

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TEACHING OF
WRITING IN GRADE-9 ENGLISH FIRST-
LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS: A CASE STUDY
OF A SELECTED GOVERNMENT SCHOOL IN
NAMIBIA

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by

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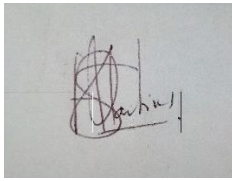
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ABSTRACT

The pedagogical practice choices teachers make when teaching writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms, as well as the extent to which these pedagogical practices appear to enable or constrain learners' acquisition of writing skills as per grade-specific curricular expectations, are the focus of the study. It draws from Bernstein's (1971) curriculum and society theory, as well as genre theory. Located within the qualitative case study approach, it is designed to investigate the reasons for Grade-9 English first-language learners' underperformance in Paper 2, the composition component of the Namibian external examinations. Drawing from the interpretivist paradigm, the study uses one-on-one interviews, semi-structured classroom observations, as well as documentary evidence of the Namibian English first-language syllabus and examples of learners' written work, to generate data. The research site and study participants were purposefully selected. The study involves two Grade-9 English first-language teachers and classrooms at one Namibian High School, and took place from the second to the third terms of 2017.

DECLARATION

I declare that the Thesis entitled, “An Investigation Of The Teaching Of Writing In Grade-9 English First-Language Classrooms: A Case Study Of A Selected Government School In Namibia”, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Education at Rhodes University, is my own work. I also declare that this thesis has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Simone A.D. Martins', is written on a light-colored rectangular piece of paper.

Simone A.D. Martins

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Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Emmanuel Mgwashu. His unrelenting support, wisdom and guidance are why I am able to submit this thesis to begin with. Not many students can say they had a supervisor as dedicated as mine, and I am ever so grateful for this. I am blessed to call my supervisor not only a fountain of wisdom, but also my friend.

To Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, as well as the principal at Omega Secondary School¹: I thank you for your time and patience. One's classroom is one's sacred space and I am very grateful that you allowed me to enter your space to observe your lessons and interview you.

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¹ pseudonym

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CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT OF STUDY

The researcher is an English 1st Language teacher in Windhoek, Namibia. She also examines Grade 12 English 1st Language papers. Her interest in this field stems from the fact that she is concerned with the difficulties her own Grade 10 and Grade 12 learners experience with writing in her classroom, as well as the fact that the learners she examines in Grade 12 appear to have difficulties with the writing component also. It is due to these concerns that she decided to investigate the phenomenon.

1.1 Language policy in Namibia

In terms of Article 3, Paragraph 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, “The official language of Namibia shall be English”. However, Article 19 states that “every person shall be entitled to enjoy, practise, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion” (gov.na, 1998). These two concepts appear to be at odds with each other. It can be difficult to engage fully with a culture or language of one’s choice when the official language of a country is only used as a mother tongue by less than 10% of the country’s population. This can be substantiated by the fact that, according to Priscilla Harris (in Kisting, 2011, para. 8), “only 8% [of Namibians] are English speakers, whereas the rest of the population use their home language and Afrikaans as the language of communication in their daily lives”. Interestingly, thirteen languages are recognised in Namibia as being local dialects or languages: Afrikaans, English, German, Ju/’hoan, Khoekhoegowab, Oshidonga, Oshikwanyama, Otjiherero, Rugciriku, Rukwangali, Setswana, Silozi and Thimbukushu.

If this is the case, why was English chosen as the singular official language for Namibia? Even before Namibia’s independence in 1990, SWAPO (South West African People’s Organisation), the leading political party in Namibia’s fight for independence, had established a language

policy for Namibia which stated that English should be the official language (Frydman, 2011). In particular, in 1981, SWAPO published a document entitled “Toward a language policy for Namibia: English as an official language”, which discussed eight criteria that an official language should meet (unity, acceptability, familiarity, feasibility, science and technology, Pan-Africanism, wider communication, United Nations). Of importance was that English was viewed as a language of liberation from the oppressive, mostly Afrikaans, previous ruling government. Because Namibia’s language profile is so diverse, it was also thought that English would unify all Namibians in the sense that it would be viewed as a neutral language.

However, these eight criteria have proven to be problematic. English can only be used as a unifying tool if people have access to the language and are able to communicate in it effectively. This may not necessarily be the case, if we look at the statistics mentioned earlier in this chapter. The majority of Namibians communicate in many other languages, the minority of which is English. As a result, “English has therefore become the property of only some of Namibia’s population” (Frydman, 2011, pp. 183–184). In addition, English was chosen based on its familiarity, which is deceiving. In Namibia’s 1991 census, it was revealed that English was not taught in schools “for actual use of its features” (UNIN, 1981, in Frydman, 2011).

Despite these criticisms, the use of English in Namibia is not entirely ill-considered. English is seen as a lingua franca, which has indeed allowed Namibians of all linguistic backgrounds to communicate effectively. In addition, it is a language used at tertiary institutions, which further brings people, in particular students and academics, together. English is also used as an international language of communication and therefore, Namibia is put on an international platform. Finally, the advantage Namibia has in using English as an official language and being linked to the United Nations in this way cannot be neglected.

1.2 Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT)

The language policy for Namibian schools can be summarised as follows:

Table 1: Language Policy for Namibian Schools

Grades 1–3	• Mother tongue instruction. • English taught as a subject.
Grades 4–6	• The LoLT is mixed: English, plus one of the recognised national languages. • Mother tongue is used to help translate unfamiliar concepts.
Grade 7, onwards	• LoLT is English.

Of interest could be to what extent this language policy helps or hinders Namibian learners. Although not the focus of this study, the impact of this language policy on Namibian learners' writing success is an aspect that data may reveal.

With a focus on Namibia's LoLT policy, Benson (2008) and Frydman (2011) state that language is not merely used for communication, but is also an indication of power, and that learning in a language that is not your mother tongue can impact learning negatively in several ways. The first concept that must be focused on are some of the reasons behind the negative effects of Namibia's current LoLT. Because of the fact that teaching and learning in the majority's mother tongue is not happening in Namibia, pupils are receiving a message that success cannot be found in one's mother tongue, and that one's mother tongue is therefore useless. This links to the idea that English carries more prestige, or power, than other languages. In Kenya, most of the ruling class speaks English because it is seen as the only way in which one can move up in the world (*The mother-tongue dilemma*, 2003). In South Africa, English is shown animosity, as can be seen by Rudwick's (2004) research where she quotes a student as saying, "It's like that, we don't like English, but... we are forced to understand English because when you go anywhere to look for a job, they use English... I only do (English) for my future, that's all" (p. 165). English is clearly linked to success, power and opportunities.

Something to bear in mind is that the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2011, p. 42) notes that in Namibia, "there are very substantial numbers of non-English speakers being enrolled in English L1 (first-language) classes". To confirm the statements made by UNICEF and Harris, the research site chosen for this case study is unique in the sense that it enrolls the highest number of English first-language learners for the Grade 10 and Grade 12 external examinations (198 and 154 in 2018, respectively), but only 4.4% of the school population speaks English as a home language (Jacobie, 2017).

The reason the above statistic could prove to be a challenge goes back to Cummins' 1984 research on Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Cummins' work in Clarence-Fincham (2000) speaks of three aspects which influence second language acquisition, the first being the difference between BICS and CALP. Cummins defines the former as "the manifestation of language proficiency in everyday communicative texts" and the latter as "the manipulation of language in de-contextualised academic situations" (Cummins, 1984, pp. 136–137). BICS is used for every day, face-to-face communication and is usually developed within two years of learning a language. CALP on the other hand, is focused on skills that are required to succeed in complex academic and cognitive tasks. This takes about five years to develop fully. CALP is what educators are most focused on, as it is believed to be the most important contributor to academic success. The reason this is crucial to understand is because, sadly, in Namibia, most pupils are forced to work using CALP before they have developed BICS. This causes a clear gap in their understanding of the language.

The second aspect related to second language acquisition is linked to the concept of CALP. It is the Linguistic Interdependence Principle, which states that CALP is only developed at school and

that control of CALP in a second language is dependent on how well the CALP is controlled in one's first language (Clarence-Fincham, 2000). This is where the following problem arises: if CALP is only developed at school, and pupils are hardly ever taught subject content in their own first language, how can scientific, academic knowledge be truly developed? The key here is to help teachers develop CALP amongst the students in a way which keeps their anxiety low and enables them to have full command of English for academic purposes. Once again, English should be thought of as a tool needed to master complex cognitive tasks, not the be-all and end-all of success.

Cummins' final feature is Additive Bilingualism. This states that a second language should never be learned at the expense of a mother tongue, and should rather be developed alongside it. Unfortunately, pupils' mother tongue is only taught alongside English until Grade 3 in Namibia, which defeats Cummins' theory completely.

All of these aspects could counteract the negative effects of English as a LoLT, but is this practical in the Namibian context? Once again, although it is not the focus of this study, whether this phenomenon has an impact on the writing ability of Grade-9 English First-language learners is an aspect that data might reveal.

1.3 Four language areas

According to Wallace, Stariha and Walberg (2004), "Writing, speaking and listening are communication skills that are important in all subject areas in the curriculum. Hence, literacy should have a central position in the curriculum" (p. 8). Their view is that one of the main goals of schools should be to improve literacy skills of learners in order to achieve academic success. Experience with a variety of writing, speaking and listening skills is required for particular skills to be acquired. In addition, Nation and Newton (2009) mention that amongst others, a

well-developed language course should focus on developing the fluency of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The link between reading and writing will be discussed in detail later.

In particular, writing proficiency can only be developed if several text-types are engaged with and practised extensively. Wallace et al. (2004) believe that writing is the final product of several activities, such as note-taking, identifying a focus area, outlining, drafting and editing. They posit that if one skill is not mastered, writing will prove to be very difficult to master. Teachers and parents or guardians are encouraged to expose children to a variety of different texts, as reading serves as a model for writing.

Many would agree that writing is an important aspect for academic success, but what does the Namibian context state? Reading & Directed Writing as well as Continuous Writing together make up half of the Grades 8 to 10 competencies and almost two thirds of the Grades 11 and 12 competencies in the English first-language syllabus (MoE, 2007). In addition, 60% of the total mark at the end of Grades 8 to 10 and 70% of the total mark at the end of Grades 11 and 12 consist only of Reading & Directed Writing and Continuous Writing. Using these statistics alone, it can be assumed that the Namibian English first-language syllabus places massive emphasis on the language skill of writing. It is in light of this weighting that this thesis focused on writing as a language skill.

1.4 Writing theories

Behizadeh and Engelhard (2011) provide a brief history of how writing theories have developed from the 1900s to the present day. In the process, they reveal that writing theories have developed into three major strands: writing as form, writing as ideas and content, and finally, writing as a socially and culturally contextualised process.

Writing as form emerged between the 1950s and the 1960s (Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2011). A “good writer” was seen as one who used the “correct” (or standard) form of English and one whose skill set in terms of language was “strong”. Because demonstration of proficiency in writing was based on being “correct”, writing was simply seen as a skill to be refined. As a result, writing was not a very creative process. Instead, it was seen as a mechanical practice. Writers were expected to conform to the Standard English set out by linguists. When a piece of writing was corrected using this theory of writing, the problems in using the mechanics of the language were simply identified, as this was seen as having major importance.

From the 1970s to the 1980s, writing was beginning to be seen as more of a mental process (Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2011). Writing as ideas and content was focused on how thought-provoking the writing process was, and was seen as being done in stages in order for meaning to be made. We see an example of the process writing approach in Flower and Hayes’ cognitive process model (1981) where the writing process was viewed very much as “planning → translating → reviewing”. Flower and Hayes (1981) assumed that these three stages of writing were how the mental process of writers worked in order to produce a piece of writing. It did not take into account that the writers may have arrived at the writing space with different backgrounds and levels of language proficiency, amongst other factors. In this regard, Bereiter (1980, in Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2011, p. 88) argued that “traditional writing instruction, based on style manuals, models, and teacher correction, is almost wholly devoted to moving students from associative to performative writing”. Performative writing was seen as writing following a particular set of conventions. This writing was produced by learners in order to show their language proficiency. If writing did not follow these standard “steps” and writing conventions, according to this writing theory, the writing piece would have failed to achieve its goal.

Johnson (1994) criticised both the “correctness” of language view (writing as form) and the process writing approach (writing as ideas and content) as being limiting factors to developing writing as a skill. He believed that the memorisation of spelling lists, rote learning of grammar rules and seeing Standard English as the only correct form of language hindered rather than helped young writers in their writing development. Cope and Kalantzis (1993, p. 44) stated that: “language learning became ‘the art of speaking and writing in English correctly’ based on prescribed absolute standards in which grammar amounted to a set of facts, fixed with no unresolved problems”. This traditional approach neglected the fact that writing changes according to its purpose and, as such, “...the texts generated in the process writing classroom (‘choose your own topic’, ‘say what you feel like saying’) often end up monotonous and repetitive” (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993, p. 6). Thus, viewing language teaching within the traditional paradigm does not allow for creativity and freedom of expression to its fullest extent.

In response to the creative thinking that critiqued traditional approaches, scholars such as Hyland (1992), Johnson (1994), and Behizadeh and Engelhard (2011), began to view writing as a socially and culturally contextualised process. They believed that this view had value in advancing the teaching of writing.

Street (2003) and Gee (2010) mirrored these sentiments with their concept of New Literacy Studies (NLS). The move was made to view literacy not as simply an acquisition of skills but as an inherently social practice. NLS suggests that because language varies across different contexts and cultures, literacy should be viewed as differing from context to context. Essentially, NLS views literacy as “not simply a technical and neutral skill; that it is always embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles” (Street, 2003, p. 77). What does this mean for the teaching approach? The ways in which learners learn and experience literacy, according to Street

(2003), is through the perspective of the teacher. As such, one must be made aware of the power relations which exist between teacher and student. Similarly, Gee (2010) mentions that previously, literacy was seen as a process that simply occurred inside one's head but that now, we view literacy as occurring within social structures as well. As a result, we cannot simply view literacy as being a cognitive, skill-based process. Instead, literacy embodies many different layers: social, historical and institutional. Once again, Gee (2010) sees literacy as a plural – several literacies exist within different contexts. In other words, we use literacy and language differently, depending on who we are communicating with and for what purpose.

Of interest is to note that, according to The International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English Joint Task Force on Assessment (IRA/NCTE), which consists of teachers teaching English at all phases and levels, “language does not contain meaning; rather, meaning lies in the social relationships in which language occurs” (Behizadeh & Engelhard, 2011, p. 7). In other words, whereas previously it was thought that learning to write lay in the acquisition of mechanics or conventions of the language itself, the understanding shifted to aligning the writing process with the social context within which it is constructed and negotiated. It is in this context that language comprehension began to be seen no longer as something that exists in isolation from the social context, but instead as shaped by social context.

1.5 Namibian context

The Namibian English first-language syllabus mirrors the developments regarding viewing language as a socially constructed phenomenon:

The starting point for teaching and learning is the fact that the learner brings to the school a wealth of knowledge and social experience gained continually from the family and the community, and through interaction with the environment. Learning in school

must involve, build on, extend and challenge the learner's prior knowledge and experience... The teaching of the first language must be done in close connection and co-operation with the home and local community. The home and community can be used as resources to deepen and extend the learner's language. (MoE, 2007, p. 6)

It appears that the Namibian syllabus prioritises language as having social relevance, where learners bring their own knowledge to the language classroom that is relevant and valid. Street (2003) makes an important point regarding one's "own knowledge": "the ways in which people address reading and writing are themselves rooted in conceptions of knowledge, identity, and being... it is also always embedded in social practices" (pp. 78–79). In the above section of the syllabus, learners are seen as resources for the classroom as they can use their experiences to better interact with and understand the language. In many respects, the Namibian English first-language syllabus seems to adhere to the latest writing theory trends, which posit that language is a socio-cultural event that should not be seen in isolation from the context within which it is produced. If we acknowledge that language and culture are two sides of the same coin, then it will be important to unpack the cultures and identities learners in the Namibian context bring into EFL classrooms, and the extent to which such cultures and identities are mirrored in the readings and texts given to students. This study will assist in ascertaining the extent of the classroom realities pertaining to this documented policy.

The Namibian first-language syllabus appears to contradict itself. It refers to competencies, and not proficiencies, in the syllabus that must be achieved by the end of Grade 10 as being, "Write a variety of texts, showing a sense of audience and purpose, using sentence structures, correct spelling and punctuation in well-structured paragraphs" (MoE, 2007, p. 7).

This smacks of the traditional view of writing, where a set of skills need to be achieved in order for one to determine whether a learner has "learned the skill" of writing. Of interest will be to

what extent this contradiction affects the way teachers teach writing and what learners produce as a result.

1.6 Focus of study

With the view of writing as a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon in mind, this study investigated the pedagogical practice choices teachers make when teaching writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms, as well as the extent to which these pedagogical practices appear to enable or constrain learners' acquisition of writing skills as per grade-specific curricular expectations. The extent to which the pedagogical choices teachers make in the teaching of writing align with the current writing theory trends, and what results these two aspects are producing in terms of Grade-9 essay writing, are additional aspects the study was interested in.

Grade 9 was chosen upon analysis of the results of both the Grade-10 and Grade-12 national external examinations. The rationale for this choice will now be discussed.

The examinations for English First Language consist of three papers: Paper 1 (reading and directed writing), Paper 2 (composition) and Paper 3 (literature). Paper 1 requires learners to read two comprehension texts, answer a set of questions for each text, and then write a short, non-fiction text where they transform the second text into a different piece of writing. Paper 2 consists of a range of narrative, argumentative and descriptive topics, not based on any text, of which the learner must choose to write one. Paper 3 comprises questions based on poetry, prose and drama. Something that can be noted is that throughout Grades 8 to 12, specific cross-curricular issues must be dealt with: teachers are expected to integrate these issues throughout the teaching of English. Environmental Education, Population Education, Information Technology, HIV and AIDS, Human Rights and Democracy. These cross-curricular issues

should assist teachers in selecting texts for learners to engage with, or topics to write about.

While it is true that proficiency in writing is required for all three of these papers, for the purpose of this study, however, only Paper 2 will be the focus. There are several reasons for this decision. Firstly, the statistics provided by Namibia's Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment (DNEA) related to the Paper 2 component (composition writing) of the examinations of Grades 10 and 12 reveal a disturbing picture. These are in relation to the Grade 10 Junior Secondary Certificate (JSC) examination, which is the first external (or national) examination that learners write in secondary school, as well as for the Grade 12 National Senior Secondary Certificate (NSSC) examinations, both at Ordinary and Higher level. These are summarised below (Tables 2-4).

Table 2: Grade 10 (JSC) Paper 2 examination results.

Year	Total number of candidates	No. of candidates achieving less than 50%	Percentage of candidates achieving less than 50%
2014	287	57	19.8
2015	268	35	13.1
2016	285	35	12.3

Table 3: Grade 12 NSSC (Ordinary Level) Paper 2 examination results.

Year	Total number of candidates	No. of candidates achieving less than 50%	Percentage of candidates achieving less than 50%
2014	90	19	21.1
2015	75	59	78.7
2016	82	17	20.7

Table 4: Grade 12 NSSC (Higher Level) Paper 2 examination results.

Year	Total number of candidates	No. of candidates achieving less than 50%	Percentage of candidates achieving less than 50%
2013	430	102	23.7
2015	379	122	32.1
2016	468	139	29.7

These three tables reveal that on average, about one quarter of the total number of English first-language candidates (both Grade 10 and Grade 12) achieve less than 50% in the writing component of their external examinations. Taking into account that the writing component comprises a third of the total mark at the end of these examinations, it is concerning that learners are not performing better. Performing poorly in the writing component of their examinations greatly affects the learners' end result.

The statistics in Tables 1 to 3 regarding the external examinations for Grades 10 and 12 are of particular importance to this study. This is because the aspects learners struggle with in the Grade 10 and Grade 12 English first-language examinations, such as paragraphing, topic sentences and using language correctly, are supposed to have been taught and learned as part of Grade-9 curriculum expectations. Therefore, an investigation of the teaching of writing in Grade 9 could reveal some of the reasons that could be used to explain high failure rates in Grade-10 and 12 National Examinations.

According to Odihambo (2013, para. 2), a baseline assessment is “a study that is done at the beginning of a project to establish the current status of a population before a project is rolled out”. This is the reason this study used Grades 10 and 12 external examination results to establish the extent of problems relating to the writing ability of Grades 10 and 12 learners, and furthermore that there is a need to investigate the teaching of writing in Grade 9 in order to understand the extent to which pedagogic choices therein could be said to be contributing to these concerning outcomes. Thus, using the results presented in the above three tables as a baseline assessment provided this study with an indication that learners are struggling with the composition component of their examinations. It is for this reason that the Grades 10 and 12 Examiners' Reports for the past three years were used to identify which aspects of writing

(Paper 2) learners appear to be struggling with, and so from there, investigate the pedagogic practices that are used to teach these aspects in Grade 9. This enabled the study to possibly deepen an understanding of pedagogic approaches that may need further attention and improvement in Grade 9, but also reinforcement in later grades.

In as much as Paper 2 is the focus of this study, we must acknowledge that reading and writing are inextricably linked. Rose (2004b, in Rose, 2005) mentions that reading and writing at primary school level already assists learners in developing their identities as readers, as well as identifying and recognising patterns in writing. In addition, factual texts should also be engaged with in order to assist learners in “develop(ing) skills in reading texts with understanding, identifying key information, selecting information for notes, and using it to write texts of their own” (Rose, 2004c, in Rose, 2005, p. 158). Rose is arguing that writing is simply a manifestation of how well reading has been mastered. Again, while the reading component of the English first-language syllabus is not the focus, this relationship is important to bear in mind.

As relevant as the above information is, it would be inaccurate to claim that Paper 2 in isolation is the only factor determining the success or failure of a learner’s writing. In fact, a note to make is that Grade-9 examinations are not externally assessed, and literature in particular is not formally prescribed. While the syllabus encourages aspects of literature to be covered, there is no formal policy governing what kinds of poems and texts learners are expected to study in Grade 9. This is purely in the hands of the teacher teaching Grade 9. As mentioned previously, this could prove to be somewhat problematic, as all the power lies in the teacher’s choices of texts. If we look at literacy as being a social process, what teachers choose learners to be exposed to will have an influence on the way in which they write, as well as what they write. While this is an important aspect to consider, because these examinations are not externally assessed, it is difficult to compare Grade 9 Paper 3 to Grade 12 Paper 3, especially considering

that Grades 10 and 12 are being used as baseline assessments.

Important to mention is the concern that the first time literature is assessed formally and externally is in Grade 12. Surely if something is only assessed formally in the 12th school year of a learner, and never before that, we are setting our learners up for failure? This is something to bear in mind when looking at how the English syllabus as a whole might be problematic.

We need to be cognisant of the fact that there are many cases where teachers take a particular grade from Grade 8 all the way to Grade 12, and the advantages and challenges this phenomenon may bring. If a group is given a teacher who is aware of the latest research in writing approaches, and who is aware of their position in the classroom and how this may affect learning, learners could be at an advantage. They will most likely be exposed to several teaching approaches that will ensure their success as far as possible. As a result, for five years, good habits will most likely be encouraged and writing is bound to be improved. Contrastingly, if a learner is given a teacher who is unaware of all the issues mentioned above, for five years, learners may keep perpetuating the same mistakes. Little improvement is likely to be made in their writing ability. This is possibly an area to focus on in the field of English language teaching.

1.7 Research objectives

It is against this background that the study's objectives are to investigate:

- How is writing taught in Grade-9 English First Language in a government school in Namibia?
- How do pedagogic practices used to teach writing in Grade 9 appear to enable/constrain learners in meeting grade-specific curriculum expectations?

In light of the above, this thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 1, Context, has already been discussed in detail. Chapter 2 will combine both the Literature Review, where the strengths and weaknesses of particular writing theories will be argued and expanded upon, and the Theoretical and Conceptual Framework, where the particular lenses of my study will be discussed. Chapter 3, the Research and Design Methodology, will show how my research was undertaken. The Findings and Analysis part of my thesis will make up Chapter 4. To round off, Chapter 5 will offer Conclusions as well as Recommendations for Further Study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous chapter situated the study in its context in detail. This chapter will be divided into two sections: Theoretical/Conceptual Framework and Literature Review. In the first part of this chapter, Bernstein's theories will be discussed in detail and its use as an "umbrella" theory will be shown. In the second part of this chapter, previous views of writing in the classroom as well as current trends will be discussed in depth. The researcher will begin with a detailed discussion of genre theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The chapter concludes with an indication of how these theories fit into the researcher's study as a whole, with a reiteration of her research questions.

Bernstein's (1971) curriculum theory and, in particular, the focus on curriculum and society, was used as a theoretical framework in this study. To complement curriculum theory as a theoretical framework, genre theory was used as an analytical tool.

