of the B.Ed was there any difference?
S3	Hmmm not really.
K	Not really. You had more or less the same lecturers for 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year didn't you <i>(Murmurs of agreement)</i>
S1	I think that in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year the standard was a bit higher. <i>(Murmurs of agreement)</i> They did mark you a bit more strictly because it did get to that point in the course where they were like come on you shouldn't be making silly mistakes anymore you know so they were a bit more they were less lenient when it came to their assignments I feel. But I don't know I kind of got 70% all the way through <i>(laughing and others laughing too)</i> . I sort of sailed through on average.
K	I would have expected a higher mark from you than only 70%. I know what you are capable of.
S1	I know I could have done better. I did very well considering the amount of effort I put into my work. <i>(laughter by all)</i> . Marriage, two children.... <i>(more laughter)</i> . Next year <i>(planning to do hons)</i> I will do better, I will be a star, I will shine.
K	And you S2?
S2	There were always a lot of assignments <i>(Murmurs of agreement)</i> . Luckily when in we had to write the journals...
S4	In level 5 ...
S2	Every time you had seven things you had to write
S1	First year
S2	And things and those things
S1	Now that was in first year and very much in the <u>level 5</u> <i>(changes voice as if to indicate that she found level 5 boring.)</i>
S2	But I think that improved my writing because you wrote <u>a lot</u> <i>(emphasis on these words)</i> .
S1	I think that it did help to write in the journal in level 5.

S2	It improved it, it really did
S1	I think with the journal writing it should have also been, you should have also gotten feedback on it. Not <u>critical</u> feedback but the journal should not be something you are writing out of your own, you are not worried about getting 80% (S4: <i>Murmur of agreement</i> ) and it doesn't have to be <u>perfect</u> and it doesn't <u>have to be</u> right but if you write a paragraph and you hand it to your lecturer they should be able to take you short pause like give you some feedback back and say "well, ok why did you think this?" Like push your thinking more, extend your writing. If someone has written something and they have said "oh, I really didn't like this it made me feel yuck, I couldn't use it in my classroom". The lecturer should be able to say "Ok, Why?" so that the next time the student writes they will automatically go "I didn't like this because.." you know and so carry it through to their academic writing. But definitely I think that was the biggest things – feedback and support ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> )
S2	Ja, and the reflections on the feedback on the assignments that helped ( <i>murmurs of agreement</i> ). It made you also think about, it was a bit of a pain to do but it forced me, it forced you to think about what you had done, how you could improve.
K	What was the reflection? Explain a bit more?
S1	We had to do that in our final year as part of our Portfolio.
S2	Ja, with the portfolio <u>and</u> also I can't remember which year it was but I think it was with Jean that we with every assignment you had like a couple of reflections that you had to write ( <i>voice tapers off and laughter from S4.</i> )
S1	I remember writing a lot of stuff right before our exams because ( <i>laughter from all</i> ) because our Portfolios were due at the exams ( <i>laughter still continuing</i> ) and you had to choice two of your best, two of your middle and two of your worst assignments and think (S3: <i>oh now, I remember</i> ) <u>why</u> they were your best and worst. Actually have we got our portfolios back?
S4	I have got my two
K	I have got some in the office
S1	I think someone said come and pick it up and I said <i>flicks her hand in a dismissive gesture.</i>
K	When you were writing your portfolio and you chose two assignments that were good, why do you think these were the best?

S4	First of all I would say that it was the mark that I ( <i>S3: Murmur of agreement</i> ) got from the assignment and also the confidence that I had when writing that assignment ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ).
S1	That is also something that I said
S3	Hmm, yes
S4	Also the information that I wrote there I was very much sure that what I had written was ( <i>S1: Hmmm –murmur of agreement</i> ). And also the structure of the assignment because that is what they were also looking for, how did you write your assignment? Do you have er introduction er and conclusion and have you quoted all ( <i>laughing</i> ) of those things.
S3	It's the same really, the marks that you have got from the assignment and the confidence that you have got
K	Which assignments were they?
All	Silence
K	Doesn't matter if you can't remember ( <i>all laughing</i> ). I was just wondering if it was the maths and the practical assignments.
S4	It was both maths and literacy.
S3	Yes maths and literacy
S1	Mine were, I didn't go for the highest mark. Um because I got a really high mark for a really eugh assignment. Because it was a really easy assignment I think it was something like making ( <i>S4: Murmurs agreement</i> ) a game or something like that which I didn't enjoy doing. Um definitely as you said the confidence and the enthusiasm that I had for the topic ( <i>Murmurs of agreement</i> ) definitely got the best marks and I think it came from really understanding it.
S2	My best assignment, I also chose because I understood in detail about what they really wanted. And I think it was written clearly and they could read clearly and see that I understood it and um...
S4	Also the assignments that we had to write was about what we researched because what we were writing is just what the person said, the person you interviewed said. ( <i>S4 and S1: hmmm</i> )
S1	The interview one?
S4	Yes
S1	I found that hard.