2.1 Theoretical/conceptual framework

Bernstein's concepts of collection-type curriculum, classification and control (or frame) are of importance because a collection-type curriculum implies a system with a strong frame (form of control of learning in the classroom in terms of material taught) and strong classification (related to how learning material is structured). Bernstein (1975, p. 16) states that a collection-type curriculum "orders knowledge according to an explicit progression: it provides explicit criteria, it removes uncertainties and announces hierarchy. It gives the child an immediate index of where he stands in relation to others in the progression".

It can be said that in Namibian schools, teachers and learners engage with a collection-type curriculum. This is because school subjects have distinct boundaries; classification is strong in

that subjects are very clearly divided on a timetable and there is a control frame which sits between a strong and a weak frame, where teachers choose when to teach particular content, but must follow a particular curriculum. Also, learners have no choice regarding what they would like to learn for each subject. Learners, as a result, know exactly what they are being taught, when they are being taught that particular aspect, and are well aware that it is the teacher and the Namibian first-language syllabus itself that hold the power regarding their learning.

According to Bernstein (1971), educational knowledge “moulds” our identities. We are told from quite a young age what we are good and bad at, in terms of academics. Therefore, this sense of who we are consists of a three-part message system: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation, where “curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as a valid transmission of knowledge, and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realisation of this knowledge” (Bernstein, 1975, p. 85, in Cause, 2010).

Therefore, how, according to Bernstein, do learners and teachers construct their identities with this message system? In Bernstein’s terms, identities are created quite early in a learner’s academic career. “The pupil is made aware of the insulations within the division of labour. He also learns that the principle of authority transcends the individuals who hold it, for as teachers/subjects change his role remains the same” (Bernstein, 1975, p. 22). Because of the traditional grading system, learners know early on how well they do in their subjects and where they are situated in the hierarchy of power relations in a school. In addition, knowledge is considered sacred, i.e. pure and unchallenged, and subjects are specialised. As a result, teachers are believed to have a strong sense of identity and may be loyally attached to their subjects. In such a scenario, learners seem to have little status and teachers possess all the knowledge, and overall, schools have traditional, hierarchical authority structures wherein control is predictable.

Bernstein (1971, p. 47) further believes that the curriculum is a form of control: “how a society selects, classifies, distributes and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principle of social control”. The curriculum is designed to increase learners’ knowledge and shape their attitudes towards reality. It could be said then, that the objectives included in the Namibian Grade-9 English first-language syllabus are an indication of what curriculum committee members view as being of importance to learners. In other words, the curriculum itself is an indication of what Namibian society is supposed to see as valuable knowledge that should be taught to the learners of the country. The curriculum document reveals what are seen as powerful forms of knowledge.

Furthermore, the three-part message system of curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation acts as a social classifier, where differences are produced and reproduced, and biases are brought forward. Bernstein (1975, p. 61) states that “the expressive order of the school is transmitted... through its ritualization” and that schools are “a major instrument of the division of labour through its control over the occupational fate of its pupils”. Cause (2010) further confirms Bernstein’s views by mentioning that through this message system, the dominant cultural group controls, classifies, produces and transmits what knowledge is learnt and what values and attitudes are acceptable in society. The dominant value systems may either interfere with or support learning, depending on where along the value systems the learner lies. It is important to note the relationship between power and knowledge, and its effects on curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. Due to the awareness of the effects of these power relations, it is imperative that teachers’ writing practices and their influence on their learners’ ability to write due to different power relations are studied. One may work on the premise that power relations between learners and teachers may either help or hinder the former’s writing performance.

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Genre theory

Genre theory, according to Dean (2008, pp. 21–23), consists of three strands existing along a continuum: genre as text (the most concrete theory), genre as rhetoric, and genre as practice (the most abstract theory). Genre as text focuses on the form of writing and tends to neglect the relationship between context and text. In schools, this perspective is often used to teach the textual features of, for example, a friendly letter. A limitation of this view is that learners, and perhaps some teachers, who engage in this perspective will simply see genre as being a formula for writing and will not fully understand the complexity of genres. Secondly, genre as rhetoric focuses on the social actions that create genre: “Writing is not only a skill; it is also a way of being and acting in the world at a particular time, in a particular situation, for the achievement of particular desires” (Bawarshi, 2003, in Dean, 2008, p. 22). This perspective views genre as having specific features, but also delves into how these genres can be adapted to suit certain situations.

Teaching using this perspective requires an in-depth understanding of the contextual and cultural factors affecting a genre and as such, if learners are unaware of how to engage with or do not form part of the dominant culture existing within the piece of writing, viewing genre as rhetoric could be limiting to their writing success. Finally, genre as practice sees genres as ways of being and focuses on genre use rather than simply on context. This perspective sees genre as an entire way of viewing the world and as a result, “emphasises ideologies and perspectives, actions rather than texts” (Dean, 2008, p. 23). This is summarised in Figure 1 (next page).

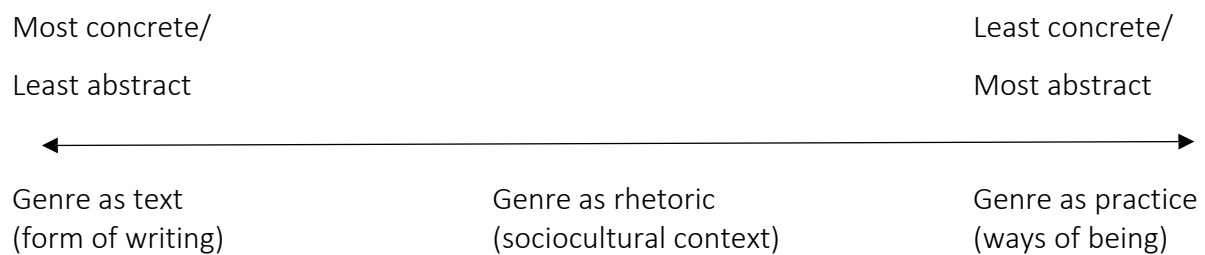


Figure 1: Genre theory continuum

The researcher's emphasis for the purposes of this study was on **genre as rhetoric** as she was interested in exploring the methodological choices teachers make, such as the topics they choose for learners to write about, the cultural context taken into account (or not) when choosing these topics, and the language teachers use during writing lessons, in addition to what the English First-Language syllabus for Grade 9 stipulates. The choice of this strand of genre enabled the study to generate data that will possibly contribute to an understanding of how teachers' and the syllabus' dominant cultural viewpoints affect learners' understanding of, and engagement with, writing.

Genre as rhetoric offers the tools to study, engage with and understand the teaching of writing in ways that break down barriers between theory and practice. It does this by engaging with the teaching of reading and writing in ways that draw attention to socio-cultural and economic barriers that tend to hinder a learner's meaningful access to the curriculum. This is partly because genre as rhetoric engages with how language is used within a particular context. It engages each genre of writing from the perspective that it has different goals and structures, depending on their purpose and audience (Hammond, 1987). It is from this perspective that genre as rhetoric focuses on how language creates meaning by taking into account social needs, cultural values and meanings of language (Johnson, 1994). As a result, the levels of literacy which learners reach at school are largely dependent on access to social, economic and cultural benefits. It is in this way that Bernstein's concept of power relations within a classroom and

the dynamics behind those who are powerful and those who are not is complemented in genre as rhetoric.

According to Applebee (1982, in Hyland, 1992), learners struggle to write correctly and implement the three areas of knowledge to a writing task. These areas are: knowledge of topic, knowledge of audience, and knowledge of language conventions. This may be due, in part, to gaps in the pre-existing categories of knowledge of writing, or schemata, that learners develop throughout their schooling career. Content and formal schemata are both categories of knowledge which learners possess (Carrell, 1983, in Hyland, 1992). Given the concerning Grade-10 and Grade-12 examination results for Paper 2 (composition writing) it may be argued that part of the reason for this low performance is the fact that content and formal schemata are probably not developed well enough in Grade 9 to ensure success in the two examinations, one and three grades later. This is an aspect this study hoped to investigate.

While content schemata have to do with learners' general knowledge of the world, formal schemata are about the knowledge regarding text types and writing structures of a particular genre (Carrell, 1983, in Hyland, 1992). It may be that both of these schemata have not been learnt in Grade 9 (the year before the first external examination). This may one of the reasons learners perform poorly in later grades. Understanding of a language stems from a reader's ability to relate the structure of a text to a pattern that is familiar to them, i.e. using both the content and the formal schemata. Because so many of our learners are unable to use both kinds of schemata, they are at a linguistic disadvantage (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1978, in Hyland, 1992).

Hyland (1992) argues that teachers should familiarise learners with schemata associated with particular genres in order to improve their literacy levels. The question then becomes: how do we teach learners to write in order to improve their writing? It is, according to Hyland (1992),

a teacher's duty to use the knowledge of sequence of genres to develop their learners' writing skills. This means that the teachers carry responsibility when it comes to developing writing skills, hence the need to include teachers as study participants who were interviewed and had their lessons observed. This is because as adults, teachers play an essential role in developing language models to assist learners in acquiring a language (Callaghan et al., 1993, in Johnson, 1994). The extent to which teachers play a positive interventionist role in teaching learners to read and write, given the unequal home and cultural backgrounds within each classroom, and given the Namibian syllabus' interest in ensuring that all learners' cultural backgrounds are accommodated, was the study's interest. In fact, the Namibian English first- language syllabus states:

Only if the learners feel secure in their personal and linguistic identity, and value their own culture, will they be able to absorb English and the globalisation which it brings, without being alienated from their own language and culture. The importance of local context and content in teaching the first language cannot be underestimated. (MoE, 2007, p. 2)

Hyland (2008) further states that there are three approaches to writing theories and writing pedagogies: texts as the products of writing; cases where the writer is the focus and the processes are used to create texts; and cases where the learner is the focus and the role that readers play in writing is of importance. According to Hyland, teachers may in fact effectively use all three approaches in the classroom. Each approach will now be discussed in detail.

With text-oriented research and teaching, texts are viewed as objects or texts are viewed as discourse. Texts are seen as outcomes in the former, while texts as discourse concentrates on the way we use language to communicate in order to achieve a specific goal. Seeing texts as objects which are outcomes means that they're a massive influence on language structures. A good writer is one who knows grammar well and is able to arrange words into clauses and

sentences. Writing is rigidly controlled by this view – that grammar should be “correct” and “precise”. The problem with viewing writing in this way is that the text is not expected to be interpreted in any way other than what was intended by the writer. Writing only has one feature in this viewpoint: accuracy. In contrast, texts as discourse acknowledges the fact that writers have their own goals and intentions, and so do readers. Texts are focused solely on the purpose of communication.

Grammar is not the only focus here, but features of a particular text are also important. In other words, teachers should be teaching learners how to group texts into particular genres according to their purpose and structure. Praise is given by Hyland regarding this approach, as he believes that genre approaches enable learners to make more choices regarding their writing. Of importance here is that the teacher understands how texts are structured, understood and used in particular ways – this will put them in a better position to help develop writing ability successfully.

The second approach is writer-oriented research and teaching, which focuses mostly on writers’ creative expression. This approach sees writing as an avenue for learners to express their personal experiences and opinions. Teachers here do not impose their own views but instead stimulate writers in particular ways. Formal errors are not paid attention to. Instead, teachers respond to the ideas that the writers produce. As pristine as this approach may seem, it is not without its criticisms, however. This approach assumes that individualism is key and neglects to acknowledge that learners and teachers have varying cultural backgrounds and social circumstances. This approach ignores the real-world purpose of writing.

Lastly is the approach of reader-oriented research and teaching. This approach posits that when we write, we are attempting to influence, persuade, inform or entertain readers. The focus here

is on the interaction between writers and readers. The discourse community in this approach joins writers, texts and readers with similar ideas. The problem, however, is that this approach purely stresses what people have in common rather than celebrating their differences.

Genre is seen, according to Martin and Rose (2005), through semantics. As such, genre is a goal-oriented process, which is also a staged, social process. Genres need to be engaged with in a step-by-step manner; it needs to accomplish something, and it forces one to engage and interact with others. Swales (2001, in Paltridge, 2013) states that genres have multiple purposes, differing in terms of the participants involved, i.e. the communicative purpose of genres varies across time and culture. Genre studies aims to understand why genres are shaped the way they are and how one can achieve the goals of a particular genre.

Genre theory impacts how writing skills are taught. Before, theorists neglected knowledge to produce discourse structure by simply looking at three aspects of writing: knowledge of topic, knowledge of audience and knowledge of language conventions. Writing, in the process approach, is seen as being about problem-solving, is learnt and not taught, and the teacher acts as a facilitator, with minimal interference. The process approach focuses on individual cognition at the expense of language use. There is no real understanding of the social nature of writing. In the study, it was seen that teachers provided learners with a problem (i.e. “write a friendly letter to...”) and learners had to solve that problem (write the friendly letter). The teachers were involved when explaining the task to learners and going through specific language conventions; however, this is where their role ended. Only after submitting the piece of writing were the teachers involved again. This involvement was restricted to assessing the written pieces.

Upon studying the process writing approach, it was discovered that students did not know what

the structural expectations of different text types were. The danger of simplifying language into blocks of text is that it ignores writers' purposes as well as their private intentions. The learners at the research site do not seem to be aware of what the writer's purpose is, other than submitting writing for assessment.

On the other hand, genre theory looks at the importance of how structure aids in communication. Genre varies according to purpose, topic, audience and channel of communication (Hammond, 1987). Genre analysis entails how the features of similar texts depend on the social context of creation. There is an interest in interpersonal dimensions of academic and technical writing. As a result, genres reflect the personal purposes of writers: the assumptions writers make about audiences as well as the interactions created with the audience and writers. Genre theory explains the way language functions in social contexts.

Carrell (1983) mentioned that formal schemata, wherein learners relate the structure of a text to language patterns, are where understanding stems from. However, this is culturally specific. As a result, second language speakers are at a linguistic disadvantage as they do not share the same schemata. If the curriculum remains invisible, learners are denied access to resources needed in order to succeed. There is an inaccessible cultural knowledge that informs the judgements of good writing and if there is a lack of engagement with the social realities of learners, they cannot access the genres of mainstream culture.

Important to note is that the majority of the learners at the research site are second language English speakers. Although they take English First-Language as a subject, they are actually not at the specific level because, as mentioned in Chapter 1, only 4.4% of learners speak English at home. How does this affect their learning of writing? Teachers may be pitching their lessons at a level where learners may not understand the cultural significance of what they are

writing. Because lessons may not be relatable to second language speakers, for example in the case of writing an argumentative essay at a First-Language level, learners may struggle to understand what to do. Learners are not exposed to argumentative pieces of writing, nor do they know what the correct conventions are. Thus, they are disadvantaged. This results in low marks when their writing is assessed.

It is important to note that what is considered “good” writing varies from one context to the next. Good writing should not, therefore, be seen as a mastery of universal processes. However, according to the curriculum that learners must follow, there are certain features that must be mastered at the end of the grade. Thus, “good” writing is seen in one context and learners are forced to conform to that context or suffer in terms of their marks.

There also exists something called the “teaching/learning cycle” in terms of genre theory, which Martin (2000) mentions. It consists of deconstruction (teachers model a genre), joint construction (scribing an example based on learners’ writing and suggestions), and individual construction (individual writing). In addition, teachers remain in an authoritative role, where they model, re-contextualise, scribe and scaffold (see one paragraph down, Halliday).

Teachers must familiarise learners with the schemata of a specific genre. By analysing conventional structures, teachers are able to (in theory) teach these structures and as a result, writing skills are developed. Language is at the centre of writing development. If learners have a shared understanding of what writing should look like, and have explicit guidance, they should know what is expected of them. Making meaning of a text comes from the context as well as the content. Higher marks and good advice will come from understanding this concept. Unfortunately, teachers are not analysing the different generic structures of what learners need to master. If teachers do not analyse what a genre is expected to look like, how will learners be able

to do this? Learners are not being exposed to the contextual aspects of writing.

Halliday (1994, in Chen, 2008) says that interventions in the classroom can be done through modelling, guided practice, composition, constructive assessment and collaboration. Learners thus have a higher chance of success in a transparent curriculum (one where they know exactly what is expected of them), where genres are visible and attainable through explicit instruction. It is also believed that learners need resources to understand genres. Learners have different backgrounds and knowledge as to what is expected in writing. As such, they must be taught and shown examples of appropriate linguistic choices according to a particular genre. Teachers can help by providing explicit models of texts. Thus, the goal of genre pedagogies is that teachers scaffold learning, wherein learners are guided in a step-by-step fashion from the point of knowledge they are already at, to a point of knowledge that are able to achieve on their own, and then teachers use knowledge of language to guide learners towards an understanding of genre and how language creates meaning.

Miller (1984, in Chen, 2008) goes as far as saying genre should be seen as social action, where different texts, roles and contexts lead to different ways of doing things with language and ways of belonging. Lills (2008, in Chen, 2008) states that this is the goal of genre theory: to close the gap between text and context. Learners who are constantly made to engage with roles and contexts that are unfamiliar to them will never truly “belong” to the language space they are expected to be in – that of English First language. Learners should be encouraged to engage in creativity with the language, but what is happening instead is that they are merely regurgitating what teachers expect them to do according to the curriculum. Learners are not being pushed to make the language their own. Teaching, therefore, should consist of meta- communication: analysis of examples of genres to heighten learners’ awareness of genre- specific language features, rhetorical organisation, and communicative purposes (Chen, 2008).

2.2.2 Text Types

Rose (2009) divides genres across the curricula (Fig. 2).

	Genre	Purpose	Stages	
English	Recount	Recounting events	Orientation Record of events	Stories
	Narrative	Resolving a complication in a story	Orientation Complication Evaluation Resolution	
	Exemplum	Judging character or behaviour in a story	Orientation Incident Interpretation	
	Anecdote	Sharing an emotional reaction in a story	Orientation Remarkable event Reaction	
	Personal response	Reacting emotionally to a text	Evaluation Reaction	Responses
	Review	Evaluating a literary, visual or musical text	Context Description of text Judgement	
	Interpretation	Interpreting the message of a text	Evaluation Synopsis of text Reaffirmation	
	Critical response	Challenging the message of a text	Evaluation Deconstruction Challenge	
	Exposition	Arguing for a point of view	Thesis Arguments Reiteration	Society & environment
	Discussion	Discussing two or more points of view	Issue Sides Resolution	
Science	Biographical recount	Recounting life events	Orientation Record of stages	
	Historical recount	Recounting historical events	Background Record of stages	
	Historical account	Explaining historical events	Background Account of stages	
	Sequential explanation	Explaining a sequence	Phenomenon Explanation	
	Factorial explanation	Explaining multiple causes	Phenomenon Explanation	
	Consequential explanation	Explaining multiple effects	Phenomenon Explanation	
	Descriptive report	Classifying & describing a phenomenon	Classification Description	
	Classifying report	Classifying & describing types of phenomena	Classification Description	
	Compositional report	Describing parts of wholes	Classification Description	
	Procedure	How to do experiments & observations	Purpose Equipment Steps	
	Procedural recount	Recounting experiments & observations	Purpose Method Results	

Figure 2: Major genres in the school curriculum (Rose, 2008, p. 8)

For the purposes of this research, only the genres relating to English will be focused on. My research covered four text types, namely: descriptive paragraph, friendly letter, argumentative essay and formal letter. If we consider Rose's categorisation of genres, it means that the four

text types fall under the following genres: recount, anecdote, exposition and once again, anecdote.

The stages of recount, according to Rose (2008), are orientation and record of events. Orientation sets up the reader for what is going to be written in the rest of the text. The record of events typically happens without any disruption and as the story unfolds, the writer judges the events.

In anecdotes, other than orientation (which sets the scene for a story), a remarkable event must occur. This event is deemed remarkable when it is out of the ordinary, so much so that it requires a comment of some sort. Problems and reactions to these problems can be described here. While anecdotes do not require resolution as such, the events described are responded to in some way.

Finally, expositions have a thesis, arguments and reiteration. Usually, within the “arguments” stage of expositions, there are “grounds” and a “conclusion”. Signalling words are expected as well, such as “First” or “In contrast”. Examples to support particular arguments are required. Restating the issue at hand concludes the exposition.

2.2.3 Assessment for learning

When focusing on the teaching of writing, attention must be paid to the assessment of the learners’ work. While analysing learners’ work, the following questions surfaced:

- 1) Why are teachers assessing?
- 2) What are teachers assessing?
- 3) Are the learners learning anything through this assessment?

This is where it became imperative that the concept of assessment for learning was engaged with deeply. Teachers should not be merely assessing to fill out the Continuous Assessment forms required by the syllabus. Instead, they should be assessing with a purpose; that purpose is to teach learners how to be better writers (Brown, 2005; Jones, 2005; Black & William, 2005).

Of particular interest when examining learners' own work was the assessment for learning concepts of feedback through marking, or written feedback (Brown, 2005; Jones, 2005; Black & William, 2005). These writers all posit that learning can be advanced through feedback in the form of comments on the learners' written work. Feedback must be at the centre of the learning process, similar to how learning overall is thought to be most effective when it is learner-centred. Feedback must be detailed, comprehensive, and written in a manner in which the learners can easily understand and access it. Jones (2005) in particular mentions that feedback is only effective if it meets the needs of the individual child by focusing on what the child did well and how he/she can improve.

Jones (2005) makes an interesting comment about how effective feedback can be used to scaffold learners into building their skills and acquiring more knowledge. This links closely to Vygotsky's theory of scaffolding, where an MKO (More Knowledgeable Other, in this case the teachers), helps learners move through the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) towards new knowledge structures. The ZPD is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. The lack of effective feedback can then be linked to some gaps in the learners' knowledge, as they are not being built up step-by-step towards a better understanding of the work that is required of them.

Another important aspect of assessment for learning, according to Black and William (2005), and Jones (2005), is that of effective questioning, or classroom dialogue. Questioning should be done in such a way that learners are expected to improve on their thinking and not simply answer for recall purposes. As a result, teachers should think carefully about how to frame their questions (Black & William, 2005). When questioning, teachers should allow sufficient time for learners to either answer or discuss the topic at hand. This allows learners to think more deeply about what is expected of them. Jones (2005) in particular calls this the PPP method: Pose, Pause, Pounce. Teachers pose a question to the class or to a particular individual, pause while the group or individual thinks about the question, and then discuss that answer with the class.

It should be noted that learners should not be ridiculed if an incorrect answer is given: every learner should learn from the answer given, whether it be incorrect or correct. The key here is that answers to questions provide an insight into how much a learner truly understands the task at hand. In addition, teachers are encouraged in this method to answer follow-up questions in order for a variety of questioning to be conducted during a single lesson. These types of questions can be open or closed questions, or questions to check for knowledge, comprehension or application.

One can also situate the teacher's use of feedback as assessment for learning (Fig. 3).

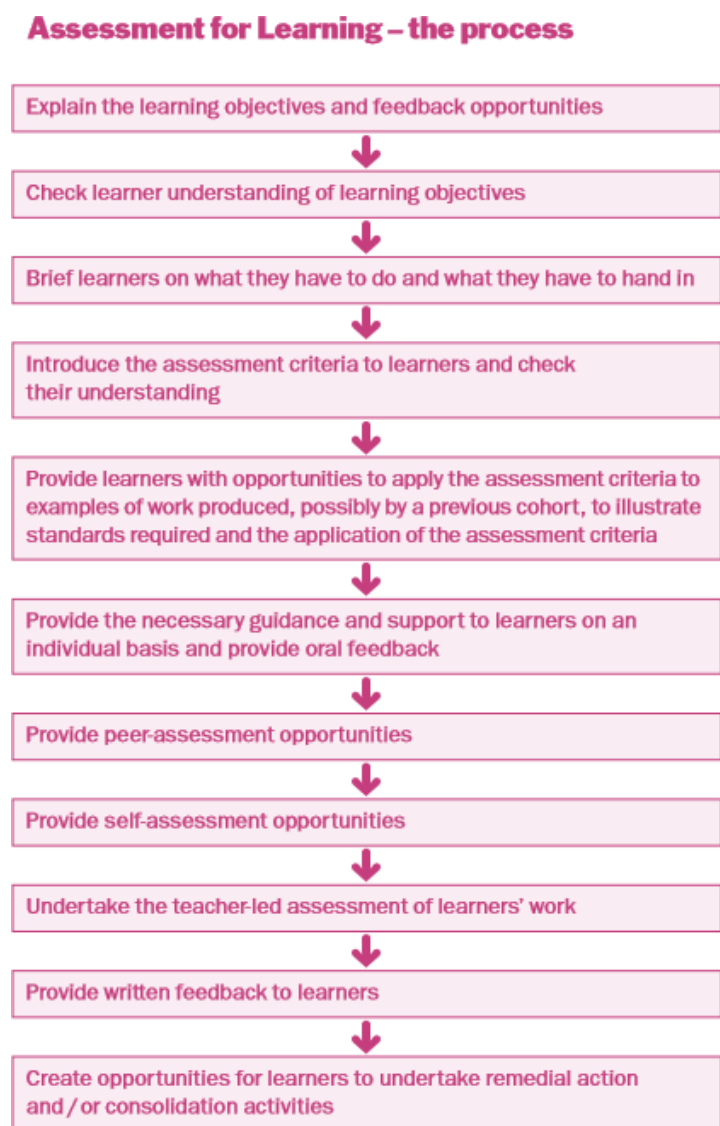


Figure 3: Assessment for learning - the process. (Taken from Jones, 2005, p. 22)

2.2.4 Systemic functional linguistics

The Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) perspective looks at the relationship between language and context. It focuses on three aspects: what is going on, who is involved, and what the role of language is. SFL sees genre as patterns of discourse for expressing meanings in context. Context is linked to language through lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features. Writing, in this view, is dialogic; i.e. there is a “discussion” between the audience and the writer. Hyland (2008) calls this “plurality of voices”.