S2	The one that I did was where they did research on the children umm and they gave us this little paragraph of research they had done and the results they had got from the research and in the assignment I said that the way ( <i>laughing</i> ) that they did the research was not affective ( <i>others laughing too</i> ) . I gave methods I would have used to get, I think it's because I actually reflected on the whole thing in detail.
S1	Were critical
S2	Ja, and that's the best one
K	Which were your worst 2 assignments and why do they you think they were bad?
S2	I said that the worst was the one in my first year
S4	I think it's because...(pause) when you are not sure of the topic, what is expected from you then you get the, a less mark
S3	As I said it's when you don't understand the question you just write whatever you think because you don't understand <i>S1: Hmm in agreement</i> )
S2	Ja I think I did not understand the question clearly and I didn't write <u>clearly</u> and it wasn't very concise and
S1	<i>(Interrupting)</i> You were sort of rambling
S2	Ja
S1	Because like you weren't sure what they wanted
S2	<i>(speaking at the same time as S1)</i> what do I think they want what do I think I need to write <i>(all laughing)</i>
S1	It's one of those assignments when you want to write in the front I am so sorry <i>(still all laughing)</i> . I am so sorry you have to read this. <i>(Still all laughing)</i> which was most of my exams. I think my worst assignment was the one that I did the night before <i>(S4: laughing)</i> I think it was something that I had to make cards for, mine flopped
S2	If your kids were older you could get them to at least colour them in for you <i>(all laughing)</i>
S4	Also writing the assignment, writing the assignment many times not only once and just hand it in. I think we had to write the assignment, I think it was three times. First you write the draft, then you write the

	assignment and then you type the assignment ( <i>hmmm: someone murmurs in agreement</i> )
S1	Did that help?
S4 and S3	Hmmm
S2	In the beginning I never did it and later on I started planning and I ( <i>L; hmm in agreement</i> ) think that's why the assignments also improved because you realise that ... (pause) I saw the results I got from planning ( <i>murmurs of agreement</i> ) and making like a small ...
S1	Mind maps, mind maps
S2	Yes, mind maps.
S4 and S3	Hmmm
S2	And then only write and then you can get your, your thoughts organized ( <i>S4: hmm</i> ) as well. And the more my assignments got um organized and the layout improved, ja, the better my marks got and that came from <u>planning</u> which I never did before and I must say that helped ( <i>S4: hmm</i> ). Also if you didn't understand the question you were given time in class to ask "what is it exactly that you want" or what you don't understand and then I used to er ja, I used to write next to the question what they wanted.
K	So they did help unpack the question
All	Yes, Hmm, they did
S2	They taught us how to unpack the question
S1	(( <i>Speaking at same time</i> ) C ( <i>course co-ordinator for level 5 name emphasised</i> ) taught us how to unpack a question.
S2	That helped a lot
S1	And mind maps and ...
S2	Ja
K	Explain what you were taught in the level 5 about how to unpack a question
S2	She gave us a very solid foundation to build on and um regarding writing assignments I think because she taught us how to unpack like a chunk of information and how to get out the key words and ja we did that often ( <i>S1 murmured agreement</i> )

S3	I was in her class for level 5 but we didn't learn this. It would have helped me lots.
S2	And take out the words you do not understand and make sure you are clear on it. Ja, we did that a lot.
S4	And also the study groups management because she also taught us how to organize our study groups. Because we had to fill in forms and say we met at a certain place and a certain time so you can't just not meet because you have ( <i>murmurs of agreement</i> ) because you have to report back we met at a certain place at a certain time.
All	Talking at once (inaudible)
S3	Yes, she was strict
S2	She was very organized
S4	Hmm, very organized
S2	Everything was like... ( <i>indicated with hands</i> ) I think that helped a lot that it was organized and that it was a routine (S1: Ja. L: Hmmm).
S1	You knew what to expect (S4: Hmm, S2: Ja). You knew on Monday morning you were going to do Moco ( <i>said with a strange accent to highlight the word</i> ) ( <i>all laughing</i> ). Do you remember Moco ( <i>said in strange accent again</i> )? ( <i>Still all laughing</i> ). And you knew that in the introduction that you would have that session for the day and you would have a summary at the end of the day, "What did you do today?" and then you would go through the week and then you knew on the Saturday that you would get your exam your assignment question and that was just that structure and you knew one thing led to the other, you know, ( <i>hmmm</i> ) there was flow and it wasn't like we will do literacy today and we will do numeracy tomorrow or you know chopping and changing. It was very much starting with this topic and this topic leads into that topic and so it was all very related ( <i>all murmur agreement</i> )
K	Any final comments. What do you think the level 5 or B.Ed should be doing with regard to reading and writing or what do you think they should do differently?
S2	I think you can bring in more practical. It doesn't have to be so much theory all the time. (S4: <i>murmuring agreement</i> ) and make the assignments practical and really how children learn to count, the stages of counting. I think you can take that to level 5. When you have a grade

	R class you need to know that, you don't need to know how to write an introduction.
S1	In the level 5 you needed more practical and you needed things that we could carry into the B.Ed like your academic reading and writing theory that was going to expand your knowledge and get you to it but I also think that while you are in it you are still teaching (S4: <i>hmm</i> ) you need the practical that you can actually do. I think if assignments are things we do in the classroom then this will help us too. I think a lot of time was spent on academic readings and the NCS and everything but you needed to get to know kids and things.
S2	You knew what to teach but not how to teach, where the link was between the theory and the practical. Writing an assignment did not make me a better teacher. Ja, how and why. I think you need to bring in more like loads of activities of how to teach children on the mat. Well I don't know...
S4	I think that what helped me when I was training to be a teacher was not writing and assignment or doing all the readings what helped me was seeing it practically in the classroom.
S1	More on-site visits ( <i>all agree</i> ) because teaching is complicated. I'm afraid I never learnt anything about reading and writing what I came in with I have left with.
S2	No, I feel that I definitely improved in writing, um ja..ja and being able to my English writing I improved a lot. Because I am Afrikaans and so I am a second language speaker. When I compare my assignments in the beginning and later on and the way I thought and that way I did it I <u>really</u> ( <i>emphasis</i> ) improved a lot for myself.
S4	I improved in... I improved in how to record my work because the portfolios, how to do the portfolios helped me a lot on how I should keep my work at school. Hmm. And also how to deal with learners with iproblems. For instance from the reading there were iiiii, there were how to tackle how ichildren who do have problems like write a b instead of a d. There were also problems ii there were also advices on how to help learners that have that problem.
K	Was it an easy reading
S4	Not very much easy
K	So do you think the lecturers taught you how to take out the main points?
S4	Yes, they helped me a lot. Especially in level 5 when we had to

	summarise the readings.
S3	For me I improved a lot in researching because I am not a good person in reading I just want to do things. And so I had to research and really to find information
S1	Yes, we had to do research and also interview people. One of them was to interview people about reading and how they teach reading, basically it was that they organize reading groups ( <i>hmm</i> ) basically one group will be doing this and another group be doing that and focused reading and how they organized their classroom, what system they use and things like that.
K	Anything else?
S3	I think if you can arrange for the students to organize their study groups, the study groups are the most important thing because if you didn't understand something but when you come as a group ( <i>S4Murmurs agreement</i> ) it helped me a lot.
S1	Yes but you also need support and follow up with the academic support.

## Appendix G Course Assignments

### Level 4 Assignment

#### **ASSIGNMENT SHEET: SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Practitioner's Guide: *Special Needs* (For Unit Standard ID 13648)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of submission: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Assignment Brief:**

**Describe how to evaluate and modify a range of ECD Learning Programmes to support children with a variety of special needs.**

**Describe and provide evidence how you have evaluated and modified the ECD Learning Programme to support one or more of the children with special needs.**

#### **Guidelines to help you write this assignment**

The Specific Outcomes, Assessment Criteria and Range Statements for the Learning Programme on "Special Needs", requires the ECD practitioner, amongst other things, to demonstrate "*knowledge of a range of special needs*", to evaluate, a "*range of learning programmes*" and to, "*consider about five situations of special needs including, physical, health, cognitive, emotional or economic needs*".

The Unit Standard also says that the ECD Practitioner "*modify actions, arrangements, learning programmes and materials to enable learners with special needs to participate*".

This means that the ECD Practitioner is required to actually implement changes and adaptations in an ECD learning site. The following assignment, is therefore used to assess all learning outcomes for this Unit Standard.

To complete this assignment, carefully follow the step-by-step method process outlined below. The activity during the Contact Session on *Evaluating and Modifying the ECD Learning Programmes*, introduce you to the process of doing this assignment and gave you an opportunity to carry out the process in a group, before doing the assignment on your own at home. The process in the Contact Session ended with the participants doing a presentation for this assignment, the process is to write an essay on each child identified.

**Step 1:**

Identify five different children, with five different special needs, from at least two different ECD Learning Programmes or settings to ensure that:

- One of the ECD Learning Programmes must be your own
- At least one or more of the children identified, must be from your own ECD Learning Programme
- For confidentiality and to protect children, give each child a false name in your assignment. False names are written in inverted commas e.g. “Thando”
- Identify which special need each child has, from the categories of special needs discussed in the Practitioner’s Guide:
  - Physical and Health Delays and Disabilities (pages 15 –17)
  - Sensory Difficulties and Delays – Deafness ( page 17 – 20)
  - Sensory Difficulties and Delays – Sight (page 20 – 23)
  - Emotional Difficulties – Withdrawn (pages 23- 25)
  - Emotional Difficulties – Disruptive (pages 23, 26 and 27)
  - Cognitive Development Delay – Mild (pages 27-29)
  - Cognitive Development Delay – Severe (pages 29 – 30)
  - Special Needs brought about Economic Needs (Poverty) (pages 31-32)
- Describe changes or adaptations that should be made to the ECD Learning Programme
- Do not choose more than one child from each category except from physical, Developmental Delay” where two children may be identified from this category, one with a physical disability and one with a disability or delay caused by health problems.

**Step 2:**

Evaluate the relevant ECD Learning Programme, to observe and identify the kinds of difficulties each child is experiencing (barriers to development). Complete a task sheet: Checklist for evaluating ECD Learning Programmes: for each of the 5 children identified. These must be included in the assignment when you hand it in.

### **Step 3:**

Write a separate essay about each of the 5 children (that means 5 essays). Each essay must be written in full sentences, with correct grammar and using your own words. Each essay must be written using the following headings to describe:

#### Child's Details

- Child's name (False names are written in inverted commas e.g. "Thando").
- Child's actual age in months and years
- The date and time when the evaluation was done using the Task Sheet: *Task Sheet for Evaluating ECD Learning Programmes*
- The name of the disability or delay identified, for example, 'Sensory delays and difficulties- Deafness'.

#### The Sign

Describe what signs and symptoms and any other key points you learnt about, which helped you identify the child's disability or delay.

#### Strengths and Weaknesses of the ECD Programme

Write down what you found when you conducted the evaluation to assess what modifications needed to be made to the ECD Learning Programme, so that this child can take part in all activities more fully. Note your findings and observations in terms of accommodating the child with special needs under the sub-headings of:

- Strengths and
- Weaknesses.