In addition, SFL ensures that writing creates a discourse community. Writing joins writers, texts and readers in a discursive space. As a result, SFL is deeply interpersonal as it involves learners' feelings or attitude towards their work, in addition to the evaluation of their work. Meaning here is not simply created by language alone, but by individual understandings of language as well. In general, there appears to be a gap between writers, texts and readers in the classroom space. The discussion that is happening merely occurs between writer (learner) and reader (teacher) when learners receive a mark and some feedback from the teacher after assessment. Learners are very rarely expected to speak about how they feel about the texts they are engaging with, nor are they encouraged to challenge the texts given to them. What occurs then is that a learner is affected negatively, as they are discouraged from engaging with writing since a positive mark is the only end product.

2.2.5 The role of grammar in making meaning

Lazar and Barnaby (2015) argue that grammar can indeed play a role in the socio-cultural view of writing, even though it is focused on sentence-level communication and is traditionally taught using a top-down approach. They interviewed university lecturers to investigate their views on teaching grammar explicitly and whether or not it had value. The general consensus was that grammar was extremely important to communicate meaning and not simply a tool for language.

Of interest to Lazar and Barnaby was how university students created their identities using English. When one speaks to family or friends, one tends to use one's own jargon and form of dialogue. Contrastingly, when using English in an academic environment, a particular standard form of English is required. The two researchers posited that sometimes the two forms of English clash and that may affect one's sense of identity. If a student's own form of English is

stigmatised and seen as being “incorrect”, and this form of English is inextricably linked to their identity, the two may be at odds with each other.

The activities used within the university setting were used to analyse the meanings which exist in particular grammatical forms. The aim was to show students that they could engage with grammar on a cognitive, practical level, instead of simply learning the “correct form” of the language. Students were encouraged to understand why they would be expected to choose a particular grammatical structure instead.

What the researchers discovered is that many students held the belief, as most people do, that language only has one correct form and this correct form must be used in all contexts. However, what the researchers tried to show these students is that everyone’s linguistic identity, shaped by their backgrounds and language, was valued. By understanding the value of the language they use, they were able to identify the power language has in its different contexts. Even more so, their linguistic identity allowed them to better express themselves in environments where the standard English form was expected, such as in academic writing. The attitude of these students moved from a viewpoint of being “right” or “wrong” to one where there was an understanding that grammar is used differently depending on its purpose.

2.2.6 Conclusion

With the social context of language learning in mind, by using Bernstein’s curriculum theory as a theoretical and conceptual framework, and genre theory as an analytical tool, the study generated data to establish the extent to which Grade-9 pedagogical approaches in the teaching of writing sufficiently prepare learners for grade-specific curriculum expectations so that they are ready for Grade 10 and Grade 12, where national examinations are written.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a background for the need for this type of study. The theoretical and conceptual framework was also discussed. The key focus was that this study used Vygotsky's social constructivism concepts of the ZPD, scaffolding, MKO and mediation, and Bernstein's views of curriculum as rhetoric.

This chapter outlines how the research was conducted and how data was analysed. The aim and research questions will be repeated and the research paradigm and approach discussed. The research site and participants, as well as how they were selected, will be mentioned. In addition, a discussion about the piloting of instruments, data generation methods and data analysis tools will be done. Finally, the ethical considerations and challenges of the research will be mentioned.

3.2 Aim and research questions

As noted earlier, the aim of this study was to investigate the role that pedagogic practices in the teaching of writing in Grade-9 English first language play in enabling learners to meet the subject and grade-specific curriculum expectations. The research questions guiding the investigation were:

- What are the pedagogic practices that teachers employ to teach writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms?
- What writing practices do these pedagogic practices appear to engender?

3.3 Research paradigm and approach

A research paradigm represents a specific way in which the researcher sees the world and the way in which he/she interprets the data that is generated. The research undertaken in this case study located itself within an interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm focuses on how people interpret and understand their own world, as well as how they make sense of what is happening around them (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Because writing, according to genre as rhetoric, is culturally and socially embedded, it was important to delve into teachers' awareness of this aspect in the writing process. Teachers' experiences of the world tend to dictate how and what is taught in writing lessons, i.e. their interpretation of the world influences their teaching. In addition, as mentioned in the previous chapter, learners tend to write based on their own experiences and views of the world. They are also interpreting the world around them as they write; hence, this paradigm is ideally suited for this kind of study.

Because interpretivist research posits that there is no single reality, this paradigm lends itself to qualitative research. The data generated in qualitative research produces a rich, in-depth set of data (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). It is this qualitative data that enabled this study to generate a deepened understanding of the reasons Grade-9 learners struggle with Paper 2 (composition writing) of the English first-language syllabus. This required an in-depth understanding of teacher's pedagogical choices when teaching writing. Thus, the interpretivist approach and qualitative research lend themselves well to this study of a teacher's interpretations of his or her choices and the reason for these choices.

Yin (1994, in Rowley, 2002, p. 18) states that a case study is an inquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context" and as such, it offers a valuable way of looking at the world. "Case studies are one approach that supports deeper and more detailed

investigation of the type that is normally necessary to answer how and why questions” (Rowley, 2002, p. 17). With this in mind, the case study approach enabled the study to engage with a specific context and understand it in an in-depth manner. By taking a single research site and using only two classrooms to observe, the researcher was able to generate an in-depth analysis of her study. Although there are a total of five English First-Language classrooms at the research site, the researcher felt it more valuable to only observe two of these classrooms, in order to analyse both in-depth, instead of taking all the classrooms and only analysing them on a surface level. Time constraints as well as the fact that the researcher is a teacher herself also made the choice of only two classrooms a more practical one. This choice also offered an opportunity to compare and contrast two different classroom settings within a single context; i.e. one school and one particular grade. In this way, the researcher was also able to see whether two classroom settings differed in their approaches or whether there were any similarities.

It should be noted that a similar study by Nyasimi (2014), in which the challenges Form 3 (Grade 9) learners face when learning essay writing skills was studied, employed a mixed-methods approach, in which both qualitative and quantitative data were generated. This research was undertaken in an entire district in Kenya over three years. The success of this type of study may lie in the fact that the population sample was so large (180 learners and 10 teachers) and that the study took place over a number of years. Contrastingly, this researcher’s study was under strict time and logistical constraints. The researcher gathered classroom observation data in one term (three months) and chose to instead do a case study of only one school, as she lives and works in Windhoek and it was more practical to only focus on one establishment. While Nyasimi’s research allowed for both breadth and depth, which created quite a comprehensive study, it can be assumed that this purely qualitative, case-study approach created depth in a focused manner.

3.4 The research site, access and study participants

This study was undertaken at Omega Secondary School¹, a government secondary school in Windhoek, Namibia. The researcher is based in Windhoek; as such, the research site was chosen for convenience purposes. Additionally, this school was selected because it is the school in Namibia that enrolls the highest number of English first-language learners for external Grade 10 and Grade 12 examinations, as mentioned in Chapter 1.

Two teachers were chosen as study participants from this particular school. These two teachers teach the highest number of Grade-9 English first-language lessons. Because only two classrooms were observed (with a total of 72 learners), it was thought that observing one classroom from each teacher would provide more breadth of information. The rationale was that different teachers may approach the teaching of writing in different ways. They were also selected as participants for their differing years of teaching experience. In order to obtain different perspectives of teaching and as much detail and variety as possible, it was imperative to choose both a ‘younger’ and an ‘older’ teacher to observe. Participant one has 18 years of teaching experience and holds a BA (Hons) degree and an HED. Participant two has nine years of experience, with a B.Ed. degree. It should also be noted that, with the principal’s permission, all the Grade-9 English first-language teachers were approached regarding the possibility of participating in this research. Only two of the teachers agreed to participate.

3.5 Piloting of research instruments

Piloting was done to ensure that participants felt comfortable with the researcher. Samson (2004) reiterates the importance of piloting data generation methods to measure their

¹ pseudonym

effectiveness. An added benefit is that if the actual study participants are used in the piloting stage is that it allows them a preview of how the data generation will unfold, thus making them comfortable when the actual study is implemented:

Familiarity with the researcher and the research process allows research ‘subjects’ to relax, to be themselves, and to behave more naturally. As time passes between a pilot study and a full-scale piece of research, and if findings are not unfavourably received, participants are likely to feel less threatened by the idea of being ‘observed’; it is more familiar to them, more comfortable (Samson, 2004, p. 398).

The pilot stage also enabled the researcher to “test” her instruments to see if they were fit for their purpose; i.e. to generate relevant data. Therefore, it was used to modify and refine research instruments, as piloting is also ideal to anticipate research issues that may arise from initial data generation tools (Samson, 2004).

Through pilot observations, the researcher was able to ensure that teachers and learners felt comfortable in her presence. Before the observations with both participants’ classes, the researcher introduced herself, explaining her purpose for being in the classroom, and allowing learners to ask any questions for clarity. Learners and teachers appeared to appreciate the transparency and a relationship of trust developed. The researcher also tested her data collection instruments: the video camera, voice recorder and observation schedule, to ensure that all three worked well together to generate relevant data.

In addition, Samson (2004) asks very similar questions to those the researcher was faced with after conducting an initial, pilot interview with the research participants: if the data generated in the pilot interview is relevant, and important data has emerged, is it necessary to redo the initial interview? It was felt it was unnecessary to do so. The questions asked generated enough

data that the researcher was able to analyse it quite extensively.

Nyasimi's (2014) research also showed that pilot studies allow one to modify research instruments if necessary, and as such, increase reliability.

3.6 Data generation methods

Various methods of data generation were used to ensure that the qualitative nature of this study was realised. One-on-one interviews, classroom observations and documentary evidence were used to achieve a rich data generation process. This was the study's way to triangulate data to maximise reliability, validity and trustworthiness.

An interview, according to Rule and John (2011, p. 64), can be thought of as a "guided conversation" between a researcher and a study participant. Interviews allow for an in-depth discussion of a particular issue. In a semi-structured interview, follow-up questions can be asked (Rule & John, 2011). These interviews and follow-up questions allow for more clarity to be obtained as the data generation process is underway. The reason interviews were used is that, in this way, the researcher was able to obtain a first-hand, personal account of what methods the study participants use to teach writing, their reflection on such methods, as well as their thinking relative to their learners' writing performance. An interview was conducted to explore how writing is taught in the teachers' Grade-9 classrooms. These interviews were used to particularly answer the research question regarding what pedagogical practices teachers employ when teaching writing.

Similarly, one-on-one interviews were conducted with teachers in the research by Nyasimi (2014) in order to gather in-depth information about a particular issue. These interviews were

successful as their open-ended nature allowed for follow-up questions and a more rounded set of information regarding the challenges learners face when learning how to write essays.

Documentary evidence was one of the methods used for data generation. Documentary evidence was used to understand particular patterns and phenomena (Bertram & Christiansen, 2011). In order to use the Grade 10 and Grade 12 external examination results as a baseline assessment, the Examiner's Reports of the Paper 2 component for both the JSC and NSSC Higher and Ordinary levels for the past three years were reviewed in order to determine what appeared to be the most challenging aspects of the writing component. A review of the past three years' reports enabled the study to identify patterns of learner difficulty arising out of learners' performances on Paper 2 (composition writing). This enabled the researcher to focus on particular gaps in the pedagogical approach that could contribute to learners' struggles with Paper 2 in Grade 10 and Grade 12. Particular attention was paid to what the grade-specific expectations were and whether or not they were being achieved. By focusing on what the Examiner's Reports stated as being problematic in the Paper 2 component, I was able to determine what writing practices are engendered in learners. In other words, what learners are doing correctly or incorrectly, according to external examiners, could be taken into account.

In order to investigate the relationship between the teachers' claims and learners' actual performance, learners' written work was analysed. As mentioned in Chapter 2, four text-types were analysed in total: descriptive paragraph, friendly letter, argumentative essay and formal letter. I obtained the written work of six learners (two high marks, two low marks, and two average marks) from each participant's class in order to establish whether there were already any visible patterns of difficulty in their written work at this stage, which may then be anticipated in the Grades 10 and 12 examinations. In total, 24 pieces of writing were analysed.

Again, six pieces of writing per text-type were chosen based on the fact that an in-depth analysis could be made of each text-type by analysing high, average and low marks in a classroom, in order for a generalisations to surface, which case studies aim to do. The written work was collected after each essay had been written and marked by the teacher. The researcher was interested in showing the omissions that were produced in learners' writing after a teacher taught a particular writing form. The questions kept in mind were:

- What did the teacher say the conventions should be?
- What did the learners write?
- What should the conventions be, according to the Examiner's Reports?
- What is the difference, if any, between the two?

The focus here was to show directly what writing practices learners produce after being taught a particular form of writing.

Of interest is to note that in Nyasimi's (2014) research, the researcher himself marked the written work of the learners, using a particular guideline. The researcher was focused on particular features of writing and this is why he chose to mark the work himself. Contrastingly, this researcher was interested in how teachers themselves marked work and whether or not it corroborated with the information they supplied during the one-on-one interviews.

Additionally, in order to corroborate interview data, classroom observation, a data-gathering tool which allows the researcher to observe participants' behaviour in a natural setting (Rule & John, 2011), was used. The purpose of classroom observation was to generate data that would enable an understanding of the relationship between what the study participant says and believes, and what they actually do in the classroom. The classroom observation that was used

was the non-participant observation. The researcher sat back and watched how the writing lesson was conducted.

The advantage of classroom observation is that it enabled the study to develop insights into particular classroom situations. It also offered a more in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences of the world (Bertram & Christiansen, 2011). However, there were clear disadvantages. Because it is almost impossible to observe everything happening in a particular situation, any observation will have to be selective. This disadvantage was reduced by video and audio recording the observed sessions so as to capture as much as possible from the teacher-learner classroom interactions. Ethical clearance was obtained from both participants, the learners' guardians, and the principal of Omega Secondary School in order to do this video recording (see Appendices A–C).

Observations were guided by an observation schedule, where the researcher documented all the interactions taking place amongst the learners and teachers. The researcher used the research question of how teachers choose to teach writing, as well as the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, to draft the observation schedule. The researcher was interested in how teachers approached the teaching of the particular text type, and whether Vygotsky's social constructivist approach was used. This was, once again, because genre as rhetoric posits that language is a social practice. It is for this reason that a set of writing lessons at the research site was observed. Two writing lessons (totalling four text-types) per teacher were observed. In this way, how the writing process was taught to learners was observed and then the researcher used genre as rhetoric to engage with the observed classroom interaction data that was generated.

3.7 Data analysis

Given the fact that this research draws from Vygotsky's theory of the ZPD and the MKO, and Bernstein's curriculum theory, the focus of analysing data was two-fold, using each theory.

Coding and analysis work together: one must code in order to analyse data effectively (Basit, 2003).

Initially, interviews and observations were transcribed (see Appendices E and F). Thereafter, colour coding was used to identify how Bernstein's concept of curriculum as rhetoric was coming across. Codes are used to make sense of recurring themes that may emerge from data collection (Basit, 2003). Seidel and Kelle (1995, in Basit, 2003), view the role of coding as "noticing relevant phenomena; collecting examples of those phenomena; and analysing those phenomena in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns and structures" (p. 144). In other words, coding is imperative to finding a common thread that runs through all the data generated. The focus was on highlighting how teachers' methodological choices, the cultural context of learners and the language use of the teachers either helped or hindered learners.

The classroom observations were also transcribed. For this set of data, the researcher focused on Vygotsky's social constructivism concepts of MKO, scaffolding, mediation and ZPD. The interactions taking place between learners and teachers that indicated that these particular concepts were being engaged with were highlighted.

The learners' written work was analysed by focusing on the conventions learners produced in their writing, and what the teachers stated the conventions should be. This would address the research question of what writing would be produced by learners after being taught a particular

text type. It was important to note whether or not there were disparities between what the teacher said and what learners did. This is in order to understand where possible challenges in writing lie: are the learners following instructions from the teacher? Why or why not?

Finally, Examiner's Reports were analysed using the concept of Bernstein's curriculum as rhetoric. The focus was on what language use learners were expected to engage with in essay writing, as well as which conventions were expected from them.

3.8 Ethical considerations and challenges

Triangulation, the action of gathering and interpreting evidence from several sources and finding relationships between these findings in order to justify one's point of view or theory (Creswell, 2003), helped ensure validity and trustworthiness in my research. Triangulation was done by analysing data obtained from classroom observations, one-on-one interviews and documentary evidence, indicating the common themes that became apparent across all the data sources during analysis.

In terms of ethics, formal permission was obtained from the school principal, the teacher, the learners' parents/guardians, as well as from the Khomas Regional Education Director (see Appendices A–D).

In addition, "research represents a shared space, shaped by both researcher and participants" (England, 1994, in Bourke, 2014, p. 1). As a result, the identities and experiences of both the researcher and participants may impact the research process. As such, it is thought that we make sense of the world around us based on our biases. It is thus imperative that the researcher recognised her positionality in this research. By doing so, she was engaging in reflexivity, which, according to Chiseri-Stater (1996; Pillow, 2003; in Bourke, 2014, p. 2), "involves a self-

scrutiny on the part of the researcher; a self-conscious awareness of the relationship between the researcher and an ‘other’”. The researcher viewed herself as a data collection instrument, and as such she had to be aware that her own gender, cultural background, ethnicity and other factors may have influenced the way in which she collected data. At the same time, those same features would influence the way the participants, or ‘the other’ of the study, reacted to a particular situation. “Positionality is thus determined by where one stands in relation to ‘the other’” (Merriam et al., 2001, p. 411, in Bourke, 2014, p. 5). In this study, the researcher was both an insider and an outsider: a fellow teacher and a researcher. The researcher was wearing the “hat” of researcher at the time of classroom observations. However, she was also a teacher from another school, scrutinising the teaching methods of her colleagues. This may have worked to an advantage, as the researcher’s positionality and the position of the participants worked together, instead of being at loggerheads. A good relationship was developed with the research participants, where they felt they could be themselves in their classroom space, instead of feeling threatened. The researcher, using her reflexivity, made sure to be constantly aware of her own experiences and bias throughout the research in order to impact it as little as possible. The focus was constantly on the research purpose, research questions, and theoretical and conceptual frameworks she was using as “lenses” to guide the research.

In addition, the transcriptions of both the initial interviews (see Appendix E) and classroom observations (see Appendix F) were made available to the participants. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that “it is common practice to check the raw data adequately with the participants” (p. 190). This was an imperative part of the study to ensure that teachers felt they were being represented accurately and fairly. The researcher wanted to ensure the study was ethical in the sense that no bias was evident in the way the data was transcribed.

3.9 Conclusion

To conclude, the research was conducted at a selected government school in Windhoek, Namibia. A case study was conducted, where two lessons each in two Grade-9 classrooms were observed. Text-types were analysed after they had been marked by the respective teachers. A total of four text-types were analysed: descriptive paragraph, friendly letter, argumentative essay and formal letter. Six pieces of each text-type were analysed, totalling 24 in total.

One-on-one interviews with each teacher as well as observations of each of the classrooms were conducted.

In addition, the Examiner's Reports of 2014, 2015 and 2016 Grade-10 and Grade-12 examinations were analysed in detail.

Permission to conduct this research was obtained from the principal of the research site, the teachers who participated, the learners who were being observed, as well as from the Khomas Regional Education Director.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Grade-9 writing lessons were the focus of this case study as they are being used to determine the origin of the problems in the writing component of the Grade-10 and Grade-12 external examinations.

It was seen in Chapter 1 that although the outcomes of the writing component of the Grade-10 and Grade-12 syllabi are to reach particular competencies and grasp the ability to write as a whole, these competencies are not always being met. It is due to this that Grade-9 lessons are being studied. The thought process behind using Grade 9s is that if the Grade-10 and Grade-12 results are not aligned with the competencies or outcomes expected by their respective syllabi, something must be at the root of this. It may be that gaps in the earlier grades are compromising the ability of learners to achieve competencies required of them in later grades.

In 1998, Hansen initially wrote in *Write Your Way to a Higher GPA* about how writing skills were exceptionally important in the workplace. Recently, she points out that: “more than a decade later little has changed except that writing has become even more important” (2018). Hansen’s study reveals that two-thirds of jobs in the United States require writing. One of her survey participants stated that “writing skills are fundamental in business... it’s increasingly important to be able to convey content in a tight logical direct manner particularly in a fast-paced technological environment” (2018, para. 6). If these findings are anything to go by, we then see the importance of writing outside of the school environment. Writing is not merely a component which needs to be mastered for a Grade-10 or Grade-12 certificate to be awarded; it is an essential skill in order to function effectively in today’s workplace. It is thus imperative

that we study the problems occurring in the writing component at school level in order to give our learners the maximum chance of success outside of school. Although writing is not the only measure of success, we do want our learners to have mastered this essential skill in order to assist them as much as possible.

This chapter is divided into two sections, each based on one particular research question. For the first research question (What are the pedagogic practices that teachers employ to teach writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms?) each text type covered during classroom observations will be analysed in detail. The topic given to learners at the end of the lesson will be looked at, and then worked backwards, analysing whether the teacher's pedagogic practice observed would assist learners in achieving their goal. The researcher will also attempt to correlate what was observed in classroom practice with what teachers said their approaches are during their one-on-one interviews. Assessment for learning will be used to decipher whether or not the feedback given to learners was effective.

For the second research question (What writing practices do these pedagogic practices appear to engender?), what the generic conventions are for each text type will be looked at, according to specific academic research done by Rose (2008). Thereafter, the learner's own work will be used to determine whether the particular text type convention was used. This will determine whether or not the learner was successful in completing the task expected of them. Together with samples of learners' own work, Examiner's Reports from 2014–2016 will be analysed to determine whether the mistakes that examiners mention as occurring in external Grade-10 and Grade-12 examinations are also apparent in Grade-9 writing. Elements that teachers mentioned they feel learners are struggling with will also be analysed. Whether or not there is a correlation between the learners' work and what the teachers feel are existing challenges will be examined.

PART ONE

Research Question One: What are the pedagogic practices that teachers employ to teach writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms?

Text Type 1.1: Descriptive paragraph

The topic given here was: Write a descriptive paragraph of 120–150 words on one of the following:

- A supermarket
- A hospital room
- A restaurant
- A classroom
- A sunset
- A room at home.

The key words are: *descriptive paragraph, supermarket, hospital room, restaurant, classroom, sunset, room at home.*

How were these concepts taught? There appeared to be a large amount of teacher talk in the lessons, with the teacher asking a question and moving on to another after it was answered.

Teacher 1 asked questions like:

- “What does descriptive mean?”
- “What tools do we use when we describe a situation or picture?”

There was some explanation given, such as:

- “You can use adverbs and strong words to describe.”
- “...senses that we have to address in your description...”

- “...if you write about taste, the smell, the sounds, textures which make up the scene or experience...”

There was a whole class discussion about a particular description, which was read out by the teacher (Fig. 4).

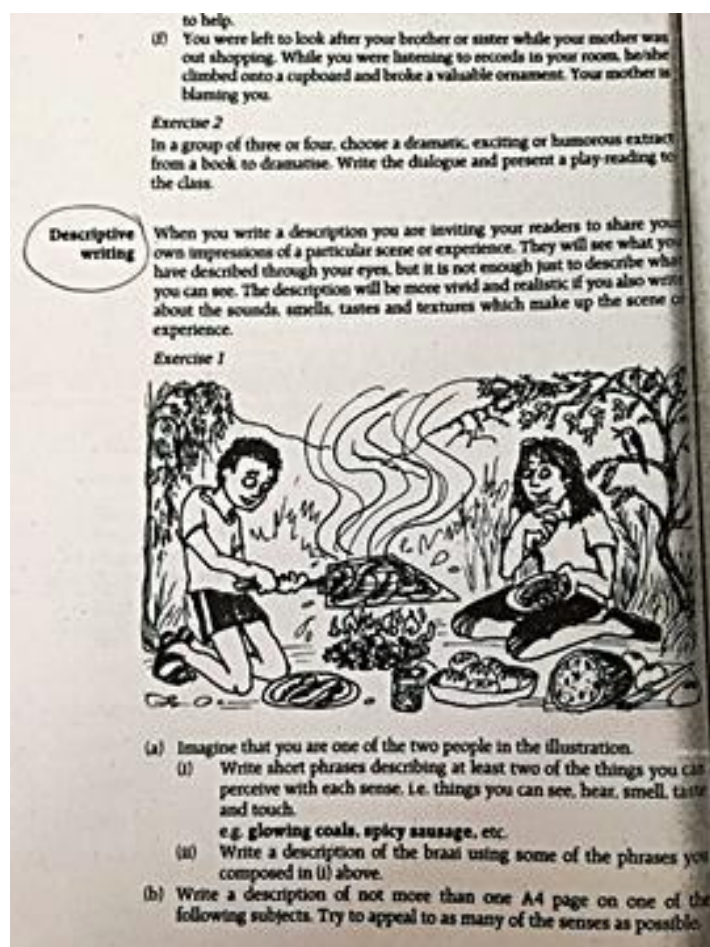


Figure 4: Descriptive paragraph classroom resource.

Yes, learners were taught briefly what a description entails, but the other key words in the topic given were not discussed at all. No examples were given in class regarding those kinds of descriptions. Learners were not asked what kinds of descriptions they could use for their chosen topic. That part of the lesson appears to have been severely neglected. In addition, it was assumed that the learners knew what an adverb was and its use as a descriptive word type.

Text Type 1.2: Friendly letter

The topic during this observation was given orally:

“You will write to Principal X thanking her for something she has done for you, perhaps as an individual perhaps as a class...

You had a free day for when, the dragon boat, right? So that would be a good opportunity to write a friendly letter to Principal X thanking her for the first prize awarding you your day off. And I think you all enjoyed that very much, right? So I think that actually deserves a thank you.

You can find yourself a partner and write in twos. So I'd like one page from a pair of you. This is a short piece because it's 120–140 words.

Just pretend you are an individual. Listen quickly: what could you for example, except for obviously thanking her? Perhaps include how you spent the day.”

The key words are: *write to Principal X, thanking her; write a friendly letter; include how you spent the day.*

How were these concepts taught? Many questions were asked and answered regarding language use and structure of the friendly letter. Teacher 1 used the board to illustrate the structure of the friendly letter for the class:

- [illegible]

The teacher then read out an example of a friendly letter to the class. She paused at particular moments and asked learners questions regarding the content and structure of the letter:

“I’ll read you a letter okay listen, to sort of remind you of what it would sound like.

Dear Aunt Connie

I suppose it’s better late than never...

So what did I just read to you? Yes, more or less the introduction.

Mum suggested that I use the money to buy...

Right so what do you think this paragraph is? Yes, the body.

I shall be starting my school on the 20th...

Yeah, also the body paragraph but it’s a math paragraph. Because it’s new information.

Thank you again for the gift. Mum, dad and Christine send their love...

That is your? Conclusion.”

Once again, it was observed that the question-answer technique was widely used. What appeared to be lacking was the use of rich, in-depth discussions regarding the structure of the example letter.

The topic given to the learners was also slightly problematic. Friendly letters are letters written to people with whom one is familiar and has a personal relationship. A letter to one’s principal cannot truly be considered a friendly letter, as the relationship is completely different. When writing to a person in power, one cannot write using a friendly tone – it will come across as far too familiar, even rude. This may cause confusion for learners, who will not know exactly how to construct a letter in light of this contradiction.

During Teacher 1's interviews (see Appendix E), she mentioned:

- “I try to make it accessible to them. ”
- “I put it into perspective – why are you actually writing these pieces?”
- “You will make them distinguish between formal and informal language.”
- “Try and incorporate a grammar lesson in-between the writing.”
- “I try to identify the gaps before they start writing.”
- “I’m quite glad to have a blackboard and chalk and write something on the board.”
- “I try to explain the rule and then they answer correctly.”
- “I try to read them a piece and tell them that shorter sentences are much more powerful (for a descriptive piece).”
- “This is how I try to make them apply it; I make them copy that style of writing.”

Both the descriptive paragraph and friendly letter used examples that learners could relate to, which makes the work somewhat accessible to them. There was some indication as to why one might write a friendly letter. At the same time, during the friendly letter discussion, learners were spoken to about the importance of correct language use. Additionally, learners were given example descriptive pieces and friendly letters to engage with. Whether or not they were able to apply a specific “style” of writing remains to be seen. The gaps in the learners’ understanding, such as correct language use, were very superficially identified. When teachers ask question after question in rapid succession and only a few learners in the class are engaged, it is difficult to identify whether the whole class truly understands a concept or not. No grammatical rules were discussed throughout the lessons.

Text Type 2.1: Argumentative essay

The topic given was a choice of the following:

- All drinks should be prohibited under all circumstances, after or before all sport events and games.
- Smoking should be banned.
- Violence on our screens is harming our 9th graders.
- All sport should be encouraged.

The key words are: *drinks prohibited; after or before all sport events; smoking banned; violence harming 9th graders; sport encouraged.*

How were these concepts taught? The teacher began by showing a video of two people arguing for or against travelling by air as opposed to travelling by car. She also discussed examples in class about television being a blessing rather than a menace, as well as arguments for and against school uniforms. It is important to note that there were no examples of argumentative essays given to the learners, but simply oral discussions.

Teacher 2 provided the class with a definition of an argumentative essay:

- “The argumentative essay is when you have to argue. At the end of the day you have to convince the reader of your point of view and you cannot just grab opinions here or there. You have to structure what you have, to give facts.”

She used a definite lecture style of teaching during the lesson, providing explanations to the learners and not allowing them much opportunity to ask questions or engage with any texts:

“We are going to stick with this five-paragraph structure. You have three paragraphs in your body.

You are going to decide whether you are for the topic or against the topic.

So, you are going to start with your two arguments, one for the topic and one argument against the topic.

What must your introduction do? Your introduction must catch the reader’s attention; you must define the topic... and you must tell the reader what the content of the essay will be about.

When you get to your body, you will have to go and write a topic sentence.

In the conclusion we are just going to wrap everything up. You just restate the importance of the topic, you can maybe paint a picture in the mind of the reader to show him, show him what the world would be like if there was no television.”

Also problematic could be the use of the word ‘facts’: what exactly is a fact? Do the learners know the difference between what they believe to be true versus what is thought of as being factual? This lack of clarity could cause confusion amongst the learners in terms of what they choose to include in their essays.

The possible concern with this text type might begin at the topic level. The topics provided to the learners are not relevant to their lives, nor does it appear that they can truly relate to them either. Much research shows the importance of teaching learners from a perspective they can understand, and these topics do not allow for this.

Learners spent the lesson learning how to structure ideas. Not once were they taught what kind of language was expected of them, or provided examples of language to use. How can learners

engage with this text type properly if they have never actually seen what it looks like in reality?

This relates very closely to what both Halliday (1994) and Martin (2000) feel is imperative to learning how to write: the aspect of modelling. Although it was seen that teachers tend to model the genre in the sense that they showed learners what the piece of writing should look like (mostly in terms of structure), the language used in that genre was not discussed at length. Also, teachers moved straight from a vague discussion of the text type to individual construction, with little guidance.

According to Halliday (1994), teachers should investigate texts and contexts for learners' target situations (situations and contexts they are familiar with), encourage reflection, exploit different types of genres, and thus create a mixed-genre portfolio for the learners. This means that learners will be exposed to a variety of genres which they can relate to better. It was seen at the research site that very seldom were target situations close to learners' experiences. The pieces of writing and topics learners were expected to engage with were so far removed from their experience that very often teachers had to spend a large chunk of time explaining the background of these pieces to the learners.

Text Type 2.2: Formal letter

The choice of topics given:

- Write a letter of complaint to Ocean Basket regarding the bad service you recently received.
- The Windhoek Traffic Department has publicly stated its intention of increasing the minimum age of drivers of all vehicles from eighteen to twenty-one. Write a letter of complaint to the Traffic Department.

The key words are: *letter of complaint; bad service; recently received; driving age changed.*

How were these concepts taught? Teacher 2 started with questioning what the learners already knew about formal letters. She asked the class what they remembered about the format, with particular focus on the difference between a friendly letter and a formal letter:

- “Contractions; do not use contractions.”
- “Please try to use formal language.”

The learners were also taught the correct structure of the formal letter and given examples of the correct structure (Figs 5, 6).

LETTER OF COMPLAINT

Be very careful to follow instructions carefully regarding date and who

(sender's address)
P.O.Box 4567
Windhoek
Namibia
20 July 2012

(Only write Namibia if recipient does not live in Namibia)

XX

Recipient's Name Pay attention to instructions.
P.O. Box 89010 There could be a catch regarding the recipient's information.
Windhoek
Namibia

XX

Dear Sir/Madam

XX

Subject heading sentence – put in your complaint (The subject line begins at the margin and must be underlined) (your word count starts here)

XX

Introduction – what are you complaining about?

Be concise. Answer the questions: what, who, where, why, when, how.

Remember your content is based on the information in the passage/s.

Body – details of the problem. Elaborate on the details that are mentioned in the introduction.

Conclusion – give your suggestions on how to solve the problem. (Your word count ends here)

XX

Yours faithfully

Sign

A. Smith

Be careful – you could be writing this letter as someone else, so do not carelessly sign your name when instructed to do otherwise.

Notes: * The tone is very formal and although you are complaining and may be emotional, you must remain formal and polite.

Figure 4: Formal letter of complaint classroom resource 1

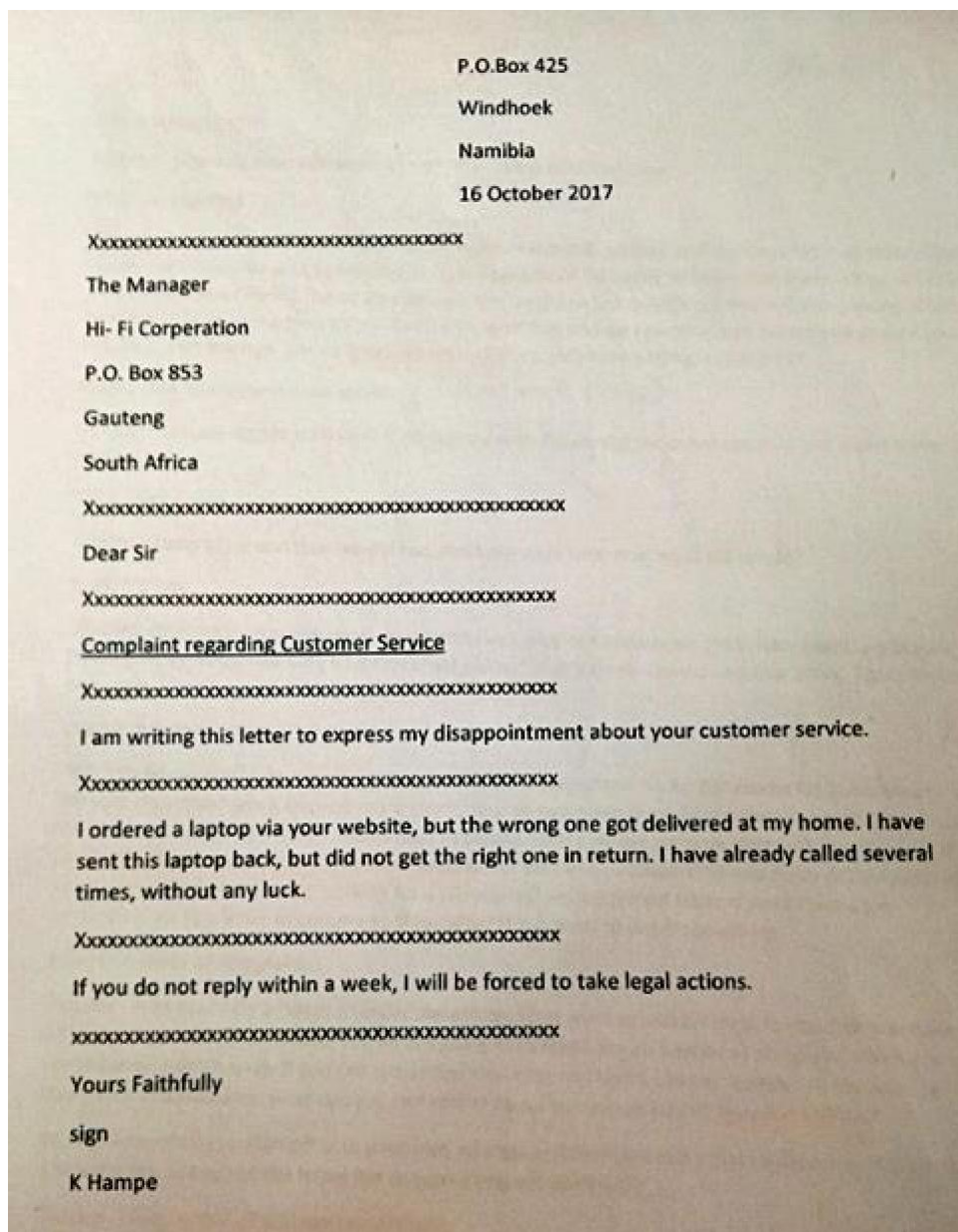


Figure 5: Formal letter of complaint, classroom resource 2

Once again, structure was mostly focused on. While some grammatical and language conventions, such as the use of formal language, were discussed briefly, it appears they were not discussed in enough detail for learners to truly grasp what was expected of them.

During Teacher 2's initial one-on-one interview, she mentioned:

- "I make sure the learners understand what it is that they have to do."

- “I use as many mediums as possible to convey the information.”
- “I spend a lot of time on building vocabulary.”
- “I try to divide the task into smaller units.”
- “I always try to choose topics the learners can relate to.”
- “Breaking down the task into smaller units is also one of my strengths.”
- “I usually look at the age of the learners, so I try to choose topics I know they will like.”

The learners perhaps knew what was expected of them regarding the structure of the particular piece; however, it is unclear whether they truly understood what they were expected to write and how. During the argumentative essay, Teacher 2 used a video and different examples of arguments so in that case, one could say that yes, she did use different mediums. However, there was no indication whatsoever that there was any time spent on vocabulary building during the lesson. The vocabulary would be related to the correct, standard form of formal English, as well as the particular language conventions required such as linking words, for example. The topics, as mentioned earlier, are not easily accessible for learners, when looking at their age or their backgrounds and what they could possibly relate to. The task does not appear to be broken down into smaller units, but rather the structure of the particular writing piece.

Discussion of findings

These two teachers have revealed a very important point: learners are not being taught *how* to write properly. They are merely being shown what they are doing wrong in terms of language and grammatical structures. This leads me to the following observations:

- i. Learners are not being guided in terms of how to improve their writing as the text-type is not being modelled.
- ii. Teachers are assessing language, grammar and content on a surface level, without any deeper engagement.

The two observations above will now be discussed in detail.

i.) Assessment for learning

Of the two sets of writing pieces I analysed from Teacher 1 (a descriptive paragraph and a friendly letter), which totalled twelve written pieces, only three pieces contained written feedback that was not simply a mark (See Appendix G). These comments were:

- “A good letter!” – Learner’s work 1.2(f)
- “Focus on the actual sunset!” (Teacher’s own emphasis) – Learner’s work 1.1(d)
- “An excellent description” – Learner’s work 1.1(e).

This indicates that Teacher 1 did not employ any effective written feedback strategies (such as in-depth, specific comments) with potential to extend classroom work, i.e. the use of feedback to extend the lesson. Teacher 1 focused on indicating what the learners did wrong in terms of language and grammatical structures, but did not actually indicate to the learners what they did well and how they could improve (James, 1992). In this way, learners were still unaware of what they needed to do in order to improve their writing.

Similarly, Teacher 2 offered only two comments in the twelve pieces of writing I analysed:

- “250–300 words!” – Learner’s work 2.1(a)
- “Off topic. This is topic 2 and not topic 5.” – Learner’s work 2.1(c).

This feedback does not offer any way of the learner knowing how to improve his/her argumentative writing skills.

Brown (2005) mentions that assessment must be transparent, i.e. learners as well as teachers should be very clear as to what the assessment criteria of the written piece are. Written pieces are assessed according to a marking rubric that focuses on two aspects: Audience/register/style/language/accuracy (abbreviated as 'L' on assessment tasks), as well as task achievement/communication/content/layout/format (abbreviated as 'C' on assessment tasks). While the rubric is explicit in terms of what is expected of a particular written piece and how to assess it, whether the learners have any idea what the marks on their written pieces mean remains a concern. The teachers who were interviewed informed me that they do not explain this marking rubric to the learners as it contains too much jargon. Their point of view was that teaching learners the meaning of the rubric when they do not understand the terms was of no use. If learners are not informed about what is expected of them, how can they be expected to perform well? It can be further assumed that even if the marking rubric was given to learners and explained to them, they still would not understand the jargon being used. This is a clear indication of how assessment is not transparent in these two classrooms.

In addition, feedback is also expected to be detailed, meaningful, comprehensive and positive, while identifying strengths and weaknesses (Brown, 2005, and Jones, 2005). Because hardly any written feedback was given to the learners regarding their written work, it can be said that feedback is not being used effectively in these classrooms. Effective feedback, according to Brown (2005), helps with learners' metacognition and deeper thinking. Without it, we are simply producing learners who have a surface-level understanding of the work they are producing. Also, it is posited by Jones (2005) that effective feedback provides learners with motivation to succeed as they are well aware of what is expected of them and how they can improve. It can be assumed then, that learners who do not receive detailed (as seems to be the case in these findings), effective feedback and instead merely receive a mark are less likely to

be motivated to do well in the next writing piece, simply because they have no idea how to improve.

During classroom observations for both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, it was noted that many questions were asked. These were mostly to check for learners' prior knowledge, which once again relates to Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding a learner through a concept by checking for what they already know:

- “The descriptive paragraph, you remember that from last year, right?” – Teacher 1, Observation 1
- “What do you remember about the friendly letter from a year ago?” – Teacher 1, Observation 2
- “What did we do (this term)?” – Teacher 2, Observation 1
- “What can you remember about the formal letter? What else?” – Teacher 2, Observation 2.

These types of questions appeared to be quite surface-level, with the teacher merely checking for knowledge by asking several closed questions (those with fixed, “right” or “wrong” answers). While these questions do in fact, according to Vygotsky, have value, by merely asking these types of questions and not expanding on different types of questioning techniques, teachers may find it difficult to assess whether a concept is truly understood or not. At the same time, Jones (2005) does mention that oral feedback has its merits as it provides instant feedback, which means that learners will immediately know whether, according to the teacher, they are on the right track or not.

In all four lessons that were observed, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 made it clear to the learners what the task to be undertaken in that lesson would be, as well as what they had to do and what they had to submit. In other words, the learning objective was explained clearly:

- “As a pair, you will have to choose one of the following topics... this is a short piece, a descriptive paragraph, 120 to 150 words.” – Teacher 1, Observation 1
- “I would like you to write a letter to... the principal. I’d like one page from a pair of you. This is a short piece because it’s 120 to 150 words.” – Teacher 1, Observation 2
- “Remember you are going to write between 250 and 300 words, so you can already divide that into 5 paragraphs, so that’s 50 per paragraph.” – Teacher 2, Observation 1
- “I have notes for you. Okay, here are your topics.” – Teacher 2, Observation 2

Thereafter, the only part of the assessment for the learning process that was observed was that of undertaking the task required of the teacher. Teacher feedback was given but as mentioned previously, only marks were provided and very little commentary was given. On one occasion, learners were provided with an example of a writing piece, in this case, that of an argumentative essay:

- “Right let’s now have a look at this person’s argument.” – Teacher 2, Observation 1.

However, while they did discuss the examples, learners were not provided with the opportunity to use particular criteria to assess the examples given. It appears then, that in terms of assessment of the learners’ work, there are many missed opportunities by the teachers. Learning is not learner-centred and as a result, learners cannot feel that they are in charge of or responsible for their own work. Learners are not being empowered. Additionally, learners are not being told:

- 1) What is the aim of the learning?
- 2) Why do they need to learn it?
- 3) Where are they in terms of achieving the aim?
- 4) How can they achieve the aim?

For Jones (2005), these aspects are essential to improving the quality of learning. Peer and self-assessment, which both Black and William (2005) and Jones (2005) mention are key components in assessment for learning, are non-existent within these classrooms. In terms of lack of peer assessment, learners are being denied an opportunity to discuss the quality of one another's work in a language that is easily understandable and non-threatening – their own peer's language. Self-assessment, according to Jones (2005), is a powerful teaching tool as once learners are able to identify the gaps in their learning, progress in learning occurs.

It can be concluded then, that teachers in this school are simply engaging in assessment *of* learning and not assessment *for* learning. Teachers are simply assessing work in order to grade learners' achievements, instead of assessing in order to advance or improve learners' work.

ii.) Grammar dimension

Another problematic aspect is the apparent viewpoint that grammar exists in isolation from context. This is detrimental to learners as they are made to believe that “good writing” is related to “good grammar”, even though they are not taught about how grammar can be used to help in communicating clearly on paper. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Lazar and Barnaby (2015) show the importance of the role grammar plays in making meaning.

Both teachers appeared to simply identify language errors by means of a comment or an

underlined word or phrase (Appendix G). There were also cases of the teacher sometimes correcting the mistake for the learner. This is similar to Lazar and Barnaby's study of university lecturers. They found that lecturers either simply underlined errors, underlined and corrected errors, or identified errors and wrote notes in the margins.

In both teachers' initial one-on-one interviews, they had many comments to make about learners' grammatical competence. There was mention of sentence structure, spelling, prepositions and pronouns being problematic. It could be assumed from the interview that the teachers understood the importance of grammar, and that they were somewhat aware of the importance of bringing context into the mix:

- “(Learners are) not making the connection between one and the other (grammar and writing).” – Teacher 1
- “They are actually able to do it (answer grammar questions), when it's packaged into grammar, but not when it has to be applied to a certain piece of writing.” – Teacher 1
- “With writing you have to apply everything else that you've learnt... so it's definitely the most difficult part.” – Teacher 2.

However, it is unfortunate to find that the examiners of the Grade 10 and Grade 12 external examinations seem to mirror the sentiments of the traditional way of viewing grammar. Below are the Paper 2 Examiner's Reports from 2014–2016 (Tables 5-7).

Table 5: Grade 12 Ordinary Level Examiner's Reports (*Comments relating to grammar italicised.*)

Comment	Year
Candidates should be encouraged to reconsider their choice of topic and do planning.	2014 2015 2016
Pay more attention to planning.	2014 2015 2016
Too many ideas in one paragraph.	2014 2015
Linking words should be added between paragraphs.	2014 2016
<i>Confusing complex sentences (write more concisely)</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Too many contractions, inappropriate idiomatic expressions, tautology and verbose language</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Frequently used words (that should be discouraged)</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Commonly confused words</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Frequently misspelt words</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Americanisms</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Colloquial language</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Tautology</i>	2014 2015 2016
Continued practice allows candidates to develop writing skills.	2014 2015 2016
Constant revision makes them competent.	2014 2015 2016
Very long, undeveloped paragraphs	2014

Table 6: Grade 12 Higher Level Examiner's Reports (*Comments relating to grammar italicised.*)

Comment	Year
Many essays lacked proper introductions and/or conclusions.	2014
<i>Sentence structure is problematic.</i>	2014
<i>Candidates struggle to express themselves concisely.</i>	2014
<i>Wrong linking words</i>	2014 2015
<i>Avoid the use of SMS language/informal language</i>	2014 2016
<i>Learners struggle to structure their arguments soundly.</i>	2015 2016
<i>Malapropism</i>	2015
<i>Tautology</i>	2015
<i>Avoid contractions</i>	2016
<i>Commonly confused words</i>	2016
<i>Spelling errors</i>	2016
<i>Accuracy of idiomatic expressions</i>	2016
<i>Punctuation</i>	2016
<i>Concord</i>	2016

Table 7: Grade 10 Junior Secondary Examination Examiner's Reports (*Comments relating to grammar italicised.*)

Comment	Year
Choose topic wisely and do planning.	2014 2015 2016
Learn to follow instructions correctly and understand questions very well.	2015 2016
Difficulties in constructing good paragraphs.	2015 2016
Must learn to connect short paragraphs with relevant ideas using linking words.	2015 2016
<i>Inconsistent and improper use of pronouns</i>	2016
<i>Use of verbose language</i>	2014 2016
<i>Not familiar with punctuation marks</i>	2015 2016
<i>Use of colloquial language, verbosity, malapropism, slang, jargon</i>	2016
<i>Contracting of words to be avoided.</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Refrain from excessive or inappropriate use of figurative/emotive language.</i>	2014

	2015 2016
<i>Urge candidates not to use tautology and superfluous expressions.</i>	2014 2015 2016
<i>Uncertainties shown in comparative and superlative forms of adjectives.</i>	2015 2016
<i>Misspellings</i>	2014 2016
<i>Teach and emphasise proper syntax, diction and all other important linguistic aspects</i>	2015 2016
<i>Candidates in the lower grades should already practise the correct structure, style, tone, register, syntax</i>	2015 2016
<i>Serious language errors led to confusion</i>	2016
Each candidate should be provided with a proper written sample of a particular writing piece.	2016
Take cognisance of important international events/improve general knowledge.	2015 2016
Teachers should do role plays, acting, news reporting, general discussions, short orals, debates and continuous writing covering local and global issues.	2016
Teachers must initiate adequate practise on how to write well-structured essays.	2015 2016
Teachers must advise the candidates not to speak colloquial language	2015 2016
<i>Use of clichés</i>	2015
<i>Poor sentence structure</i>	2015
<i>Very long/short sentences</i>	2014
<i>Frequently used words (discourage candidates from using these words)</i>	2014
<i>Commonly confused words</i>	2014
<i>Americanisms</i>	2014

A large majority of the comments given are indeed related to grammar. We cannot place blame on the examiners alone, however. The syllabus states, in as much as it proposes viewing language in a sociocultural way, that learners should be taught grammar in terms of what is accepted in Standard English. Of course, we cannot neglect the importance of grammar in writing, but perhaps what we should be focusing on more is the value of grammar assisting in clarity of communication, and not simply existing as a form of “correctness”.