#### Modification of the Learning Programme

Describe how to modify (change or adapt) the relevant ECD Learning Programme, to help the child with this particular need, to participate more fully. Use the following sub-headings to write about how to change and adapt:

- Activities and Routines  
Describe changes or adaptations that should be made to the Daily Programme and all activities and routines with which the child struggles, or cannot participate in
- Resources, Materials, Furniture and Equipment  
Describe changes or adaptations that should be made to resources, materials, furniture and equipment in the learning environment and for all the activities and routines with which the child struggles, or cannot participate in.
- Language and Communication
- Times and Duration of Activities and Routines
- Attitudes and Behaviours of Adults  
Explain how the ECD practitioner can model acceptance and encouragement towards this child. Also explain how the ECD practitioner can try to change the

attitudes and behaviours of the colleagues, non-ECD staff, parents of the child with special needs and the parents of the other children.

- Attitudes and Behaviours of the Children

Explain how the other children can be encouraged to show an interest in the child with special needs and to develop an understanding of the obvious barrier

#### **Step 4:**

You are not expected to do Step 4, for the children from other ECD Learning Programmes or settings. The task for Step 4 must be based on the changes and adaptations that you have made to your own ECD Learning Programme for at least one of the children you have written about in Steps 1 – 3.

Provide concrete evidence of at least 3 changes or adaptations that you have made to the ECD Learning Programme, for a child in your care, who has special needs.

Ensure that some of the concrete evidence below includes a description of:

- What you have observed about this child or children before, during and after the modifications were made
- How the child or children responded to the modifications you made to the ECD Learning Programme, materials, furniture and equipment

The concrete evidence you provide should include a number of copies of the following items:

- The Task Sheet: *Checklist for Evaluating EC Learning Programmes* which has already been included in this assignment
- Learner Profiles or Learners Portfolio of Evidence
- Observation rough notes or anecdotal notes
- Observation book entries for the relevant child
- Theme or Discussion Planners on how children can deal with the special needs of other children
- Drawings, sketches or photographs showing adaptations to resources, materials, furniture and equipment (both before and after the modification).

- Reports to parents (remember to change the child's name on the copy you submit)
- Reports and referrals to specialists if relevant (remember to change the child's name on copies of any documents that you submit)

**Putting the assignment together before handing it in:**

The pages of the assignment must be stapled together in the following order:

- Cover page - Only one cover page for the whole assignment, with all the usual detail.
- Introduction – only one introduction, of 2 or 3 lines, outlining the contents of the whole assignment, which covers all 5 essays.
- The body of the assignment – this should consist of the 5 separate essays.
- In front of the essay should be the relevant task sheet: *Checklist for Evaluating ECD Learning Programmes*.
- The essay about the child you have chosen to use for Step 4 should be the last essay at the back of the assignment
- The evidence for Step 4 should be placed immediately after the last essay (remember to include copies only)
- Conclusion – only one conclusion for the whole assignment, of three or four lines reflecting on how you felt about doing this assignment, any conclusions you drew or recommendations you would like to make
- The Assessment Criteria should be placed right at the back of the assignment

## Level 5 Assignment

### Assignments

You have FIVE assignments to complete for this ELO. Details follow.

As you know, reading and writing skills (academic literacy) are extremely important in this course, because it is equivalent to the first years of a degree.

Please, therefore, read the instructions for each assignment extremely carefully. Follow them exactly.

We have allocated time each day during the course meetings (in Activity One) to discuss assignments and ways in which to read and to write at Level 5.

In addition, we propose that you form a study group to reflect upon your new knowledge and to apply this knowledge into your own practice ('applied competence', or 'performing your competence'). A 'Buddy system' is also very useful (looking after each other).

**Be very careful that you use the study group and Buddy system to structure your thinking ONLY. Write your own assignment yourself. It is YOU who will be graduating, not the study group. The NDECD certificate will be in your name, not the name of the study group. It is very dangerous to do exactly what the study group says. What if they are wrong, and your own mind is telling you that, but you are too polite to say so? You will fail with the rest of the study group! So, autonomy of learning (independence) is MUCH prized.**

### Practical assignments

Practical assignments are completed in your ECD programme site. The assessor will verify that they are in place and up to date. See assessment grids in the '*Integrated Assessment Form On-Site Observation*'.

#### Assignment 1      Helping Children Acquire a Second Language

Read through all the sections on Language and Play Development in Cassie Landers: Cassie Landers (no date) *Facilitator's Resource Guide: A Guidebook to Accompany the Animated Child Development Video Series*. Unicef

Use other readings to supplement your knowledge on language development. Research on the internet, in your public library and the CSD Resources library.

Write a **report** on Language Development, starting from conception. Remember to use your **own words**. (Instructions are on page 9)

## Instructions

1. Interview 3 parents:
  - a. a parent of a one year old
  - b. a parent of a 3 year old
  - c. a parent of a 5 year old
2. Ask these parents -
  - a. how their child uses language
  - b. how language is used in their homes
3. Write a **report** on Language Development, starting from conception. Remember to use your **own words**.
4. Your report needs to have:
  - a. an **Introduction**, where you introduce the topic and say what you intend doing in the essay.
  - b. a **Body** where you will
    - i. describe your interview questions and explain how they were answered.
    - ii. summarise what I have learned .
    - iii. reflect on what you have learnt and describe how it affects your own practice.
  - c. a **Conclusion** where you draw all the threads together and make recommendations for yourself in your own classroom and community.
5. Your report will be 500 – 750 words long and structured in the following way:

<b>Sections of the report</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Check</b>
Cover page	Put this, filled in with your details, in the front of your assignment, together with this instruction page.	
Contents page (do this last so that you can put in the correct page numbers)	Number the sections of this report. This comes next in your assignment after the cover page and instructions page.	
<b>1. Introduction</b>	Explain what this report is about. This must be a very short, clear paragraph. You could state the purpose in one sentence.	
The purpose of the report		
The structure of this report	Explain how you have set this report out, using the list of contents to guide you. This should be a very short paragraph. You need only one or two very short sentences.	
<b>2. Interview questions and responses</b>	Describe your interview with parents and their responses	
<b>Summarise</b>	Summarise what you have learnt from the interviews Explain how it relates to the readings you have done	
<b>3. Reflections on these practices</b>	Reflect on what this means to you. Whenever you use any words or ideas from books and readings, cite them exactly like this: (author date: page number)	
<b>Conclusion and recommendations.</b>	Make a conclusion (an opinion) about Language Development in your young children Make a recommendation about how you will use this knowledge (from your interviews, experiences and readings) in your own ECD programme and classroom.	
<b>List of references.</b>	Write down in an alphabetical list the names of the references you have used. Do this by copying the references from the List of references in your readings. Copy them exactly. Give the page numbers for the references from the books.	
<b>Assessment grid</b>	Fill in the Assessment Grid which follows and attach it to your assignment.	

### **Submitting the assignment on time**

Follow the instructions for submission in the document:

**‘Overview of the Practical and Reflective Assignments and Assessment for the course’**

## Assessment grid for the Reflective Report

**Assignment Title** .....

Name..... Date.....

Attach this entire grid to your assignment. The Assessor will use it to assess the assignment. You will receive the assignment and the assessment report back from the Assessor. You will file it in your Portfolio of Evidence for the Assessor, the Moderator and verifier of the programme to see as evidence of your competence.

Fill in this section before you submit the assignment.

### To the Assessor:

I found the following interesting and useful to do in this assignment:

I found the following difficult to do because.....

Signed.....Date.....

## B.Ed Assignment

### Constructing your assignments

Use this checklist to make sure that you have followed all of the instructions for writing the assignment before you submit it for assessment

No.	Action	Check it							
1.	<b>Collect together the following manuals and materials</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Citing and Referencing</li> <li>b. Literacy and Numeracy</li> <li>c. Relevant reading manuals</li> <li>d. Task and assessment sheets for the Theme</li> <li>e. Jug of water and a glass (water for the brain cells and synapses)</li> <li>f. Some fruit to eat (e.g. apple if you are weighty, banana if you are thin or live with diabetes)</li> <li>g. A quiet place to read and write. Ask your family to join you in their own studies or to read or go out to visit family and friends.</li> </ol>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> <tr><td>d.</td></tr> <tr><td>e.</td></tr> <tr><td>f.</td></tr> <tr><td>g.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	g.
a.									
b.									
c.									
d.									
e.									
f.									
g.									
2.	<b>Analyse the title</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Find key verbs and key nouns</li> <li>b. Find the meanings of the key words</li> <li>c. Explain in your own words what the assignment asks you to do</li> <li>d. Explain what relevance it may have to you in your family and workplace where you are.</li> <li>e. Explain what steps you will take to answer the assignment.</li> </ol>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> <tr><td>d.</td></tr> <tr><td>e.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.		
a.									
b.									
c.									
d.									
e.									
3.	<b>Structure the assignment</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use headings and sub headings</li> <li>b. Introduction</li> <li>c. The sections of the body of the essay</li> <li>d. Conclusions</li> <li>e. List of references</li> </ol>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> <tr><td>d.</td></tr> <tr><td>e.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.		
a.									
b.									
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4.	<b>Write in rough first</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Edit and add/change/subtract/move</li> <li>b. Add in information from the readings (cite the author)</li> <li>c. Add the reference immediately to your list of references as you use it</li> </ol>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.				
a.									
b.									
c.									
5.	<b>Sleep on it</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Put it to one side.</li> <li>2. Forget about it.</li> <li>3. Do something else.</li> <li>4. Take a walk.</li> </ol>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.				
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No.	Action	Check it					
	5. Eat	<table border="1"> <tr><td>d.</td></tr> <tr><td>e.</td></tr> </table>	d.	e.			
d.							
e.							
6.	<b>Finalise it</b> a. Write it out neatly b. Use only one side of the page c. Write so that your lecturers can read easily! d. Make the cover page e. Attach the completed assessment page to the back	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> <tr><td>d.</td></tr> <tr><td>e.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.
a.							
b.							
c.							
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e.							
7.	<b>Submit it</b> a. In time (on the day) b. On time (at 0830) c. In the assignment box (beer tray)	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.		
a.							
b.							
c.							
8.	<b>Receive it back</b> a. In time (the next meeting) b. On time (at 0830) c. In the assignment box	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.		
a.							
b.							
c.							
9.	<b>Read it very, very, very carefully</b> a. Learn what to do to improve your next grading b. Write back to the lecturer c. File it in your portfolio of evidence d. Use it often	<table border="1"> <tr><td>a.</td></tr> <tr><td>b.</td></tr> <tr><td>c.</td></tr> <tr><td>d.</td></tr> </table>	a.	b.	c.	d.	
a.							
b.							
c.							
d.							

Total your score out of 40.

You should get 40/40 every time for your process of writing an assignment

If you do this, then you have only to concentrate on **what** you write and **how** you write!