This relates quite closely to the manner in which teachers were assessing the learners’ work. The correction made on the learners’ work were related to grammar. Teachers noted mistakes in

spelling or sentence correction, for example, and did not appear to be looking at the effectiveness of the written piece as a whole.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the Examiner's Reports is that it is unclear whether examiners view language as important to making meaning or whether the examiners view grammar in isolation. This lack of clarity may be the crux of the problem: if teachers read Examiner's Reports but do not fully understand what is expected of them, how can teachers improve their pedagogical skills in order to ensure the success of their learners in the writing component of the examination?

PART TWO

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: What writing practices do these pedagogic practices appear to engender?

In order to determine whether or not the learners were successful in achieving what was expected of them in the text type they wrote, I will use Rose's 2008 work on genres, previously discussed in Chapter 2. In addition, the *RDW Formats for English First Language* (2016) booklet that is made available to all English first-language teachers will be used as a reference. Finally, the Examiner's Reports from external Grade-10 and -12 examinations, from the years 2014–2016, will be examined to determine whether the mistakes appearing in these external examinations are similar to what is appearing in Grade-9 learners' written work.

All of the samples of learners' own work, together with my own annotations thereof, appear in Appendix G.

Text Type 1.1: Descriptive paragraph (recount)

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the descriptive paragraph falls under the “recount” genre, according to Rose (2008). In most of the learners’ work, the orientation part of this genre was present, in the form of an introductory sentence:

- “Our favourite restaurant is Spur.” – Learner’s work 1.1(a)
- “My kitchen at home is big and tidy.” – Learner’s work 1.1(c)
- “As I stand there at my hospital bed...” – Learner’s work 1.1(f)

In one case, a learner built up to an orientation, or introductory, sentence. This learner described a restaurant and only at the end did she mention:

- “...in this extremely romantic, yet chaotic restaurant” – Learner’s work 1.1(e).

One can then assume that learners understood how to orientate their writing in the correct setting according to the topic that was chosen.

6. DESCRIPTIVE COMPOSITION

A descriptive essay contains writing that creates a vivid impression of the topic. It captures the author's experience of person, place, or thing into words by appealing to the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

APPROACHING THE DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

Show them

Don't tell your reader that something is large. If you do, their natural reaction is "I'll be the judge of that - large is the smallest size at the supermarket!" So tell them that it is the size of three soccer stadiums rolled into one. Make your descriptive essays build pictures in their minds.

Topic Sentence of a Descriptive Essay:

The TOPIC SENTENCE usually includes the topic and conveys the main impression.

(topic) (main impression)

Ex: My English professor's office is a complete mess.

1. **Find a main impression.** To create an effective main impression, think about your topic and what is the quality that best describes it. Ask yourself, "What do I think of first when I think of this topic? What are the first words that come to mind? What is the lasting impression I want my readers to have about the topic?"

2. **Be personal.** English descriptive essays are meant to be described as you yourself see things, so try to form a bridge between the way you see it and your reader's mind.

3. **Use vivid details.** Use concrete details and images, via the senses, to support your main impression of the topic. State how it looks, sounds, feels, smells, or tastes. Try to show rather than tell by avoiding abstract or general words. For example, instead of writing, 'Jack sat under a dead tree', change the abstract word 'dead' to make it concrete: 'Jack sat under a bare, brittle tree whose bark was rotting off.'

Figure 6: Descriptive Essays (*RDW Formats for English First Language*, p. 15)

Describing a scene

Your aim in descriptive writing is to convey to your reader as vividly as you can the character of the subject you are describing. The reader should be allowed to see, smell, taste, touch and hear what you are describing.

Words are the only tool at your disposal. Choose them carefully to provide the most vivid and realistic impression possible.

Even in narrative essays in which the emphasis is on action rather than description, characterisation relies heavily on good descriptive writing as well as careful observation.

You can either give a purely objective description (i.e., you merely describe the physical appearance of the place) or a subjective description. In the latter, you would include your own feelings and impressions. But whether you are conveying fact or impressions, it is useful to remember the following points:

1. Describe what you see in the foreground and background, emphasizing the features which appear most striking.
2. Bring out the atmosphere of the place by using appropriate **adjectives** and **nouns**, e.g., a tranquil scene, the calmness of the sea, a riotous gathering.
3. Add interesting details to the description by using **contrasts**, e.g., the sea and the sky, the mountains and the plains, the fields and the huts.
4. Arrange your details in a **logical order**. (background to foreground or vice versa)
5. Write a topic sentence to sum up the main idea of your paragraph.
6. Use a variety of descriptive words (adjectives and adverbs) and phrases. Do not overdo it, though.
7. Use figurative expressions like **similes**, **personifications**, **onomatopoeia**, **metaphors** etc., but use them sparingly. Should you use figurative expressions in almost every line, the reader might concentrate more on them instead of being emerged in the description.
8. Try to use **all your senses**: smell, taste, sight, touch and sound.

Figure 7: Descriptive Essays (*RDW Formats for English First Language*, p. 18)

In addition to orientation, events were mostly recorded in order, some using vivid details and sensory images, as required by the *RDW Formats for English First Language* booklet (Figs 7, 8).

- “bright red colours...flames singing our succulent steak... crispy, juicy and spicy... steak persuaded our taste buds... bright, sweet, cool and delicious” – Learner’s work 1.1(a)
- “beeping of the machine... deafening silence” – Learner’s work 1.1(b)

- “braided emerald coloured basket” – Learner’s work 1.1 (d)

While these are good examples of both recount and descriptions according to the literature above, there were some parts that were problematic. There appears to be difficulty in developing the concept of a topic sentence, where there is one idea per paragraph. This is evident in a few examples:

- “We took our first bit all the talking and toddlers screaming and playing drougned away while the juice steak persuaded our taste buds.” – Learner’s work 1.1 (a)

In the example above, one can see how the learner began with describing a bite of steak, the noise surrounding them, and then in the same paragraph began writing about the dessert portion of the meal. One learner wrote her entire description in a single paragraph. The ideas appeared to be mismatched:

- “As I pressed the round button of the elevator. I could smell the medicine.” – Learner’s work 1.1(b)

In one paragraph, this learner moved from the outside of the room, to the doctor’s entering the room, to a conversation between the doctor and the learner’s parents. This is problematic because in the Examiner’s Reports for Grade 10 and 12, weakness in paragraph structure is mentioned:

- “Too many ideas in one paragraph” – Grade 12 Ordinary Level Examiner’s Report (2014, 2015)
- “Difficulties in constructing good paragraphs” – Grade 10 JSC Examiner’s Report (2015, 2016)

We are seeing here that problems are manifesting themselves in Grade 9 and perpetuating themselves in the later grades, which is worrying.

Text Type 1.2: Friendly letter (anecdote)

The anecdotal style of a friendly letter, according to Rose (2008), requires orientation as in the previous text type, a remarkable event, together with problems and solutions.

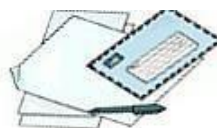
Once again, learners were able to orientate their writing in the form of an introductory paragraph:

- “No words can express how grateful I am for granting my class, 9B, a day off.” – Learner’s work 1.2(a)
- “I would like to thank you...” – Learner’s work 1.2(b)
- “We would like to thank you...” – Learner’s work 1.2(c)
- “I would like to show my gratitude...” – Learner’s work 1.2(d)
- “I am addressing this letter to thank you...” – Learner’s work 1.2(e)
- “We would like to thank you...” – Learner’s work 1.2(f)

This aligns with the *RDW Formats for English First Language* booklet quite well, in the sense that the paragraph begins with a reason for why the letter is being written (Fig. 9).

1. LETTERS

a. FRIENDLY LETTER



Follow instructions
carefully regarding date
and who you are.

(sender's address)
P O Box 9086
Kleine Kuppe
Windhoek
*Namibia
20 July 2012

XX

Dear John *(always written against the margin)*

My dear John *(In the case of closer relationships, a more friendly greeting is appropriate)*

Dearest Uncle John *(no punctuation after the salutation)*

XX

Introduction: never ever start with "I am writing to tell you" or "How are you?"

Do not use clichés.

Refer to previous communication.

Body: needs careful thought as it contains all that one wishes to say.

Each new topic dealt with in the letter requires a new paragraph.

A line is left open between paragraphs.

Tone is important as it expresses the writer's feelings towards the reader, e.g. friendly, respectful, affectionate, cheerful or annoyed tone.

Never use slang as it reflects a lack of respect. Colloquial language may be used at intervals.

Express yourself in a straightforward way to make communication effective.

Use questions and exclamations occasionally for a conversational tone, which makes the style relaxed and informal.

Closing Paragraph: maintain links; look forward to a response.

Conclusion: the close of the letter should match the greeting and it appears next to the margin.

XX

Your friend

Mary

There is no punctuation in the close.

Yours sincerely/ Yours affectionately

The signature should be handwritten even if the rest of the letter is typed.

Only one's first name is used at the end of a friendly letter.

*Namibia is used in the address only when writing to somebody in another country.!



Figure 8: Friendly Letters (RDW Formats for English First Language, p. 2)

Learners were all able to make mention of the remarkable event, which in this case was the Dragon Boat Race, and the subsequent day off they received as they won the junior category.

Most learners divided their ideas into paragraphs clearly, with one idea per paragraph:

- "Our class was extremely excited...."

- We were overjoyed and extremely surprised...
- Therefore, we would like to thank you once again..." – Learner's work 1.2(f)

However, what appeared to be lacking was a conversational, friendly tone. This may be attributed to the fact that, as mentioned previously in the first section of this chapter, the instruction to write a friendly letter to a person in a position of power such as the principal might have been slightly confusing.

In a similar way to Text Type 1.1, problems were apparent in paragraphing. One learner wrote one paragraph consisting of two very distinct points:

- "The day off was well deserved and we enjoyed it. It was surely used to its full potential (idea1)... I supported the team... (idea 2). The children that was there at the event..." – Learner's work 1.2(b)

Yet again, we have evidence of how paragraphing is a difficulty which learners are facing in their writing.

Text Type 2.1: Argumentative essay (exposition)

Argumentative essays fall under the genre of exposition, according to Rose (2008). The expositions consist of a thesis, arguments with examples, and concludes with reiteration of the most important points.

The *RDW Formats for English First Language* booklet views argumentative essays in a very similar manner (Figs 10, 11).

8. ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

Introduction

The introduction should be designed to attract the reader's attention and give her/him an idea of the essay's focus.

1. Begin with an attention grabber.

The attention grabber you use is up to you, but here are some ideas:

- Startling information
This information must be true and verifiable, and it doesn't need to be totally new to your readers. It could simply be a pertinent fact that explicitly illustrates the point you wish to make.
If you use a piece of startling information, follow it with a sentence or two of elaboration.
- Anecdote
An *anecdote* is a story that illustrates a point.
Be sure your anecdote is short, to the point, and relevant to your topic. This can be a very effective opener for your essay, but use it carefully.
- Dialogue
An appropriate dialogue does not have to identify the speakers, but the reader must understand the point you are trying to convey. Use only two or three exchanges between speakers to make your point.
Follow dialogue with a sentence or two of elaboration.
- Summary Information
A few sentences explaining your topic in general terms can lead the reader gently to your thesis. Each sentence should become gradually more specific, until you reach your thesis.

BODY

Topic sentence: This is the statement you want to make.

The death penalty has a deterrent effect on crime in our society.

Elaboration/Explanation:

Continue with the thought of your topic sentence. You can also explain what you meant to say in the topic sentence. (However, never start your explanation with 'I mean...')



Figure 10: Argumentative Essays (*RDW Formats for English First Language*, p. 28)

Less criminals will commit murder as they will receive the ultimate punishment: the death penalty. In general, people (even murderers) fear death, therefore it will deter these criminals from even contemplating such an evil deed.

Evidence:

Here you need to provide exact evidence, like statistics, names of people or other numbers or facts.

Since the death penalty was introduced in Mongatoe, the murder rate has decreased from 20 murders annually to only 4. This surely shows the efficacy of the death penalty.

Your body paragraph might then look like this:

In addition, the death penalty has a deterrent effect on crime in our society. It is proven that fewer criminals will commit murder as they will receive the ultimate punishment: the death penalty. In general, people (even murderers) fear death, therefore it will deter these criminals from even contemplating such an evil deed. To illustrate: since the death penalty was introduced in Mongatoe, the murder rate has decreased from 20 murders annually to only 4. This surely shows the efficacy of the death penalty.

Conclusion

The conclusion brings closure to the reader, summing up your points or providing a final perspective on your topic.

All the conclusion needs is three or four strong sentences which do not need to follow any set formula. Simply review the main points (being careful not to restate them exactly) or briefly describe your feelings about the topic. Even an anecdote can end your essay in a useful way.

It is, therefore, clear that the death penalty is an extremely effective means of punishment and should consequently be introduced in Namibia.

Figure 10: Argumentative Essays (*RDW Formats for English First Language*, p. 29)

The thesis, arguments and reiteration in Rose's work coincide with the booklet's introduction, body paragraphs as well as conclusion, respectively. In addition, most learners were indeed able to identify the crux of their argument in the form of a thesis, or an introductory paragraph:

- "I believe all 'booze' and drinks should be prohibited under all circumstances..." – Learner's work 2.1(a)
- "We agree that the statement, smoking is a selfish, dirty, unhealthy habit should be banned." – Learner's work 2.1(b)

- “Therefore we agree that alcohol should be banned from stadiums...” – Learner’s work 2.1(c)
- “Violence on screens, in my opinion, does not harm our 9th graders.” – Learner’s work 2.1(d).

Learners were also aware of the use of transitions or linking words to help with the flow of their ideas, which is an issue that is mentioned in the Examiner’s Reports:

- “Linking words should be added between paragraphs.” – Grade 12 Ordinary Level Examiner’s Report (2014, 2016)
- “(The use of) wrong linking words.” – Grade 12 Higher Level Examiner’s Report (2014, 2015)
- “(Learners) must learn to connect short paragraphs with relevant ideas using linking words.” – Grade 10 JSC Examiner’s Report (2015, 2016)

However, Examiner’s Reports show that paragraphing, once again, is problematic:

- “Too many ideas per paragraph.” – Grade 12 Ordinary Level Examiner’s Report (2014, 2015)
- “Very long, undeveloped paragraphs.” – Grade 12 Ordinary Level Examiner’s Report (2014)
- “Learners struggle to structure their arguments soundly.” – Grade 12 Higher Level Examiner’s Report (2015, 2016)
- “Difficulties in constructing good paragraphs” – Grade 10 JSC Examiner’s Report (2015, 2016)

In addition to the above, the learners’ own work shows severe deficiencies in the ability to develop a paragraph coherently, with only one idea per paragraph:

- “People who drink tend to suffer from liver problems and extreme addiction (idea 1) which sometimes leads to suicide (idea 2). People also tend to use violence (idea 3) when they are drunk... car accidents can happen (idea 4)...” – Learner’s work 2.1(a)
- “Smoking is selfish (idea 1)... it causes conflicts (idea 2) between people... businesses put up signs to tell people no smoking allowed (idea 3)... one should just ban smoking (idea 4).” – Learner’s work 2.1(b)

Text Type 2.2: Formal letter (anecdote)

Similar to the friendly letter mentioned in section 1.2, a formal letter may also be considered an anecdote. Learners were clearly able to orientate their writing by writing a short, introductory sentence:

- “I am writing this letter to inform you that I have experienced very bad service at your restaurant.” – Learner’s work 2.2(a)
- “I am writing this letter to inform you...” – Learner’s work 2.2(b)
- “I’m here to complain about the change...” – Learner’s work 2.2(c)
- “I wrote this letter to express my disappointment...” – Learner’s work 2.2(e)
- “I am writing this letter to express my disappointment...” – Learner’s work 2.2(f).

The remarkable events were described in body paragraphs, where learners either explained the details of the bad service they received at the restaurant, or explained why they disagreed with the Traffic Department’s new implementation:

- “On October 16th, I ordered a sushi plate... found a scarlet, plastic fingernail. When I called the waiter... received a rather rude response... when the chef arrived, he explained to me that he could not prepare a new plate of sushi for me, and that I could

merely take out the nail, and eat the food. I was utterly disgusted... I was forced to leave the restaurant.” – Learner’s work 2.2(b)

- “People can’t start to drive at twenty-one... children should have dependence and drive around...” – Learner’s work 2.2(c).

A solution was offered at the end of most learners’ conclusions:

- “I highly encourage you to talk to the people who work under you and tell them that customers are their main source of income and that we deserve respect.” – Learner’s work 2.2(f).

The introductions, body paragraph details and conclusions correlated with what the *RDW Formats for English First Language* states:

(i) LETTER OF COMPLAINT



(sender's address)

P.O. Box 4567

Windhoek

*Namibia

20 July 2012

XX

The Chief Executive Officer *(Recipient's title: check instructions thoroughly.)*

GAME

P.O. Box 89010

Windhoek

Namibia

XX

Dear Sir/Madam

XX

Subject line/Heading carries concise formulation of your complaint. *(The subject line begins at the margin and must be underlined.)*

XX

Introduction: what are you complaining about?

Be concise. Answer the questions: what?, who?, where?, why?, when?, how?.

Body: elaborate on the details that are mentioned in the introduction.

Conclusion: suggestions as to solve the issue/complaint etc.

XX

Yours faithfully

Sign

A. Smith



Be careful : you could be writing this letter as someone else . So do not carelessly sign your name when instructed to do otherwise.

** The tone is formal and although you are complaining and may be annoyed, you must remain formal and polite.*

**Namibia is used in the address only when writing to somebody in another country.*

Figure 11: Letter of Complaint (RDW Formats for English First Language, p. 4)

Overall, it appears that this text type was answered the best out of the four pieces. Learners were able to adhere to the conventions of the text type as laid out by the booklet.

Conclusion

Two concerns have surfaced through the analysis of learners' work, one-on-one interviews with the teachers, classroom observations and analysis of Examiner's Reports:

1. There is a lack of modelling when it comes to particular text-types; and
2. Learners are simply being shown their grammatical errors, without any further engagement.

It has been shown in this chapter how imperative it is that learners are shown what particular text-types look like before they are expected to produce their own. Learners need to be shown how texts are created in terms of their format, diction and style. If text-types are not modelled correctly, learners will most likely be unsuccessful in their attempt at producing a specific text.

The overall concern is that teachers are not using feedback as an effective tool. Teachers are providing very little feedback to the learners other than a mark. Learners cannot be expected to learn from their mistakes if they are not aware of what mistakes they are making. The Examiner's Reports have also been found to be very focused on grammar instead of the overall effectiveness of the text that is being produced.

A concern is also whether or not learners truly understand what the marking rubric's symbols stand for, and whether or not the teachers understand what the Examiner's Reports are focused on.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

The focus of this case study has been to investigate the writing practices of Grade-9 English first-language learners in a selected government school in Namibia. This was done by looking at the phenomenon of writing in two ways: what the teachers are teaching during writing lessons, as well as what the learners are producing as a result of these writing lessons.

In Chapter 1, the need for this investigation was indicated, by focusing on the Grade-10 and Grade- 12 results of previous years and using these as a baseline assessment. In this concluding chapter, findings are tied together and summarised. Suggestions for further studies will also be made.

5.2 Summary of findings

The following research questions guided this case study:

- What are the pedagogic practices that teachers employ to teach writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms?
- What writing practices do these pedagogic practices appear to engender?

The findings discovered regarding each research question will now be discussed in detail.

What are the pedagogic practices that teachers employ to teach writing in Grade-9 English first-language classrooms?

It appeared that teachers were teaching learners how to write in a very superficial manner, i.e. learners were simply learning how to write in a format that is required of them according to the

syllabus. Learners are not being exposed enough to the types of texts they are expected to write. Teachers appear to have run through a single example, if any, of a particular text type and expect learners to produce that same text type. Topics were very rarely related to learners' own life experiences, such as when they were asked to write an argumentative essay on whether or not smoking should be banned entirely. This contradicts Halliday's (1994) and Martin's (2000) mention of the importance of modelling text types for learners, as well as giving them familiar contexts, in order for learners to understand how to reproduce the text type required of them. In addition, genre as rhetoric, which mentions the importance of breaking down barriers when it comes to socio-cultural and economic aspects, tells us that language creates meaning by taking into account social needs and cultural values. It can thus be posited that if topics given to learners are not related to their social or cultural values, they will find it very difficult to make meaning using language. As such, they will not be successful in producing the text-type expected of them.

In addition, lessons consisted mostly of lecture-style presentations, or simple question-answer techniques. This does not allow the teacher an opportunity to establish whether or not learners have grasped the concept behind that particular text type. Simple question-answer teaching techniques where the whole class is not engaged may make it difficult for all the learners in a classroom to succeed. This technique is simply one of assessment *of* learning, where learners are being graded on a particular piece, instead of assessment *for* learning, where they are being taught how to improve their skills.

Grammar is very rarely touched on. While explicit grammar is not the focus of this study, grammar and its ability to help to make meaning are very important. This important aspect of writing seems to have been lacking in the two classrooms which were observed. No language style or type was ever discussed in the lessons observed and as a result, it can be assumed that

learners were not aware of the style of language expected of them in the text type. In addition to the importance of grammar for making meaning are the vague Grade 10 and Grade 12 Examiner's Reports. It is unclear whether or not the examiners are looking at grammar in a very traditional manner, or whether they expect teachers to look at grammar in a more integrated way. This confusion may result in teachers being unaware of what exactly is expected of them.

In addition, assessment for learning was not dealt with in depth. Little feedback was given to learners regarding their work. This begs the question: do learners know what they are getting "wrong" and how to improve on their mistakes if they are not given detailed feedback? Learners are not being taught how to write, they are simply being shown what they are doing wrong. The type of assessment done on these text types was not transparent, nor was it detailed. Jones (2005) mentions that this type of unclear assessment may cause learners to lose motivation to improve. Importantly, learners were not given the opportunity to discover whether or not they were on the correct path of achieving success in that writing piece. Because the feedback given was nearly non-existent (except for three comments in 24 writing pieces), learners are unaware of the standard expected of them and ways in which to improve.

What writing practices do these pedagogic practices appear to engender?

Learners mostly were able to follow a particular structure as required of them according to their teachers. Their writing resembled some form of paragraphing, with a beginning and an end.

However, how to order information appeared to be a challenge, as most learners struggled to adhere to the concept of one idea per paragraph. Many learners listed several different ideas in one paragraph, resulting in a fragmented, confusing piece of writing. In addition, learners also were not able to determine what style of language to use: many of the formal pieces of writing appeared informal, and vice versa. This relates strongly to the previous mention of the importance of

teaching learners how grammar can be used to make meaning.

Overall, it can be determined that teachers may not have the tools necessary to teach learners how to write correctly and carefully, and learners are not being given the tools to succeed either.

5.3 Suggestions for further study

This study focused only on the writing component, or Paper 2, of the English first-language syllabus. It was mentioned previously how we cannot assume that Paper 2 is the only place in the syllabus that requires knowledge of writing. It would be interesting to expand on this study by focusing on the common thread of writing across all three examination papers: Reading & Directed Writing, Writing, and Literature. This study would perhaps be able to show us how the challenges of writing present themselves across all aspects of the curriculum in Namibia.

Another further study could be to look at the teaching of writing in all its processes: the initial lesson where teachers teach the text type, the lessons where learners actually write the text type in class, as well as the lessons after the work has been marked. This type of study could allow us to see whether there are any gaps that also manifest during the physical writing of the text type, as well as the feedback given to the learners after the initial assessment.

Finally, one could perhaps study the power of effective feedback using the concept of assessment for (and not of) learning. Teachers could be taught how this type of feedback can be used in the classroom effectively and a study could be undertaken to discover whether or not learners' writing improves as a result of effective feedback.

5.4 Conclusion

It has been deduced from this study that Paper 2, or the writing component, of examinations are indeed problematic. Teachers are not engaging with texts at a deeper level. Learners, as such, do

not quite know what is expected of them. Teachers should be taught the importance of modelling and socio-cultural aspects of teaching in order to help learners improve their writing ability. In addition, learners must be given effective feedback and marks should be explained to them at length.

The hope of this research is that we are able to take note of the power of Desmond Tutu's words in order to improve our learners' skills:

“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.”

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² pseudonym

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Permission letter to principal

████████████████████ (name of school)

PO Box ██████████

Windhoek

2 June 2017

Dear ██████████ (principal's name)

Request for permission to carry out research at your institution

I am a part-time Masters of Education student in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. For the purpose of my Master's dissertation, I would like to research the challenges Grade 9 learners experience when writing essays for English 1st Language. The tentative title of my research is: "An investigation of the teaching of writing in Grade 9 English First Language classrooms: a case study of a selected government school in Namibia".

I request your permission to involve any one of your English 1st Language Grade 9 teachers and classrooms in my research by conducting one-on-one interviews with the teacher, observing her classroom practice (while recording both video and sound), and analysing some of her learners' work.

I undertake to work ethically with the learners and teacher. I will obtain the written consent of the teacher, all participating learners, as well as that of their parents. I will ensure the anonymity of the school and the participants when I report on my research. In addition, learners and the teacher will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves.

Should you wish, I will make available all of my findings once my Master's dissertation has been submitted.

If you require further input, you are welcome to contact my Master's supervisor, Professor Emmanuel Mggwashu, at e.mggwashu@ru.ac.za. In addition, please feel free to communicate with me at any time should you have any queries or questions about my research. I would value any input you may have.

Yours sincerely

Simone Martins

Student Number: 15M8759

Telephone: +264 81 248 6834

Appendix B: Permission letter to teacher

████████████████████ (name of school)

PO Box ██████████

Windhoek

2 June 2017

Dear ██████████ (teacher's name)

Request for permission to carry out research at your institution

I am a part-time Masters of Education student in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. For the purpose of my Master's dissertation, I would like to research the challenges Grade 9 learners experience when writing essays for English 1st Language. The tentative title of my research is: "An investigation of the teaching of writing in Grade 9 English First Language classrooms: a case study of a selected government school in Namibia".

I have been given permission from your principal to use the school as a research site.

I request your permission to involve you and your Grade 9 English 1st Language class in my research by conducting one-on-one interviews with you, observing your classroom practice (while recording both video and sound), and analysing some of your learners' work.

I undertake to work ethically with you. I will ensure your anonymity when I report on my research. In addition, you will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to you.

Should you wish, I will make available all of my findings once my Master's dissertation has been submitted.

If you require further input, you are welcome to contact my Master's supervisor, Professor Emmanuel Mggwashu, at e.mggwashu@ru.ac.za. In addition, please feel free to communicate with me at any time should you have any queries or questions about my research. I would value any input you may have.

Yours sincerely

Simone Martins

Student Number: 15M8759

Telephone: +264 81 248 6834

Appendix C: Permission letter to parent/guardian

The Parent/Guardian

_____ (name of school)

Windhoek

2 June 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian

Request for permission for your child to participate in a research study

I am a Master's student at Rhodes University currently undertaking research regarding the challenges of Grade 9 learners when writing in English 1st Language. I have received permission from the principal to use _____ as a research site.

I will be observing several English 1st Language writing lessons while simultaneously recording both video and audio material. Your child's essays may be used in the research to analyse any of the challenges that arise with writing.

Both the school and your child's identity will remain anonymous throughout the research process. I undertake to work ethically with your child and she/he will be free to withdraw from the research at any time.

If you give permission for your child to participate in this research, please complete the declaration below and return it to the English 1st Language teacher, who will hand it to me.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on +264 81 248 6834 should you have any queries regarding this research and/or your child's participation in it.

Yours faithfully

Simone Martins

DECLARATION

I _____ (full names of parent/guardian) hereby confirm that I understand the content of this document and the nature of this research. I give permission for my child to participate in the research.

Signature of Parent

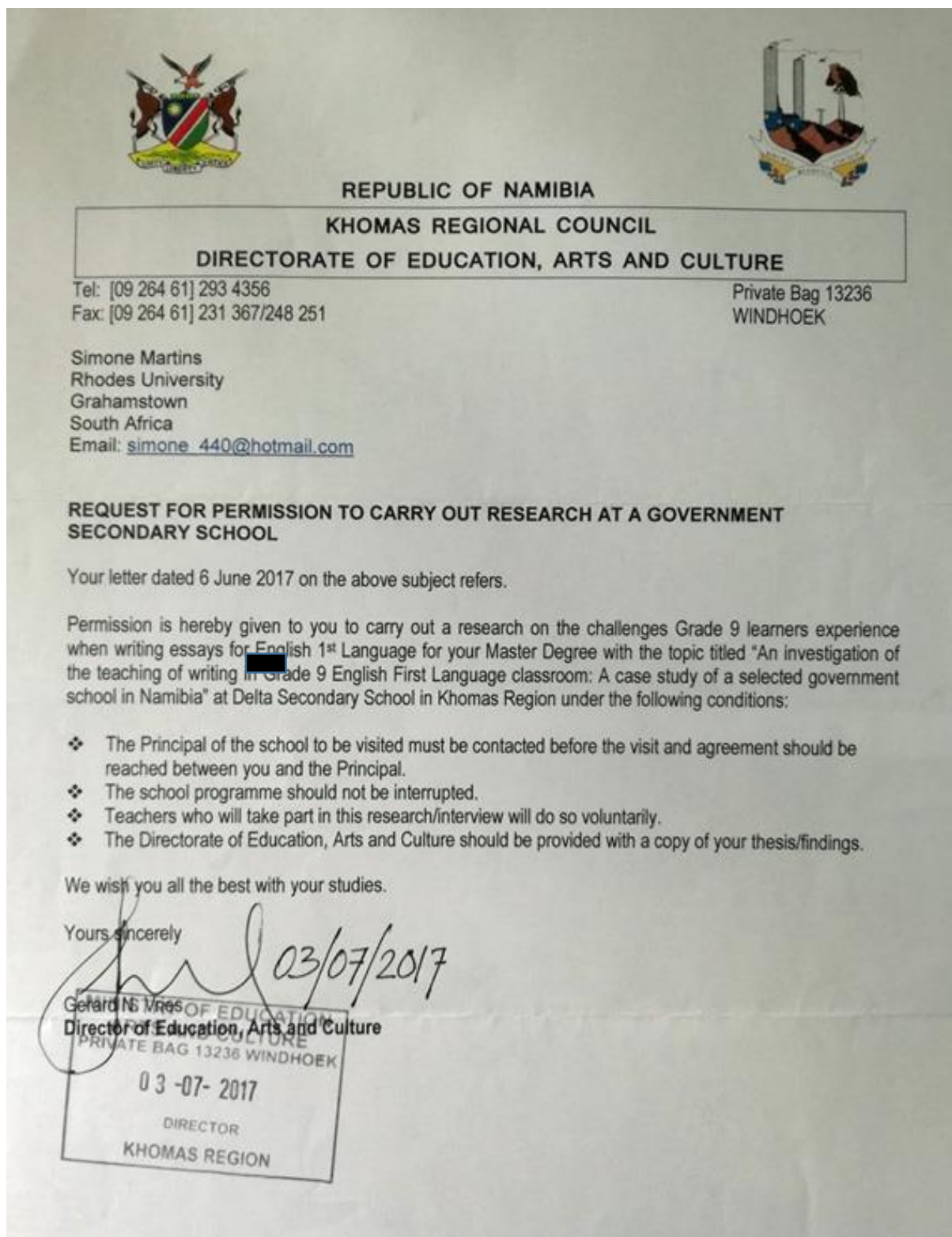
Date

Signature of Learner

Date

Name of Learner

Appendix D: Approval letter from Khomas Regional Director



Appendix E: Interview Transcripts

Initial Interview: Participant No. 1 (5 July 2017)

Interviewer: In your view, what role does a learner's ability to write play in accessing the Grade 9 Curriculum successfully?

Participant: Obviously the learner has to be able to write to make sense of what is read, that is, in reaction to what is being read. The learners' interpretation of texts. Those can be discussed orally of course, but it's different to discuss something orally and then to put these thoughts onto paper. Being able to make the switch between spoken and written language is important. They all speak very well if they're given the chance to express themselves. But as soon as you make them sit down and write whatever it is that they just told you five minutes ago, it's a different story. I feel they have to have the ability to express themselves, what they say orally, in the appropriate written form. I actually think that writing is a life skill.

Interviewer: So you think it's broader than simply the curriculum? There are broader implications?

Participant: I should hope so, actually. I sometimes worry that there are learners who are exceptionally good in oral work and who are excellent debaters, but when they need to argue in an argumentative essay, I'm actually quite shocked at what happens. They cannot make that switch. I wonder what it is, I must be quite honest, I don't know what it is.

Interviewer: Do you think that lack of ability affects their overall mark quite severely?

Participant: Yes, because our current syllabus focuses almost solely on writing. I think that's why I think they need to be able to write. And because of the colloquial language and the written language. They are unable to make that switch, I find. It's a big problem.

Interviewer: As the English first-language teacher, what strategies do you use to teach writing?

Participant: I try to make it accessible to them. Then, when you actually write letters of complaint, for instance, you tell them they must be serious but not threatening. Firstly – put it in perspective – why are you actually writing these pieces? You will make them distinguish between formal and informal language. What is used where. In a letter of complaint, you write in a formal manner, and a diary entry in a less formal manner. Those things you could discuss. It depends on the vocabulary you're supposed to use. That's where contractions come in; no contractions if it's formal and contractions if it's less formal. If I do see if there's a problem, I try and incorporate a grammar lesson in between the writing, and then get back to the original plan. In the primary school, English is compartmentalised. The grammar is in one drawer and essay writing is another, but in Grade 8, you have to make the connection and apply. If the learner does not apply that knowledge... It's strange, if you tell the learners to fill in the blanks they'll get 90%, but if you use the same register in a grammar test and apply it to an essay, they will lose it. The connection... It's like the synapse is not working. I try to identify the gaps before they start writing. And then after I've marked, I will try to focus on the individual problems. And then work something out from there, if it has not sunk in, or there's a new problem that you weren't aware of before. But the classes are so big, a lot of things are lost.

Interviewer: What would you identify as the strengths and challenges in your approach to teaching writing to Grade 9 learners?

Participant: Learner numbers are of course a problem. There's this constant noise in the classroom. I manage to keep them relatively quiet but there's a constant chatting. I don't know if it's an attention deficit or because of learner numbers that they can't concentrate. And because of learner numbers, it's difficult to give individual attention. There are some weaker learners who I think would be able to grasp it if they had more attention. Trying to compartmentalise, and not making the connection between the one and the other. Also, the difference between colloquial and formal language. I try and explain to them, "I don't expect you to speak formal language to your friends, but when you enter these four walls, please try. At a funeral, you dress accordingly. So when you speak, you assume a certain register". I think for some that is not quite so clear. The strengths... I think trying to identifying the challenges before they arise.

Interviewer: Do you think that resources play a role in terms of whether a learner writes well or not?

Participant: Yes and no. Learners copy essays from the internet, word for word. They all get zero. Media and all that is a good thing, but they are so swamped by it that they lose the ability to find answers within themselves. Or just to speak to their parents over dinner. Of course the answer is on the internet. So I think they don't have any faith in their own ability any more, which might also be lost in the process, because they are swamped by the media. But of course, I'd love to have a smartboard, say when teaching literature or certain eras in English, to make it more accessible, but I think sometimes I'm quite glad to have a blackboard and chalk and write something on the board.

Interviewer: How do you think that helps them?

Participant: They enjoy writing on the board themselves, to literally stand there and stand in front of the class. Also, to copy it and not just hand out page after page. Sometimes I make a mistake which is good, so they can see where things can go wrong. When they watch something, everything seems to be right, which is what I'm so afraid of. There's nothing wrong with using the internet and increasing their knowledge, but they can't switch off the internet and say, "I'll remember this and use it in my essay." They copy it instead. I think the use of the internet really needs to be monitored. That's imperative. You can't just switch on your smartboard and use it as a babysitter for your class.

Interviewer: Are there any aspects of writing you feel your learners struggle with the most? Please explain.

Participant: Overly long sentences, run-on sentences interrupted by a comma. I don't know whether that's sentence structure or punctuation. Maybe both? They're actually taught prepositions incorrectly. However, when I make them do corrections, they keep making the same mistakes. The problem with the writing is words like "where" and "were", but I think that's a problem with English being used incorrectly in the media. "This" and "these" – I can't differentiate between learners' words. It's these almost minor details that lead to bigger mistakes. "Where" and "were", "this" and "these"... They hear it incorrectly from their parents also and then they use it incorrectly. And partially, I think, it's been taught incorrectly.

Terribly long sentences. Otherwise, because we have many German learners, they often use the wrong sentence structure, but that is something I can address. And other language groups have other language problems. It just these mistakes that have become so ingrained in “Namlish”, I wonder if we can get rid of them.

Interviewer: Which strategies have you employed to enable your learners overcome their struggles in these aspects?

Participant: I try to explain the rule and then they answer correctly. But again, you give them a grammar test and they answer it perfectly, but as soon as you ask them to apply it, it's as though nothing works. It's the application thereof that I'm worried about. They understand the rule. It's a rule they know and they tell me exactly what it is. I bring it up again and again, but they make the same mistake. When you have a descriptive piece, for instance, I try to read them a piece and tell them that shorter sentences are much more powerful. I can take a piece and hand out and ask them how long the sentences are and what they express and how much they describe. This is how I try to make them apply it. I make them copy that style of writing. But once again, they get carried away when they actually should be applying it. I give them exercises like, “How can we shorten these sentences without losing any information?”, those types of exercises. They are actually able to do it, when it's packaged into grammar, but not when it has to be applied to a certain piece of writing.

Initial Interview: Participant No. 2 (6 July 2017)

Interviewer: In your view, what role does a learner's ability to write play in accessing the Grade-9 Curriculum successfully?

Participant: For most learners, English is their second or third language, which I think has a negative impact on them accessing the curriculum successfully. The fact that it is the medium of instruction from Grade 4 impacts them a lot. The learners have to be able to write in all the different areas of learning in the curriculum. Writing also links up to the other subjects.

Interviewer: Do you think that the skills that they learn in their writing lessons translates to the other subjects?

Participant: Definitely. Also what they learn in the other subjects can help them in the English class. In History, there are a lot of terms, in Geography too, terms that they can use in their writing.

Interviewer: Do you see them using that information from other subjects in English?

Participant: Yes, yes I do. Not only the writing, but the orals too.

Interviewer: As the English first-language teacher, what strategies do you use to teach writing?

Participant: 50% of answering any question correctly is understanding the question, so that's the first thing I do. I make sure the learners understand what it is that they have to do. Also, they need to know the different types of writing (descriptive, narrative, argumentative) and then when they get the question paper, how to identify what type of writing it is that they have to do. I also advise them to choose a topic they can relate to and when I do the teaching of the lesson, I usually slow down my speech and I try to use short sentences. I try to use as many mediums as possible to convey the information, for example, oral, written, videos. I also spend a lot of time on building vocabulary. I also try to divide the task into smaller units, for example,

I will concentrate on the introduction in one piece of writing; on another I will concentrate on the body and topic sentences and sentence structure and when I do the marking, I specifically look at that also. I'll put the emphasis on the conclusion on another type of writing again. I think this helps a bit.

Interviewer: With the small sections, do you tell the learners that you'll be concentrating on that?

Participant: No, I don't. Every time I tell them what they must do, they will only focus on what I tell them I'll mark.

Interviewer: With so many learners, do you find it easier to focus on a section at a time?

Participant: Yes, I do. When I hand back their essays, I tell them what common mistakes were made so then everybody can hear what they did wrong.

Interviewer: You mentioned that you explain everything in shorter sentences. Why do you make that decision?

Participant: Because I feel once you start using long sentences and you stretch everything out, they just don't concentrate and they just drift off. But if it's short, they actually listen.

Interviewer: Do you think the multimedia helps the learners? Is it necessary to have it? To what extent does it help?

Participant: At this stage, learners remember something more when they see it, whereas when I speak, they're not as interested. When they hear somebody else speak and they can even see something, then they will remember it.

Interviewer: How often do you see that learners misinterpret the question?

Participant: This is really a struggle. Learners tend to drift off. It's a descriptive, and then they write an argumentative. It happens often. It is a problem.

Interviewer: What would you identify as the strengths and challenges in your approach to teaching writing to Grade-9 learners?

Participant: The strength of the video I use. If they see something, they will remember it better. I always try to choose topics the learners can relate to. Those are my strengths. Then they can write better. And breaking down the task into smaller units is also one of my strengths. I feel if I only talk about the introduction, something sticks. And the next lesson, I will talk about the introduction again, but I won't put as much emphasis on it, then they hear it again. Eventually, it must stick. And the challenges? Learners have difficulties to write about current events happening because of a lack of knowledge. They don't read enough and they don't know what's going in the world, so they really suffer if they have to write about something that happened recently.

Interviewer: How do you decide what is relatable to the learners?

Participant: I usually look at the age of the learners. With the Grade 10s, for example, I will look at topics like exams coming up, your final exams, so I look at the age. Sometimes you have the classes from Grade 8 to 9, so you start to get to know them. You know they like soccer. You know the girls like music videos. So I try to choose topics I know they will like.

Interviewer: How do you think this helps them with their writing?

Participant: Obviously, they'd know more about it, so they can write more about it, whereas if I tell them to write about farm life, certain kids won't be able to write about it.

Interviewer: Are there any aspects of writing you feel your learners struggle with the most? Please explain.

Participant: Sentence structure. Learners tend to stick to simple sentences. They don't use the other types of sentences. The spelling is a problem for me. I also feel the fact that our learners speak different languages at home. English is not their first language at home so they mix up the spelling of the words. Learners are also lazy to consult the dictionary. They simply do not check their spelling and SMS language also plays a role here. And lastly, creativity. And I think the fact that they don't know about what's going on in the world... they can't be creative. That's where they lack creativity.

Interviewer: Do you think there's any way of overcoming that lack of creativity?

Participant: I think learners should start reading newspapers and listen to the news. They should just read more. That's the only way I think we can solve this problem. Unfortunately we don't have enough time in class to read because we have grammar to concentrate on, literature... There's just not enough time to make learners sit down and tell them, "Okay, now you're going to read this". I think the parents can help us in this aspect. They should see to it that their children read at least half an hour every day, but they just don't bother. I also think learners have so much homework these days, and you still expect them to read, I mean, come on, they just want to go to bed.

Interviewer: Which strategies have you employed to enable your learners overcome their struggles in these aspects?

Participant: What I do after I've marked my learners' work, I will tell them to do their corrections and this is the time the learners can come to me individually. They will ask me, "Ma'am, I don't understand why there's a red line here," and then they sit down and try to do it or what I also do is I take all the papers and I see what common mistakes are made.

Interviewer: So you take their mistakes, try to fix it and hope they apply it?

Participant: Yes. I don't know how many times I have to correct the same mistakes, over and over. I think learners don't go back to their notes. I feel if they just once go back and see what mistakes they did, then they won't do it again, but they don't do it. Also, I think learners throw away the notes or lose the notes. Some of them lose it.

Interviewer: Do you think writing is the most difficult aspect of English?

Participant: Definitely, because if you take grammar, it's something you can learn. But with writing, you have to apply everything else that you've learnt and you have to apply it in the writing, so it's definitely the most difficult part. Reading comes in, grammar comes in.

Appendix F: Lesson transcripts

29-06 Descriptive essay (Text Type 1.1)

Teacher: As you can see we have a visitor today, can you just introduce yourself?

Mrs. Martins: Yes that will be perfect, hi everyone I'm Mrs. Martins. I am a teacher at Windhoek gymnasium and what I'm doing currently other than teaching is I am doing my Master's degree. And part of my Master's degree is basically just looking at Grade 9 and their writing so I'm just going to be watching a few of your lessons this term and next term. Please act completely normal, pretend I am not here, ignore me, I am just a creature at the back so yeah. I'm just here to watch ignore me pay attention to your teacher, I'm just here to learn not to judge anyone, I'm just here to learn as much as I can.

Teacher: Okay before I forget and I will forget, you have your files with you and after the period I just want a few of the narrative essays that you wrote last term, I just want those essays from VARIOUS PUPILS so if you could bring me those after the lesson, you're supposed to have them here in your file after the lesson okay? It's okay if PUPIL is not here, we will just take somebody else. PUPIL where's PUPIL? Can I have yours? No we just want the narrative essay, the long piece that we wrote last term. So let's start. As we said now, we did the long piece, the long piece we did last term was the narrative what can you still remember how do we structure a narrative essay? How do we structure it? Yes?

Pupil 1: It's in third person ma'am, you write it in third person.

Teacher: You write it in third person, what else? What will the structure look like how will you start?

Pupil 2: Introduction

Teacher: Yes you will have your introduction and what do you put into your introduction? Yes, the who, where, when and what. And then you will have your?

Class: Body.

Teacher: The body and then at the end you will have your?

Class: Conclusion.

Teacher: Now today we are going to do a descriptive essay. Descriptive essay is very similar. How will you know if I give you a topic that you have to do a narrative essay. What clue will you have that it must be a narrative essay. If I give you a topic now, how will you know what type of essay you might write.

Pupil 3: in the way that the tense the sentence is like write about something that has happened.

Teacher: Okay that is just the tense that will tell you what tense you must write in remember you must stick to one tense throughout the essay so the topic will just give you an idea of what tense you must use PUPIL 4?

Pupil 4: They tell you to write a story.

Teacher: When they tell you to write a story if you hear narrate or if you hear that write a story but now today we are looking at a descriptive essay which will tell you that you must describe something if you see the topic and it says describe something then you know it must be a descriptive essay. So the descriptive essay follows the show don't tell me method of writing, what do I mean with that? Show, don't tell, PUPIL 5?

Pupil 5: Show emotion.

Teacher: Show emotion, okay, yes.

Pupil 6: Ma'am shouldn't it be like a diary and show emotion and tell what happened.

Teacher: It should show emotion almost.

Pupil 7: It should show feeling?

Teacher: Why are you all stuck on feeling? You must describe but show, don't tell I mean that if I read your essay I must have a picture in my mind I must be able to picture this what you are telling me in my mind so you must be able to draw a picture in the mind of the reader when I read something I want to be able to visualize it when I read it, that is what I mean when I say, show, don't just tell. What is a descriptive essay, when I ask you to write a descriptive essay, I'm asking you to describe a person, you can describe a place, you can describe a memory an experience or an object. It is important to write about something that is vivid to you. What is vivid what I mean by vivid is something that is intense something that is colourful something that is bright. So my advice to you is to always write about something that you have experienced before. If you haven't experienced something before it will be so difficult for you to explain it in detail, but if you've actually been in that place it's much easier if you've done it, it's much easier to write about. I want you to take a look at these two sentences pupil 8 read the first sentence for me.

Pupil 8: I grew tired in the car ride home.

Teacher: PUPIL 5 read the next one.

Pupil 5: I leaned back and rested my head against the headrest, my eyelids began to feel heavy and the headlights shining from the window began to blur in my head.

Teacher: Which one do you prefer?

Class: The second one.

Teacher: The second one, just imagine, I grew tired of the car ride. You can't imagine anything when you read that. It's not specific it's not detailed. But if you read this one, it's much more detailed here. You leaned back, you rested your headrest you can imagine this, your eyelids begin to feel heavy you know when you are tired, what your eyes feel like? And the headlights shining through the window blur in your head. It's very descriptive do you agree? Yes PUPIL 6, did you want to say something? My tip for you when you do a when you do this if that you must use your senses to help you write description. So you must use sight, what do you see? Sound, what do you hear? Taste, what do you taste? Describe what you smell smell smell. Touch what does it feel what do you feel? When you choose your topic it's time to plan. Picture your topic in your mind. Use your five senses and bring the atmosphere of the place using adjectives and nouns write topic sentences, I will explain to you what I mean by each of these now we'll do an example. Use descriptive words like adjectives and adverbs and then last but not least, very important, you must make use of figurative language, personification and this is the most difficult part. Personification, similes and metaphors we did this I think last week. Do you still remember what is personification?