**In the next section you will find copies of**

- a. a cover page**
- b. an assignment instruction**
- c. an assessment sheet**

Category	Not achieved	Not yet competent	Competent	Highly competent	Exceeded the requirements
<b>Comments on evidence of</b>					
Clear understanding of required task					
Efficient and effective structure of assignment					
Clear effective sentence structure					
Clear and effective paragraph structure					
Clear and effective section structure					
Wide reading					
Correct referencing and citing of information					
Planning and reflection upon action					
<b>Final summative comment and mark</b>					
Signed.....					
Assessor		Student		Date	
<b>RATING CODE</b>	<b>RATING</b>			<b>MARKS %</b>	
1.	Outstanding			75-100	
2.	Excellent			70-74	
3.	Highly competent			60-69	
4.	Competent			50-59	
5.	Not yet competent (see comments)			40-49	
6	Not achieved (see comments)			0-39	

<b>Category</b>	<b>Not achieved</b>	<b>Not yet competent</b>	<b>Competent</b>	<b>Highly competent</b>	<b>Exceeded the requirements</b>
Competence consists of the relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours so that the candidate is suitably efficient and effective in putting forward a critical understanding using the required levels of academic literacy..					

**Assignment Instruction Sheets**

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<b>One point two</b>	
Due Date	08.30 in the assignment box on Sat. 10 <sup>th</sup> May
Length	4 written pages (about 800 words)
Assignment	<b>Journal</b>
Title	Human beings in groups
<p><b><i>Explain ways in which you think human beings have and have not in the past, and do and do not now put humanity into action through their attitudes and behaviours.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Refer to Reading 5 and to class discussions.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>How would you help children to put humanity into action?</i></b></p>	
Key nouns	Key verbs

<b>One point three</b>	
Due Date	08.30 in the assignment box on Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> May
Length	4 written pages (about 800 words)
Assignment	<b>Journal</b>
Title	<b>Human beings</b>
<p><b><i>Critically analyse the SA Constitution, the Batho Pele policy and the Forward to the NCS. What have these policies to say about the way in which we should treat human beings in our society?</i></b></p> <p><b><i>How would you promote humanity amongst children?</i></b></p>	
Key nouns	Key verbs

## **Appendix E      Assignment Assessment Reports**

### **Report on Level 4 assignment: Special Needs**

**Date: August 2011**

#### **Step 1**

Everyone did this section. All teachers had 5 students but they did not do their reading that we gave them to do. They did not know what a special needs child is they all told us about children who are deaf and dumb they did not know that a child who is HIV is a child with special needs or a child who is very clever. They all saw the LSN child as stupid. I think the teachers made up the stories and they were not children they know.

#### **Step 2.**

The checklists were at the end of the assignment. The teachers did not always show how the LSN child and their disability is not helped by the class. Most teachers only talked about wheel chairs and ramps. A lot of the teachers' did not want the special needs child in their pre school. They said the child must not come to their school because they do not have money for wheel chairs. This made me cross because we talked in our class about our bias and how we need to help all children. They also did not know where to put this. Because it was step 2 they put it in the front of the assignment and not at the back like we told them.

#### **Step 3**

The teachers did not use the childrens own names. The teachers did give the childrens details. They did not think about the LSN child enough. They all had children with lots of disabilities so I think they made some of them up. They could not always link the LSN child and the disability. They are poor at writing and reading. They did not know how to read the notes and tell how the child has special needs.

The strengths and weaknesses was not done well. They all said the school was good and that the special needs child must go to a special school because their school is poor they have a grant and the does not have money for this child. The government does not give them a grant. Xyz she was good she had a child who was deaf and dumb she said she would learn sign language.

#### **Cover page**

Everyone had a cover page. Lots of students do not have page numbers on their pages.

#### **Introduction**

They do not know how to do an introduction. I have to teach them again. They did not know how to put one introduction for all 5 sections. They could not put all what they wanted to say in 2 to 3 sentences. Students write more than 4 sentences. Lots of spelling and grammar mistakes.

The sentences were poor. They had a lot of spelling mistakes. This was not good as we told them to use a dictionary. They must buy a dictionary or give their assignment to another teacher to read before they hand it in,.

They plagiarised and put in words from a book they did not put it in their own words as they are not good at English. Some of them did not know the English words and wrote in Xhosa. They did not write good paragraphs. They do not know how to change their ECD classroom for the LSN child.

## **Level 5 Assessment Report**

### **Response to Assignment 1: Policies**

Dear ND ECD Students

Congratulations on completing one of your first assignments for your Diploma course. Please take note of the comments listed below.

#### **Part 2: Writing up the assignment**

##### **Cover page:**

In general most of you submitted your assignment with a cover page. Most of you managed to put on all the relevant information.

##### **Contents page**

Most of you remembered to do a contents page. Take care and double check to see if the page numbers on your contents page corresponds with the written assignment. (The page numbers on the contents page did not always correspond to the actual pages in the assignment.)

##### **Introduction**

This proved a bit more difficult for a lot of you. Think of the introduction like a formula. Introduction = The purpose of the report + The structure of this report. The purpose is (what is this assign about?). The purpose would therefore need to include something about collecting and analysing the school policies. The structure can also be seen as – how is the assignment set out? The headings of your assignment could help you decide on the structure of the assignment. Think of the assignment as a recipe when you first start cooking you follow the recipe and the cake always comes out right. When you become an expert cake maker you can improvise a bit. Clearly indicate where the introduction ends and the body of the assignment ends.

##### **Policies and record keeping already in place**

In this section, you were supposed to provide a summary of the policies e.g. who developed them, what the policy was etc. Most of you went into a lot of unnecessary detail about what the policies said and not just a broad outline of information about the policy.

##### **Reflection on the policies**

In this section you were supposed to say more than just the “policy was good”. You were supposed to look at your notes, think about classroom discussions and then look at your school policy and see if it meets all the necessary requirements of what is required to be in the policy.

You could have said that the policy was “good” but then you needed to explain why you think it was good. How did it measure up to what is required of that particular policy?