Pupil 9: When you give inanimate objects human characteristics like the smiling sun.

Teacher: Yes, a simile what is that? PUPIL you don't know? Okay, anyone else? Yes, try.

Pupil 10: It's a... it's a direct comparison.

Teacher: Using as or like and a metaphor is when you compare two things without using as or like. You already had trouble with this last term. Can you now see how things add up, how they join in whatever you learn in grammar, you must be able to use it in writing this. We giving you that picture, see how we're using it now in your writing so everything that you learnt you are using now. Let me make an example imagine that you are imagine that you are selling cars you are a sales person I walk in. You are the sales person. Hi ma'am I would like to buy your car. What would you ask me?

Class: What's your price? What's your budget?

Teacher: Yes?

Pupil 11: What type of car do you like?

Teacher: Yes, you will ask me what kind of car do I want. DO you want a sports car, do you want a truck, do you want a new car do you want a second hand car so this is out detail comes out you must be specific you must give details. Quickly have a look at this picture here. Now I give you a topic, PUPIL 12 what do you think what is the topic here? What must you write about?

Pupil 12: I think we would have to write about...

Teacher: What would the topic be? The island, that would be the topic the island you would have to write about the island but now, what about the island? Yes?

Pupil 13: The disaster.

Teacher: Yes the disaster, describe this disaster and then this is what you must do now you must describe the disaster that happened on the island remember I said we must use our senses, what are our senses again? See, what you hear, smell, feel and taste. Imagine that you could just you must just think a little bit outside of the box don't just picture this picture that that you have now. Think further. Remember it's a hurricane and what do you think what will that island look like after the hurricane?

Class: Disastrous.

Teacher: What do you see as you step off of the plane? What do you see? You can't just tell me, you need a noun and you need an adjective yes?

Pupil 14: Buildings and people and buildings.

Teacher: Okay, you said buildings what buildings?

Class: (Collection of answers.)

Teacher: Broken houses okay what do you hear?

Pupil 14: Falling bodies and buildings.

Teacher: You came there after everything was done. People screaming, people crying. What do you think what would you smell? Burnt houses, the sea, dead fish. Remember after a hurricane it is very hot, it is very humid, so what will you feel? The heat, and when you get to an island like this, you will not see any cars moving, there will be silence so you will be able to say that you hear silence because you won't see any cars on the road. The power is out so perhaps when you have a taste or when you drink water , you will say you taste warm water.

Pupil 15: Ma'am, how do you say it is like the wavy water? Like in the ocean in the wshh thingy?

Mrs. Martins: Wavy.

Pupil 15: Wavy, the wavy water? Thank you ma'am.

Teacher: You can basically use any when you structure it this essay so you can please, this is an approach you can use and maybe use your senses and maybe use a paragraph you can say what you see use that as one paragraph, use it as what you hear in one paragraph. But remember what I said, one idea, one paragraph, and you need a topic sentence you need a topic sentence to start your sentence, to start your paragraph and your topic sentence will tell you what your paragraph is about and at the end, you need to conclude, when you conclude I just wrote down it will take too long, you just need to I just wrote down one idea but you need to elaborate on this now. What do you see, you see the use you're the broken houses, you see ash but you must now make use of personification, make use of similes and explain this in detail, each of your senses, as I said you can use any approach you don't have to use this approach but you need structure. You cannot just write, sometimes in your topic heading it will also give you a clue how to structure it. When we come to the conclusion you need to show that you are ending it now. You need to show closure. I have a little video that I quickly want you to take a look at now. (Plays video.)

Teacher: Any questions? Yes?

Pupil 16: Now ma'am that example of a conclusion, isn't the conclusion supposed to be more like...

Teacher: More like longer? No your conclusion can be shorter not too long, but it doesn't have to be too short like two sentences so it can be a little bit, would you like me to give you an example of a conclusion?

Pupil 17: Yes please ma'am.

Teacher: Quickly first your homework, can I please quickly see who will be in the entrepreneurship day because I see you before break so I will only see you after that tomorrow.

Class: Yes/no.

Teacher: So then we can't do it tomorrow? So all I want you to do for me is I made a summary of what we did today if you could just read through it over the weekend I would appreciate it very much, anyone extra today? Did somebody take for PUPIL. You are not going to write this essay at home. On the first page, there is a short piece of writing the descriptive piece with an example, we are quickly going to look through it and on the next page, it's from past exam papers. Please you are not going to write this at home we are going to do this in class. Please just have a look at the topic, you come into class next period with this that's already written up I will throw it into the dustbin. I'm serious.

Pupil 18: Ma'am...

Teacher: Yes?

Pupil 18: Mine doesn't have a back piece!

Teacher: Did all of you receive two pages? Okay we are running out of time we have two minutes. Okay summer escape, the introduction. PUPIL 19 read.

Pupil 19: Where are we ma'am?

Teacher: The descriptive, this first example.

Pupil 19: Oh, right okay. My family all looked forward to leaving Florida during the torrid summer months.

Teacher: What does torrid mean?

Class: Hot.

Teacher: Hot. Please move away from those overused words, good, bad, warm. Please continue.

Pupil 19: It is a tremendous relief to get out of heated hustle and bustle of summer living in Florida. Each summer we follow the yellow brick road upstate to our hometown of New York.

Teacher: Okay that is your introduction it tells you the action that happened, where it happened and who it happened to okay read.

Pupil 20: First one that sets the state and then the action happened and then darken then upstate. (Intercom plays message.)

Teacher: Okay we don't have enough time now, but you will see there are some notes here on the side and what I want you to look for are the figurative language the personification all figurative language used and how is it used look at the conclusion and look again how they made use of the senses. (Intercom sounds again.)

Teacher: So that is your homework for Monday is to do the summary of the lesson and you also read the example that I gave you. Listen what don't you understand? The entrepreneurs go make their stalls before break tomorrow the rest of you have to come to class but I will try to we will do something fun don't worry because it will only be half a class.

18-10 Friendly Letter (Text Type 1.2)

Teacher: Alright, please face me. Good morning class.

Class: Good morning ma'am.

Teacher: And we have a visitor today.

Class: Good morning ma'am/visitor.

Teacher: Alright, you may take a seat. Alright we are going to do the friendly letter today. What do you remember about the friendly letter from a year ago? Pupil 1 it has to be what?

Pupil 1: For your friends miss. (Class laughs.)

Teacher: For your friends? Um Pupil 2?

Pupil 2: It has to be informal

Teacher: It has to be informal, yes. What does that mean "informal"? Pupil 3?

Pupil 3: Um, (INAUDIBLE 03:52 AUDIO FILE)

Pupil 4: (Interrupting) You don't say so much you just...

Teacher: (Interrupting) To convey ideas, feelings, um and you communicate with someone in such a way as you would be speaking to them.

Pupil 5: And ma'am is your gramma as strict as it is in a formal letter?

Teacher: Yes, your English language still has to be appropriate and has follow the rules but not as...

Pupil 6: (Interrupting) Restricted.

Teacher: ...formal. But please no SMS language or anything like that. Anything else you can remember about the friendly letter? Why do we actually still write letters? Don't we SMS and email? Yes?

Pupil 7: There's something about the letters that you don't get in SMS I feel like some people feel better or happier when they write letters to convey more feelings in the letter than you do in every SMS you write.

Teacher: Yes you it is a very personal communication and remember even if you write an email you also have to follow the rules that we use in a friendly letter if you mail a friend you will also use a language that they can understand you wouldn't use necessarily formal language so you know, the same applies. However you do not use SMS style. Right, now what about the structure? Right imagine your margins to be here. (Illustrates on chalkboard.)

Pupil 8: On the right hand – left, left hand side of the page will be like the address like the friend's address.

Teacher: Yeah so we would use – Well here in Namibia we use the post office so PO BOX. (Writes on board.) So what else?

Pupil 9: Windhoek.

Teacher: Windhoek. (Writes on board.)

Class: Namibia.

Teacher: Yes. (Writes on board.) And?

Pupil 10: 18th October 2017

Teacher: Alright and then?

Pupil 8: You skip a line there.

Pupil 11: Oh Ma'am I have a question!

Teacher: Alright, you don't ignore that PUPIL 8 continue in a second.

Pupil 11: Ma'am! That date, is that the date that the letter needs to be received or is it the date that you write it?

Teacher: It's the date that you write the letter. And please write it out, don't write it (Shows on blackboard 18/11/17 and erases it.) Alright you skip a line, what do you call that and then comes what? Dear?

Pupil 12: That is the greeting Ma'am, Dear.

Teacher: The greeting yes, the salutation. Dear... (Writes on board.)

Class: (Playfully calls out addressee names for the teacher to use as an example.)

Teacher: Right, there after?

Pupil 13: Then comes there an introduction where you tell her that you are looking for...

Pupil 14: (Interrupts.) First you skip a line, then comes the introduction.

Teacher: Alright, lets discuss the introduction that's correct. I'm just discussing the introduction over there. (Gestures to the left-hand side of the black board.) It's not that you have to underline or say introduction or write introduction I just wanted to move it from this. So let's put down notes here on what we can include in the introduction.

Pupil 15: You can include that if there was a previous letter from her or him, you can include that you read it and you are looking forward to hearing from them again and then you include why you are writing from what you've read in the last letter.

Teacher: Yes so, that depends on whether or not you received a letter from the person you are writing to. There are no hard-fast rules to use or that describe how you must write every single friendly letter. Whether you might have received a letter from that person before, so you would...

Pupil 16: Greet.

Teacher: Yes, you could greet or you can you know thank person for letter and...

Pupil 16: A short description of the letter.

Teacher: Yes and perhaps your intention in writing this letter. It depends on the topic they have. Right what comes next, so here we have the introduction (Points at blackboard.) and after the introduction you do what PUPIL 3?

Pupil 3: You skip a line.

Teacher: After this you skip another line and then you begin with the body. Now what can we include in the body?

Pupil 3: Ma'am I think your intentions are explained in your body. Like say for example you're writing a letter that you're taking a vacation in Germany. In your introduction you can tell them you're having a good time so your body would consist what the good time is maybe you're on the beach maybe you're skiing.

Teacher: Yes, so the most important information would be in the body and there you can use one two three paragraphs it depends on the length of your letter. And then of course your topic etcetera, etcetera. After the body, what happens next? Alright let's ask a few other people. PUPIL 17, what happens after the body?

Pupil 17: After the body you write basically a conclusion.

Teacher: So before you do before you come to your conclusion in terms of structure skip a line. Alright just imagine this to be your page. (Points to blank portion of blackboard.) Alright and what could you include in your conclusion?

Pupil 18: In your conclusion you could include the goodbye and a greeting to the rest of the family and just to say "shap"! (Class giggles.)

Teacher: Hold that thought, that comes later. Yes you wrap it up PUPIL 19 anything else?

Pupil 19: You just you basically conclude the body.

Teacher: Yes you end off you wrap it up um let's see I have an example here, I'll read it to you in a moment okay, so the conclusion is that a very long paragraph or not?

Class: (Collective mumbles, but a general "no".)

Teacher: And then PUPIL 19 what happens after your conclusion?

Pupil 19: You say your salutations.

Teacher: Yes then you say your goodbyes. You could still include you know, greetings to the family or your friends' parents or whoever and then you end off.

Pupil 20: (INAUDIBLE VID 13:12)

Teacher: That's the million-dollar question, yes. How do we end off?

Class: (Mumbling yours sincerely/your sister/your examples.)

Teacher: Alright so after your conclusion you still write a line here saying what, give regards to your blessed parents. You can, you don't really have to but this is part we are talking now.

Pupil 8: Your friend.

Teacher: Yes, your suggestion – your friend. It's one suggestion but back to the faithfully, where do we use faithfully?

Pupil 21: When the person is going through times of pain.

Teacher: No, good try. PUPIL 22?

Pupil 22: Only in the formal letter.

Teacher: Yes the formal letter uses faithfully. Think of faithfully, F, and formal letter. Remember I told you that. Now, yes?

Pupil 22: Ma'am when should we use sincerely?

Teacher: Where would we use sincerely? Now people all friendly letters are not the same remember so for instance could you write a friendly letter to PRINCIPAL X.

Class: (Response is mixed.)

Teacher: You could, I mean you've known her for two years now and then its three and four and five so you could actually write a friendly letter to PRINCIPAL X or any adult or yes to your teacher but using a formal letter might also be an open door so there are in fact friendly letters that you can use to address a person that you might not know that well and that is then for instance when you use yours sincerely. For a friend or that is for when you are very close or you could use – that is when we use your sincerely when you write to PRINCIPAL X thanking her for something she has done for you perhaps as an individual perhaps as a class and she did that the other day, what was it?

Pupil 22: The free day.

Teacher: You had a free day for when, the dragon boat right? So that would be a good opportunity to write a friendly letter to PRINCIPAL X thanking her for the first prize awarding you a day off. And I think you all enjoyed that very much right? So I think that actually deserves a thank you. Alright so that is the other sort of friendly letter that we attempt to write you can obviously write to your friend who you know very well and your grandmother who you are very close to what you write there when you end off? Your grandmother?

Pupil 23: Ma'am when you write to a family member can you then write your cousin or your aunt or?

Teacher: You can do that or you can your grandmother – yours affectionately and if you address your grandmother who you are very close to, you can also say dearest grandmother here at the salutation. Sorry I'm squeezing this all in. Why is the grandmother in a capital letter here?

Pupil 3: You're using it as a name.

Teacher: Yes you're using grandmother as a name.

Pupil 24: Ma'am when writing to your parents can you write your name like your poppy,

Teacher: Yes you can do that in fact you do that when you are very close to someone this we discussed this would be some adult that you know but there has to be a certain distance this is say you know someone you are very close to like a family member or a grandmother and then the next question is what do we write over here?

Pupil 25: When you say yours friend can you replace your name with like a pet name?

Teacher: Yes a pet name, yes that what I'm going to say so if your friend is a very close friend you can use that pet name that you know your friend knows. Do you write surname?

Class: (Collectively) No.

Teacher: No all you do is yours affectionately, so it varies. Yours sincerely is there other examples are yours affectionately I wrote there, you can obviously use your loving daughter your loving son, love from, best wishes, so there is some space for you to decide what exactly to write. Alright any other questions so far?

Pupil 26: Ma'am I'm confused where do I write the –

Teacher: Sorry, where do you write what?

Pupil 26: The pet name.

Teacher: (Gestures to the blackboard.) So instead of Barbara you write the pet name.

Teacher: Alright again, anything else you are unsure of okay. I'll read you a letter okay listen, to sort of remind you of what it would sound like.

Dear aunt Connie – of course there is also the address and whatever else needs to be there.

Dear aunt Connie

I suppose it's better late than never, but I'm sorry for having taken so long to thank you for the card and the money you sent me for my birthday last month. It was very kind of you and I appreciate them very much.

So what did I just read to you? Yes, more or less the introduction and now your aunt knows what else is going to follow.

Mum suggested that I use the money to buy a set of math's instruments for geometry, but I didn't think much of that idea. Instead, I bought the latest CD by Talking Heads, you'd like it! I expect you have heard some of it on the radio and might have seen the video on Fast forward last night. Fast forward is a show. It is a great album, but it drives dad crazy. He keeps saying that Beethoven and Mozart must be turning in their graves.

Right so what do you think this paragraph or where can this paragraph be found?

Class: Body.

Teacher: Yes, the body. Because Michael – the person writing the letter is explaining what he would like to do or things to do with the money. Alright next paragraph!

I shall be starting my school on the 20th. I'm quite looking forward to it, especially the sport but I don't like the look of algebra much. Christine is better at maths than I am but I've seen her struggling to do her algebra homework! I'm going with mum tomorrow to buy my new school uniform. We wear maroon blazers – Sounds familiar.

Class: (Laughs.)

Teacher: And khaki shorts. We don't have to wear hats thank goodness! I'm also getting new cricket tops as I'm hoping to get into one of the under 14 teams. I can't wait to try out the bat that I got as a combined birthday and Christmas present. Now what do you think this is or where do you think this goes?

Class: (Collectively agree it's a body paragraph.)

Teacher: Yeah, also the body but it's the math paragraph. Because it is new information. Alright a new, well skip a line and a new line starts...

Thank you again for the gift, mum, dad and Christine send their love and we are all looking forward to seeing you again in May. Keep well and give Tikki a pat from me. That is your? Conclusion. He has already included the regards in the conclusion. This is optional and then he signs off saying your affectionately Michael. Alright anything else?

Pupil 24: He's rolling up the paper

Teacher: Yes, I can see that. Alright anything else we need to add you want to know? Right and therefore I'd like you to write a letter to PRINCIPAL X. Why again?

Pupil 25: An apology letter!

Teacher: Ah! There must have been a reason for that! Alright. I would like you to write a letter not to a friend that is slightly a cut above the friend because we have done that also. Alright so – (writes on blackboard) or the principal or let's make that – (continues writing on blackboard) Alright You can find yourself a partner and you can do this together in twos. So I'd like one page from a pair of you I think everybody is here and no one is absent so you should all find a partner please. Alright and this is a short piece because its 120-140 words that's the yeah. Alright people calm down. (Class has been spilt into pairs and they are busy working on their letters, the teacher is addressing various students, making them move chairs to ease the partnership.) Alright please yes, open the windows. People you obviously have to discuss it but not at the top of your voice and you may use dictionaries. What about Language did I use contractions when I read you the example?

Class: (Mixed responses.)

Teacher: I did. So contractions can be acceptable but please they have to be used correctly. If you're not sure please don't use them.

Pupil 26: When is it due Ma'am?

Teacher: Let's see, how about Friday?

Class: (Argues about Friday not suiting them.)

Teacher: Let's make it Friday. You have the lesson after break

Class: (In an uproar of disagreement.)

Teacher: Your test day is day 4 so day 5 is on Friday so you should be able to do it on Friday really.

Class: (Continuous uproar.)

Teacher: Alright, you can all calm down please.

Class: (Reluctant to calm down but eventually settles down.)

Teacher: Alright, people please calm down.

Class: (Does not calm down.)

Teacher: Alright the 9th it's not that significant the date but if you want to mention it of course. Someone asked for the date but it's not that important. But the important thing is that you won a prize. You are in pairs but you need to write once, but don't let your partner write it and then just agree with everything because your mark will be the same so I expect effort from both of you a effort.

Pupil 13: Ma'am, for this letter are we writing as plural or singular? Like we would like to thank you.

Teacher: Just pretend you are an individual. Listen quickly, what could you for example except for obviously thanking her say about the prize or the day. Perhaps include how you spent the day remember it was teachers day on Thursday and you had the day off on Friday. (Bell rings.)

Teacher: Alright, good day. (Class leaves classroom.)

22-09 Argumentative Essay (Text Type 2.1)

Teacher: This is going to be a heavy lesson for you because we are going to discuss something that is quite difficult. You still remember the other essays we did in the beginning of the year?

Class: Yes.

Teacher: Yes, the descriptive essay where you had to describe and then the narrative essay, what did we do with the narrative essay?

Pupil 1: We spoke in third person.

Teacher: Sorry?

Pupil 1: You speak in third person, like we wrote a story.

Teacher: Yes, you wrote a story, just put your hand up if you want to say something okay. So the argumentative essay, the argumentative essay is when you have to argue at the end of the day you have to convince the reader of your point of view and you cannot just grab opinions here or there and just go with it you have to have a structure you have to give facts – it's very important. So facts rather than opinions. I just quickly want you to listen to – its off now – just quickly listen to this short video here. (Plays video, two characters are arguing between traveling via flying vs road trips.)

Teacher: Okay, so what do you think about these arguments? Were they good?

Class: No.

Teacher: Who thinks they were good? Are you convinced?

Class: No.

Teacher: Exactly, so that is what you might try and do you must convince the read of your point of view at the end of the day. We are going to go about this, you are only Grade 9 now so were not going to go too much into detail I'm going to try and make it as simple as possible for you. We are first going to look at the structure and you must remember there are different ways about doing an argumentative essay. You can have the five paragraph structure we are going to discuss we are going to do it like that or you can have where you have one argument for and directly underneath that you say the counterpoint where you are against it one argument for one against or you can list all your arguments for different paragraphs and then your arguments against but we are not going to do it like that. For now we are going to stick with this five paragraph structure you are going to have obviously three paragraphs in your body you are going to start off with a plain you are going to decide are you for the topic or are you against the topic think about all the pros and all the cons and see which arguments are more, pros or the cons then you make your decision. So you are going to start with your two arguments that is for the topic and one argument against the topic whatever you decide if you are against it you are going to start with two arguments against it and one argument for so whatever you want to convince your reader about let's say for example we take a topic about school uniform and you want to convince your reader that it is good to wear school uniform then you are going to write two arguments starting with your first argument why you are for school uniform and then your second argument why you are for school uniform and the last one you are just stating why you are against school uniform. But I don't want you to go too deep into it, you just want to mention it so that the reader sees that you not bias you know there's another side to this as well but from the start you are trying to convene him to of your view.

Pupil 2: So the two arguments you explain the two arguments...

Teacher: Just wait we will get to it just now. Just hang on and then obviously your conclusion. So that's what your five paragraphs will look like there. Let's start from the top now, let's start with the introduction and then we I will explain the body paragraphs in detail. So the introduction, what must your introduction do? Your introduction must do three things. It must catch the reader's attention, you must define the topic in your introduction that means when I read your introduction I must understand what do you want out of this, what do you... you must break down the topic to me. And then number three you must tell the reader what the content of the essay will be about so you are going to tell the reader what you are going to discuss in the paragraphs just shortly what paragraphs one and two and then show the other side to this. Let's look at catching the reader's attention first of all how can you go about to catch the reader's attention. You can do this by maybe starting off with a short story it's always good to use humour if people laugh its good or but what always works with me is a sad story something that's very emotional.

Class: Touching?

Teacher: Something touching always works with me or you can do that or another way how you can catch the reader's attention is you can start with an interesting quotation you can quotes but it's difficult to do that in the exams because you don't have any resources.

Pupil 3: Are we going to write one in class?

Teacher: Obviously you are going to write exams so you are going to write one in class yes and then another way is to provoke your reader say something that will make them stir up an argument that will make them angry. When you're writing the entry slot of the essay you can make a statement such as all people who smoke in public should go to court for manslaughter already you stir up emotion here you start something okay lets you must define the topic in the introduction how will you define the topic? Obviously it's very good to use your dictionary to define the topic look at this one here, democracy is the only alternative for South Africa. I don't even know what democracy means so you must break it down to tell me what democracy is. So you are always, don't write on my table please...

Pupil 4: This was already here ma'am

Teacher: Do you know what democracy means?

Pupil 4: Democracy is – I might be mixing words here – it's basically a democratic solution to certain problems.

Teacher: I still don't know what that word means.

Pupil 4: It's basically a government ma'am voted by the people, for the people.

Teacher: Okay, yes, correct. So it is when you choice your government. Yes you vote for the people you want to rule your country so you are going to break that down or you can if you have this topic the moral standards of Namibian youth are dropping. What do you mean with youth? Do you mean learners from the ages 20 to 10 to 20 or from 15 to 30 years what do you consider as youth? Just simple things like that lets, that was now how do you define the topic and the last one is to tell the reader what the content of the essay will be. In order to do this you must first plan decide what is your point of view and what are you going to write about. Quickly look at this one here television is a blessing rather than a menace, television educates and shows the reality of the world we live in It also turns people into couch potatoes what did this person do now? He told me, television is a blessing rather than a menace I now know this person is for television then he told me television I know this person is going to discuss the first argument is going to be the for and he says the television educates and now you have to go and write a topic sentence when you get to your body you will have to go and write a topic sentence so that will be your first topic sentence that television educates but in the introduction you just mention it and it also says that shows the reality of the world we live in so you know that these are the two things he's going to discuss in his essay it says it also turns people into couch potatoes so that is the counterpoint now. That is the...

Pupil 5: So basically when we tell the reader about the essay will be about we summarise.

Teacher: Yes you just summarise what is going to follow now. Yes?

Pupil 6: The essays that we or if we write an essay now say now this topic now and would we have to make more arguments or like...

Teacher: No you just do your summary and choice your two strongest arguments choose your strongest arguments you can even put your other arguments in if it fits with your topic sentence you can fit it in there you can use it as an argument if it fits in. One idea one paragraph. We are done with the introduction.

Pupil 6: Ma'am what does it mean when it says it turns someone into a couch potato?

Teacher: A couch potato is someone who does not move around he just sits around on the couch and eats and gets bigger and bigger, okay that's a couch potato. We are done with the introduction now you get the idea of what to do with the introduction now when I am done explaining to you I will give you an example and we can quickly go through that. Now the body, If we take this this is now what your body will look like, you have your two arguments for and your one argument against. So the one argument you already said, television educates so this is going to be your first body paragraph. You have to write a topic sentence. So you're going to tell me that television educates and give me now you have to support that statement. Give me why? Ask yourself the question why. Why do you say that television educates, explain it now, try to use try to use examples.