When you referred to your notes and the classroom discussions to discover the strengths and weaknesses of your school policy, you needed to then state or reference what the notes said. Most of you did not refer to the notes.

The few students who did reference from your readings and notes must remember to use the correct form of referencing. Look at the referencing guide that you were given as well as the exercises we did in class.

### **Action you have taken**

This section needed you to find out what policies your school did not have and then make plans to develop the policies for your school. I do realise that some of you are not the principals at your school but you still needed to take some action and initiative so that your school developed these policies.

Remember to be more specific about the actions you took.

### **Summary/conclusion/recommendations**

These are not three separate sections but are all issues that can be discussed in the conclusion. This should not be very long. Only a paragraph or two at the most. It should be a summary of what you have discussed in the assignment or recommendations that your school can do regarding policies.

### **References**

As noted above use the reference guide that you were given to write the list of references you used. This does not necessarily have to be all the books/articles/readings you read but only the ones that you make reference to in your assignment.

### **General**

Remember to put page numbers on all pages

Please proof read your assignment or give it to a fellow student to read and make comments on before you submit it. Use the dictionary to look up words that you are not sure about the spelling.

## **B.ED Assessment Report**

Sunday, May 18, 2010

Dear students,

### **Reflections on Theme Human Beings : first six assignments: 10<sup>th</sup> May**

Thank you, everybody, for your first assignments. We enjoyed reading and commenting, because we could see where your strengths are and where you need help.

Lecturer x has commented on each person's assignment, to tell you what your own strengths and weaknesses are at present. She hopes that the comments are helpful to you. Please write a letter back to her and to Jean, to tell her what other comments she needs to make or to explain to you. In this way, both lecturers will know how to help you further. The more you tell us, the better help we can be to you. That is why we ask you to write back to us after you have read our comments. Please write freely in the letters- they do not 'get assessed' – they help us to assess our next steps.

You will see that Margaret has read and commented on each assignment. She has then written to you on the assessment sheet. She has given you ONE assessment for all of the assignments.

In her assessment, she has told you some ways to improve next time. They are important comments. She has no time to write down something which is not important (It takes long to mark one assignment like this!)

Here are Margaret's comments which you can **use to improve** your next assignment batch.

#### **1. Being efficient with your time**

There are six assignments to do on each theme, two additional ones about new learning, and a class essay test. You do **not** have time in your busy life to spend 24 hours a day on each one. So, how to never, ever waste your own time?

First of all, analyse the question thoroughly. Look at the verbs. What do they say you must do? Look at the nouns. What must you use to do this? That is all you must do. Nothing else.

Secondly, structure your answer. Decide how you will set out your answer. Make headings and subheadings out of the title. Then write **ONLY** what is required under each heading. No more.

Thirdly, do not despair. This is hard to do in the beginning. It gets easier the more you do it. It is like sewing or knitting or driving a car. It is not easy to begin. The more you sew, the faster you get at sewing. The more you sew, the more you learn, the better you get at sewing. Writing is not different.

Fourthly, if you want to get good at something, you must learn. Learn from Jean and Margaret, and learn from the readings we give you. Learn from your colleagues. Ask for help. We all need help to learn. All human beings need help from each other.

2. **Writing in English as your second or third or seventh language (read this, everybody!)**

This is difficult to do. You may not understand English well. You may not be used to reading a lot. You may not be used to thinking in English, which is different from thinking in another language.

So, what to do? Get a dictionary. Use it. Ask people about words and meanings. Ask lecture x and y in class meetings. Define every important word you use, before you use it.

Think in your own language. Think first, write later. Write in your mother tongue. Translate. Write in English. Get people to read it for meaning.

3. **Writing in English as your first language (read this, everybody!)**

This is difficult. You may not understand academic English well. You may not be used to reading a lot. You may not be used to thinking academically in English, which is different from thinking in everyday life English when you are chatting to a friend. So even though you speak English from birth, this is a new English to learn in many ways. So in many ways, you are also a second language speaker!

So, what to do? Get a dictionary. Use it. Ask people about words and meanings. Ask your lecturer in class meetings. Define every important word you use, before you use it.

Think in your own language. Think first, write later. Write in your mother tongue. Translate. Write in English. Get people to read it for meaning. Watch the meaning of every word you use. Be careful about the words you use- you may be so used to them that you think others understand what you mean. This is not true. Margaret found for example, that an English home language speaker can make as many mistakes in meaning, if not more as, or than, any English second language speaker.

4. **Organising each assignment**

Know what you have to do. The pattern is always the same. Look for the pattern. Use it. Do not stray from the pattern yet. The pattern is:

- a. short sentences and one idea per paragraph
- b. headings and subheadings
- c. introduction (always the same) what must I do and how will I do it. Short and sweet.
- d. The 'argument'. What am I wanting to say?
- e. Summary of what I have learned.
- f. Conclusion on this.
- g. Recommendations for me. Not for the government. Not for the children. Not for the principal. For me. I am the one getting the B. Ed degree which tells me and everyone else that I can argue academically.

h. List of references.

5. **Following the instructions carefully**

Do nothing except what you are asked to do. That is a waste of time. Your time.

6. **Copying words from the readings**

Never ever copy any words from another person. If you do, Margaret and Jean can see it immediately. We are experienced readers and writers and we have struggled through your struggles now. That is why we are helping you.

When you want to copy words put them into a special space (indented from both margins) or “make a quotation, like this”.

Use you own words as much as you can. This shows us that you know what you are talking about. When you copy other people’s words, we think that you don’t understand, so you are just copying....

7. **Citing and referencing properly**

When you want to use someone else’s words or ideas , please tell who it is and where you found the words and when they said the words.

Like this:

*Henry James (**Brainyquote.com no date**) once said that to be human there are three things to do: be kind, be kind, and be kind to others.*

Then you write the whole reference in the List of References at the end of the assignment. Like this:

James, H. (no date). *Quotation about humanity*. In Brainyquote.com. Retrieved in February 2008 from <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/human.html>

8. **Applying to your own life with examples**

It is no use quoting something for nothing or making a point for nothing. This is a waste of your time. If you make a point or a quote, then you need to use it. You use it by telling Jean and Margaret what this point means to you. Why have you bothered to write it down? So you tell us why. You use an example from your own life. Like this.

Applying to myself in real life.

*Henry James (**Brainyquote.com no date**) once said that to be human there are three things to do: be kind, be kind, and be kind to others.*

I believe that he is right. I try to be kind always to others, but I find it very difficult when I see people being rude to little children. Then I do not want to be kind. I want to be unkind and to be very rude back to the person!

9. **Applying to your professional life with examples**

*Henry James (**Brainyquote.com no date**) once said that to be human there are three things to do: be kind, be kind, and be kind to others.*

*I believe that he is right. I try to be kind always to others, but I find it very difficult when I see people being rude to little children. Then I do not want to be kind. I want to be unkind and to be very rude back to the person!*

Applying myself as a professional teacher and ECD specialist

So, I have to control my own feelings, and to put myself into their shoes and ‘launder’ or ‘wash clean’ the attitude and behaviour towards the children. I do this by taking a deep breath and saying to the adult: “Do you mean that you would like the child to listen to you while you are speaking? Perhaps the child doesn’t understand you, because he is so frightened by your tone of voice. Try it like this!” And then I model how to talk to a child in a respectful way.

#### 10. **Talking the talk and walking the talk**

In an essay never use the word ‘should’ in a general way as in

The teacher should always talk respectfully to children as equal human beings.

This does not sound as if you are practicing what you preach. Talk honestly about your own self as an ECD specialist. It is also meaningless because of course all teachers SHOULD talk respectfully etc.! That does not mean that they do!

Rather say

I try to always talk respectfully to children as equal human beings. Sometimes I achieve this. Sometimes I fail. I fail when I am tired, fed-up or frightened of an accident. I do it by always imagining that this child is a wonderful human being who one day will rule South Africa. My job is to make sure that this child knows from **me**, how to respect all people. One day he will remember me. He will remember me as a brilliant humane professionally- focused teacher. He will be a brilliant, humane professionally-focused leader.

You show us that you are thinking in an analytical and critical way about your own behaviour. This is what being a ‘reflective practitioner’ means.

Reflective practitioners are what South Africa needs. There are not nearly enough of us!

\

If we can only talk the talk, but not walk the talk, then we are merely **'purporters'**



What on earth is a **purporter**?!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
A **purporter** is someone who pretends, deliberately, to be something which she is not. She claims, often falsely, to be respectful for example, but she is disrespectful in the classroom. She does not do what she says she does. She pretends to be democratic but she is NOT! She pretends to be an excellent professional teacher, but she is not! **She is a purporter!!!!**

And, to add to all of this, here is the editorial opinion from the Daily Dispatch newspaper of Monday May 19, 2008 (retrieved on May 19<sup>th</sup> 2008 from <http://www.dispatch.co.za/article.aspx?id=203094>).

# Children learn from adults

2008/05/19

A RECENT event at one of our province's top private schools, St Andrew's College in Grahamstown, gives cause for pause.

Two weeks ago seven boys were caught drinking. Five "were asked to leave". The other two – first offenders – were suspended. The Daily Dispatch learnt that one of the boys was the son of a leading ANC businessman, right out of "the top drawer of the new black elite". The other was a Xhosa prince. Last year the businessman's older son, a prefect, was suspended from the same school for vandalising a teacher's car.

While the businessman has declined to discuss the latest matter with the Dispatch, the prince's family said "corrective measures" had been taken. They also pointed out that such incidents are not uncommon in a peer environment.

And indeed they are correct – children get up to all sorts of antics no matter where they find themselves in the social sphere. Consider the young Prince of Wales, infamously referred to as "Harry Pothead" for his pot-smoking escapade.

But this does not mean that their misbehaviour should be treated lightly. Within the context of unprecedented violence and hooliganism in schools around the country, it is now more important than ever that children are taught values.

But how does one do that in a society increasingly bereft of values?

As Jonathan Jansen, the speaker at a graduation ceremony at Wits University last month, so poignantly asked: "How does one teach values when everywhere around us, crime is decimating our numbers and destroying our souls? ... when, in the face of the greatest humanitarian crisis in our region since apartheid, our political leaders claim 'there is no crisis in Zimbabwe?' ... when a ship hugs our coastline trying to offload deadly weapons in a country where there is no bread on the shelves?

"... when black and white South Africans can barely tolerate each other in the wave of racist exhibitionism sweeping the country? ... in a country with one of the highest indices of inequality in the world? ... when a third of those seeking knowledge come to school hungry? ... when, in the face of poverty, the black middle classes are encouraged by their political leaders to get 'filthy rich'? ... when for the first time since 1994, our country is being torn apart by crime, poverty, racism and inequality?"

Add to that the number of leaders arrested on drunken driving charges and the recent outbreaks of xenophobia and it is simply delusional to think that children will learn values by reciting a pledge of allegiance to a country, a government, a leader or a constitution.

Values are learnt by suffering the consequences of one's actions, and from seeing the examples set by us adults in the lives we live.

With best wishes for the next assignments,