Pupil 7: Of how it educates.

Teacher: yes give me an example of a film that educates children or give me statistics if you can you just go into detail about it then what is important is that linking words you cannot just go straight to the next paragraph. You must use a linking word to connect to the second paragraph there in the introduction you told me it shows the reality of the world we live in so that will be your topic sentence television shows the world go into detail about it, ask why do you say so, give examples okay you get the idea and last you go into your third paragraph and say however it can also you however it can however television even though television is a blessing it can also be bad for you no don't use bad. Bad is a bad word. It can also be a curse because it can turn you into a couch potato. And then don't go just very short on the other hand you don't have to fall into this pit hole you can tell yourself motivate yourself you must go outside and move around you just quickly mention the counterpoint and then go back to what you believe in. But please guys, do not bring in new points in that paragraph. Yes, would you like to say something?

Pupil 8: So when you write the third part of the body, wait so at the same time we're supporting like because I thought we were saying like one but at the same time you can be presenting the other.

Teacher: Yes, you just want to show the reader that you are aware that there are other sides to this argument as well. You are not just trying to bring in what you believe in here you are aware of it, that's all you are trying to do but you are still at the end of the day trying to convince.

Pupil 9: You have to be unbiased.

Pupil 10: Ma'am so everything you are going to write has to be for the topic?

Teacher: Yes.

Pupil 10: You can't add any of the other points?

Teacher: Yes your main points that you are going to discuss each paragraph what you are going to do in each paragraph have to tell me what you think so that you can follow, there's a logical sequence there.

Pupil 11: So those are the bodies, but in the introduction you state what the topic is, what you think of the topic and what you're going to discuss about the topic.

Teacher: Say again.

Pupil 11: So in your introduction you tell the reader or you define the topic but first you catch the attention and then define the topic and then state your opinion and then you...

Teacher: But just be clear with what's your point of view.

Pupil 11: And then?

Teacher: And then you just tell them the points that are going to follow. Okay, right let's move on. So in the conclusion we are just going to wrap everything up, you just restate the importance of the topic, you can maybe paint a picture in the mind of the reader to show him, showing him what the world would be like if there was no television I have

an example here, I decided we are quickly going to work through this example it's about school uniform. When we are done with this, on Monday I am going to give you notes or I can give you notes before the bell rings so read through it quickly or go through it over the weekend. On Monday I am going to give you a partner and let me just see if there are any questions and I'm going to give you a partner and we're not going to do it like we usually do it, with everybody writing his own essay. You like it?

Class: (Overall agreement.)

Teacher: You like it? So on Monday I'm going to give you a partner. And you and your partner are going to sit down and do you write down all the arguments for and against. And you write the essay together I don't want one person doing everything remember I know what your writing is like by now I will just know if one person did it alone.

Pupil 12: So ma'am we have to write if we write together so one should one write and the other write

Teacher: No you just have to plan together so you sit together and what no you do not type.

Pupil 13: Ma'am do you choose the partners or do we choose.

Teacher: I will see.

Pupil 14: Ma'am please.

Teacher: So what are you doing in front of my class today?

Pupil 15: Ma'am I was giving her my Vaseline.

Class: (Laughs.)

Teacher: She never says a word in class but today! Let's start! Arguments about uniforms. A clique is if you form groups, little groups. Okay, arguments about uniforms I want you to please turn the page around you will see at the back problems with uniforms, here all the arguments for uniforms why you should wear a school uniform to school is listed and next to it, why this person is against school uniforms, I just want to do this really quickly. So we'll do this first one quickly and then you stop. Okay this person says that he is for school uniform because you can save money. He thinks that civvies are cheaper than school uniform this is this person's opinion he's going to convince you about it.

Pupil 16: Uniforms will cut down on teasing.

Teacher: Uniforms will cut down on teasing, do you really think that it's going to do that?

Class: No/yes.

Teacher: Because I can still tease you even though you're wearing a uniform I can tease you about anything, your hair, your length, your weight...

Pupil 17: (Mumbles question.)

Teacher: Could everyone please listen to what she is saying?

Pupil 17: Its worse when you are (INAUDIBLE 25:50) because nowadays we only make friends.

Teacher: That's true, but on the other hand, wait we are not going to go through that one! We need to discuss this on paper. We are just listing the points now. Schools will be safe from outsiders, this means when somebody enters our school gates now the person doesn't have school uniform we will immediately see it. Then next one?

Pupil 18: Parents will no longer have to buy designer labels.

Teacher: so this person says that your mother will not you will not ask for Nikes or what's the newest? Rebok but remember you will still need it on weekends.

Pupil 19: Who wears Rebok?

Teacher: You will still ask for Nike t-shirts.

Class: Adidas.

Teacher: Adidas.

Pupil 18: It will separate the public schools from the catholic or private schools.

Pupil 19: Yes.

Teacher: I don't know, our private schools also wear also have uniforms. Let's see what this person says about why he is against school uniforms. Why he thinks we should not wear school uniforms. PUPIL 18.

Pupil 18: Uniforms ultimately cost more.

Teacher: I've had a student in the other school who thinks that our school uniform actually costs more instead of your variety shirts from Pep for 30 dollars but you don't...

Class: (Argues about uniform costs.)

Teacher: Okay lets continue.

Pupil 18: Uniforms do not teach children how to deal with people who are different than them.

Teacher: Okay uniforms do you agree with this?

Class: Yes.

Teacher: Yes, In their own way okay bless you. Next one.

Pupil 20: Cliques still form.

Teacher: Yes you still form your cliques with the people you smoke with that's what you go out with or during the weekend. Next

Pupil 18: It is impossible to prevent all outside intrusions.

Teacher: Where there is a will there is a way. If people wants to enter, they will enter. You can even go and borrow school uniform from your neighbour and wear that. Next.

Pupil 20: Pupils will still ask for designer labels for outside of school clothing therefore, uniforms will not make this issue go by.

Teacher: Yes, they will still ask for designer clothes. Yes, next.

Pupil 20: If you need uniforms to distinguish between public, catholic and private schools, you might need to re-evaluate where your child is going.

Teacher: Right, next.

Pupil 20: Uniform teaches children that in order to all get along we must conform to the same attire.

Teacher: who agree with that?

Class: (Mixed response.)

Teacher: Right lets now have a look how this persons argument you can turn your paper around. Pupil 21 can you read the first paragraph.

Pupil 21: Many well-intended (INAUDIBLE 29:59) have justified the use of school uniform for many different reasons. While they make valid points, I often disagree. Here are the three points I disagree with the most or you can skip down to what I believe is a list of pro and con of school uniforms.

Teacher: Okay this is the introduction, I already the person disagrees with the fact that you have to wear school uniform now this thing one, will probably be your topic sentence. One, two three.

Pupil 21: No matter what you add, students will always be made fun of for how they look. Uniforms will make it harder for kids to form.

Teacher: Okay so you are going to discuss this, you are going to go into your paragraphs and response with why do you say this.

Pupil 21: No matter what you dress students in, they will always find way to pass judgement over the years. If it's not based on the style of clothes worn, there are many other superficial ways to judge people some of these: Height, weight, accessories, odour, the way one walks and smoking habits. This list by no means is proper, but you get the idea. These can be a problem in schools, yes judging people upon appearance can be bad in schools, however making everyone wear the same clothes, will not make the problem magically disappear. Instead of hiding from the problems, why not try to

tackle it head on? Teach your kid to accept the odd-kid out, teach your kids not to judge based on superficial criteria. Kids can be taught to be open to all sort of people, however by making everyone wear the same type of clothes I believe that you are just sending the message that just because you are jealous of each other because you are different that doesn't make you all the same. How will your child ever cope in the adult world when they actually grew into someone who is other than themselves.

Teacher: Now this is a very long paragraph, you must remember you are only going to write from 250-300 words so you can already divvies that into five paragraphs so that's 50 per par. And that's very short, that's really very short. It's not a lot it's difficult to do that. Okay next one, PUPIL 22 will you read the next one?

Pupil 22: Yes ma'am.

Teacher: Let's try to listen please.

Pupil 22: Uniforms will save families money. Students will not ask for clothes that families cannot afford. His response, firstly uniforms have not saved...

Teacher: Okay stop quickly, you are not going to write now response.

Class: Yes.

Pupil 22: Firstly uniforms have not saved families money, if one buys no name brands, clothes can be relatively affordable when my mum bought my little brother his uniforms, she bought him two separate outfits. Two golf shirts, two pairs of pants, one sweatshirt, and one vest. It came to around 250 dollars. She could have easily bought a week's worth of street clothing, 7 shirts and three pairs of pants for slightly less money. Mind you, we aren't in the habit of buying a new wardrobe every time a new school year starts this is just a comparison. It should be noted that when you buy a new uniform, regular street clothing also need to be bought for weekends and during the summer. Now some might say, now wait a second, my kids t-shirt cost 40 dollars or more. It is not that difficult to find long lasting clothing in the 10-20 dollar range. The only catch, it may not have your child's favourite company logo that is endorsed by a multi-millionaire. So what if your kid says that all the cool kids have Nike shirts, this is an ideal time to teach your kid that there is more to life than a cool logo. This would also be a good time to teach you kids not to be friends with kids based on logos that the kids wear. If all the parents didn't buy all their kids logo clothing or taught their kids not to put emphasis on the logos, this wouldn't have been an issue.

Teacher: Okay, last paragraph is very long for me.

Pupil 24: He's very biased.

Teacher: (Laughs.) come let's have a look at the third paragraph.

Pupil 25: Uniforms will make it easier to identify those who are not from the school and therefore increases security or safety. This happens to be the only valid point. I guess some students from other schools go to other schools to cause trouble, unless they are in a T-shirt they will stick out like a sore thumb. So from that respect, the school will be protected from unwary outsiders, however I some...

Teacher: Okay, stop. Here this person bought in the other part, the counterpart but he immediately changes now back. However...

Pupil 25: However I somehow doubt that uniforms will (INAUDIBLE 36:09) and stop students from sneaking in contrabands. I am also sure that it would not be that hard to borrow uniforms from friends who go to a uniformed school. If there is a will, there is a way. Especially students who have a lot of time to conjure up mischief or play.

Teacher: Did you notice there is no conclusion?

Class: Yeah.

Teacher: I want you to just quickly don't make it long quickly write a conclusion for me you can work with your you can work with your just turn around you can. (Class begins to turn around and work.)

Teacher: Guys, you have two minutes. Before the bell rings. You have two minutes I still want to hear the conclusions. (Class is still working.)

Teacher: You can't draw on everything! (Class works.)

Teacher: I don't think this is going to be a good idea. Writing one essay with someone else because some people they just have to write a conclusion and some people are not working with sorry you must not just listen, you must contribute. You are drawing! (Class continues working.)

Teacher: I will give you a list with all your linking words, you can start with your conclusion it is clear that or finally. (Class works.)

Teacher: Therefore, consequently. (Class working.)

Teacher: Are you struggling?

Class: No/yes.

Teacher: Guys, you are lost it seems to be with your conclusion. Don't leave yet I just quickly want to give you some notes, you could say maybe, in conclusion it is clear that there are valid arguments for both opinions however I believe that I have been given sufficient evidence that learners should be allowed to wear civvies or street clothes, I believe that wearing civvies always the learns to learn a sense of individuality. That can be your conclusion or something like that don't make something major. Please take your notes. (Class is busy leaving.)

Teacher: You know I don't give you homework over the weekend so leave it, just read through this. (Class leaves.)

16-10 Formal Letter (Text Type 2.2)

Teacher: Anything else? Can we start now, my laptop is broken now.

Class: (Complains.)

Teacher: No don't you'll make me so angry again. It was still working and then last night, nothing. Okay anyway lets continue with today's lesson. Some people will be happy to know that there will be no video today who was it? PUPIL? There's no video today. Could you just quickly tell me, in the beginning of the term we did three long pieces now. Term one, term two and we are done with term three as well, so we are done with our long pieces. What did we do? The continuous writing, yes PUPIL 2?

Pupil 2: We started with term three.

Teacher: Yes, we started with term 3 we started with the we did the argumentative and then? Narrative and what else?

Class: Descriptive.

Teacher: Descriptive and then we did two short pieces in term one, what did we do?

Pupil 3: Diary.

Teacher: Diary entry was only term two in term one okay but anyway we did a diary entry, a dialogue, a friendly letter, what else did you do for short pieces? That's three. We did two four more. That's three, one more.

Pupil 4: A formal letter.

Teacher: No, we didn't do a formal letter. A descriptive paragraph. So for the exams for today we are still going to do a short piece and one more short piece so two more short pieces and you must know them for the exams which is in three weeks' time so please. Today we are going to start with the formal letter. We can write a formal letter for various reasons. For example you have different types of formal letters so if you have a letter

you are seeking for a job you will write a formal letter if you fill out a job application form a letter of complaint. What else? If you want to order something.

Pupil 5: A letter of complaint.

Teacher: Yes, that's if you want to order something. I just want to make it clear to you that you have different types of formal letters, but we are going to concentrate on a letter of complaint which you also did last year. I don't know if you can remember that okay so PUPIL 6 can you quickly tell me what can you don't look in your notes, what can you remember about the formal letter? How is it written?

Pupil 6: First of all you start off with your own address and then you skip a line and then on the left side you write the address of the letter the company you are writing to.

Teacher: Okay, is that all you can remember?

Pupil 6: No then you write you skip a line and then you write sir or madam you can leave it as this, or you can pick which gender you're writing to and then an introduction and then write and then a conclusion.

Teacher: Okay, almost correct, but you've left out some information. So that is why we will be looking at it again today? You skipped some parts. I want you to recap for me just quickly how do we write a friendly letter. But he wasn't with us at the time. Okay PUPIL 7?

Pupil 7: Okay so you start with your PO BOX and then you skip a line and then you say dear sir or madam and then you skip a line and then you start to in a nutshell start with what you are going to talk about and then skip a line and then in your body you talk and then you skip a line and then in your conclusion you say yours sincerely.

Pupil 8: After you've added your PO BOX...

Teacher: Are we back at the formal letter again?

Pupil 8: Yes okay so then you write so dear sir/madam and then you skip a line and then you write your complaint and then you skip a line and then you start with your introduction.

Class: (Mumbles in agreement.)

Teacher: Okay guys, quickly tell me what are the differences between a formal letter and a friendly letter. Yes?

Pupil 9: Ma'am a formal letter is that you should use abbreviated words or slang.

Teacher: You shouldn't use slang, you shouldn't abbreviate you shouldn't what else?

Pupil 10: Ma'am I think In a formal letter you should get to the point.

Teacher: Yes. Get to the point immediately.

Pupil 11: Write respectfully.

Teacher: write respectfully, you can show that you are angry, but you don't need to swear or be respectful at all times.

Pupil 12: Can't use apostrophes.

Teacher: What do we call that? Contractions do not use contractions, do you know what is that?

Class: (Gives various examples of basic contractions.)

Teacher: Right so write out the words full and please try to use formal language. Instead of saying I want to know you can use I want to I would like to discover or find out I want to enquire whether yeah those extra words, please try to use those words, not the simple English lets quickly go run through this again. I almost wrote this on the board now alright so you said in the middle on the right hand side whose address will go there?

Class: Yours.

Teacher: So your address will go there. I just asked Mrs Matins now and she also said it doesn't matter at this point if you are going to put the full-stop there or there, (Changes position of full stop.) but I want you to do so. PO BOX 007 and then the town.

Class: Windhoek.

Teacher: Windhoek and then?

Class: Namibia, Ma'am.

Teacher: Namibia not "Nambia". Please some of you I cannot right, I cannot make you if your N is a capital N or if it is a small letter so when you write be sure it's a clear capital letter. You must look out for that as well, and then after that you said I must write...

Class: The date.

Teacher: The date, today's the 16th October 2017 you may not again, the month is always written with capital letters, you may not write the date like this, slash. (Shows abbreviated dates with brackets.) Please you must write it out full like that. What do you want, do you want it open or...

Class: Open.

Teacher: Then open it. Next?

Pupil 13: Ma'am next the personal information that you write do you write like the PO BOX do you write both.

Teacher: No you write PO BOX with those capital letters and those small letters.

Pupil 13: No ma'am I mean, all of that, can you just write in bold or...

Teacher: Yes that's fine by bold letters you mean capital letters?

Class: Yes.

Teacher: No PO BOX PO is capital letters, ox is small letters so look, capital letters and the rest small letters. Then you skip a line and now who's address are we going to put there?

Class: The company.

Teacher: The person you are sending it to, if you are sending it to say for example SCHOOL SECONDARY SCHOOL what are you going to put in first? The title of the person you are writing to, for example...

Pupil 14: The secretary.

Teacher: The secretary, Mrs. SECRETARY or the principal and underneath that, PRINCIPAL or you can say the manager.

Pupil 15: What if you don't know who it is?

Teacher: Exactly so you write because it must go to the manager of let's say pep okay so now you can start with your PO BOX 005 now look here if you are writing to someone who doesn't stay in Namibia, if your person does not stay in Namibia you have to write Namibia but also if the person is in the same country you don't have to write Namibia.

Pupil 16: If you're writing a person's name.

Teacher: Do you know their name?

Pupil 16: Yes.

Teacher: Then you can just immediately write here with the person's name, you can leave out this and you will write Mr. Swart or whatever.

Pupil 17: Ma'am if it's a mister, must we write out the whole word?

Teacher: I'm coming to that now so PO BOX 005 and then Gauteng South Africa can you please stop the talking and then you leave a line open and what do we put after that? what did you say?

Pupil 16: Ma'am if we know...

Teacher: If you don't know the person you put that, sir or madam. Rather use dear sir or dear madam.

Class: You forgot the R, ma'am.

Teacher: (laughs) okay after that if there is somebody who is not dear sir or dear madam is fine but if it is somebody who is not married then you will write M... Put up your hands please.

Pupil 18: Mrs.

Teacher: Someone who is not married.

Class: Ms.

Teacher: You'll know definitely then that that person is not married, yes miss if the person if you are not sure whether the person is married or not then you will say, Ms if the person is married or if she's a widow then you write Mrs, okay, so if you know the person so dear Mrs Piet so if you don't know the person here I don't know the person so here I said madam and you leave a line open and now you have to write a heading what is this about, what is your letter about? Can you please tell me why do I write why must I write a heading.

Pupil 19: So they know what the letter is referring to?

Teacher: So they know what the letter is about and remember people don't have time to go through every single letter so if the manager goes through this he knows this is something he needs to address if he sees the technician must address the problem, he immediately sends this letter to the technician. So this will tell the person receiving the letter where in the department the letter must go to alright so, when you write the heading let me think, what are we going to complain about?

Class: Food.

Teacher: You see now you say food but we are writing to Pep Stores alright people what else? Dirty clothing, dirty clothing okay. The (INAUDIBLE 19:59 RECORDING) must please be written in capital letters and underline this or let me rather say complaint you so write complaint regarding the dirty clothing with capital letters and you must please underline this. And then leave a line open and then what's next? My introduction your introduction who was talking now? Who was saying something? You again? Do you want to write the introduction for us quickly. We are writing to pep stores to say we are complaining about the dirty clothing you can just talk, there's no need to write.

Pupil 20: I am writing this letter to address the problem.

Teacher: Address! Very good.

Pupil 20: To address the problem of dirty clothing in your stores.

Teacher: Then we can move on to our body. So in your introduction you will tell me what is this all about why are you writing what you can also tell me when the incident happened and now your body. You just elaborate on the issue and your conclusion lets what do you lets quickly take the body further who wants to do the body Yes? No you just explain what happened.

Pupil 21: Recently I had purchased a few items from your store which.

Teacher: Okay stop, did you mention that in the introduction, did you mention that earlier? Don't repeat yourself. Did you say that in your introduction. Or you just said I'm writing about okay so now you're saying you purchased okay go on.

Pupil 21: A few items from your store I found out later that it was dirty and I regret my purchase.

Teacher: Just elaborate a little bit more.

Pupil 21: Which has which caused me to be very distraught and angry. I spoke to the cashier about the matter but the cashier did not respond.

Teacher: Okay very good, now we can move on to our conclusion. And in your conclusion you are going to tell me what you want the manager to do about this problem or how they can solve this problem or what can make you happy? Who wants to try?

Pupil 22: Here ma'am, I would just like you to check your clothes to make sure your clothes are okay before you open the store.

Teacher: You don't want any refund? You just don't want this to happen again.

Pupil 22: and I don't want this to happen again in the future.

Teacher: nonsense I don't believe that! Are you serious? Then it must have been at MALL definitely not at ANOTHER MALL because she says that they take the clothes, after you try them on they wash it and only then they hang it up. (discussing various shopping oddities)

Teacher: Anyway...

Pupil 23: In your body paragraphs?

Teacher: Yes, you can have more than one.

Pupil 23: Can we tell them how we feel?

Teacher: Yes you can express your anger but don't swear and be distasteful like. Okay your conclusion, the bell is going to go just now, your conclusion you just have to sum everything up again, then you leave a line open then our name and leave a line open then you will say, please remember if you don't know the person in this case like where we wrote dear sir. Listen please, where we wrote dear sir. Listen please dear sir or madam then you will say yours faithfully remember if you want to be safe, f for formal letter. Faithfully is for formal letter. Sincerely is if you know the person to whom you are writing then you would say yours sincerely but you wouldn't say you always spell sincerely wrong. (Class laughs.)

Teacher: I have notes for you, yours faithfully then you sign and then you write your name. My neighbour behind me now has a dog, and that dogs would immediately get into bed when that dogs start barking and Friday night that dog stopped barking at 2 o'clock in the morning. My husband threw four stones onto their roof and then the dog was quiet so maybe I must write him a letter of complaint. PUPIL 24 please loudly read out this example to the class please, quickly hand this out please. Loud quickly. Just read, introduction.

Pupil 24: I am writing this letter to express my disappointment about your customer service. I ordered a letter via your web-site but the wrong one got delivered to my home, I have sent the letter back but didn't get the right one In return. I have already called several times without any luck. If you do not reply within a week I will be forced to take legal actions yours faithfully signed Mrs. K. Hubbs.

Teacher: Okay here are your topics I would rather not give you the topics today rather tomorrow in class you are going to write your formal letter your planning, I will give you one full period for planning and one full period for the actual letter and those people who didn't write the test, I will give you another test today is Monday Tuesday Wednesday on Thursday I will not tell you I can set up a new test just make sure you know your poetic devices so I can basically ask you anything. Is everything clear? Any questions?

Class: No. (Class gets ready to leave.)

Teacher: You can pack away class. (Class begins to pack up.)

Appendix G: Samples of learner's work with my own annotations

Descriptive Essay - 1.1(a) 07 November 2017
9E

Topic: A restaurant

ORIENTATION

Our favourite restaurant is the Spur. As we enter, the bright red colours on the wall light up the entire place. The Indian theme gives us a thrill of adventure and excitement. While the chefs are busy cooking we can hear the flames singing our succulent steak. Our succulent steak arrived and we can already taste the crispy, juicy and spicy ~~steaks~~ meat.

ALLEGATION
DESCRIBE
LING.

Keep to one tense

We ^{take} took our first bite all the talking and toddlers screaming and playing ^{drowns} drowned away while the juicy steak persuaded our taste buds. Our ^{delicious} ~~desserts~~ arrived and ^{we} ~~yet~~ could see the bright, sweet, cool and delicious appearance of the desserts. Our milkshakes ^{also} arrived and we ^{task} ~~could~~ see the sweet, creamy and brightly coloured, flavoured shakes persuading us to order more.

PERSONIF.
ADJECT.

11/11/2017
Nelson College

C2
23
 $\frac{12}{20} = \frac{6}{10}$
CFechler

A hospital room
use one tense!

As I pressed the round button of the
elevator I could smell the medicine.
I enter the room and I look to the
right. I see my brother. ~~Faying~~ ^{Mom and Dad} My father
are sitting next to him, nobody is making
a sound. The only thing I can
hear is the keeping ^{SENSES} of the ^{mean} machine.
On the other hand, I stand there with
hope that someone would say something
because the deafening ^{FG. EXPR.} silence is killing
me. My mother is crying. I look ^{at} my
brother's face, ^{will} could he open his
eyes? The doctor enters the grounded room.
numb. ~~with~~ My Dad father stands up
straightly ~~as~~ as the doctor says, "I'm
sorry". Suddenly the room is filled
with dark depression yet still no one says
anything.] → Dark depression descends on us...

C2
23 ¹²/₂₀

Cfechke

3.1(c)
Descriptive paragraph

8 November 2017

Your kitchen at home

ORIENTATION

My kitchen at home is big and tidy. I keep my kitchen clean most of the time and it has several electronics and cabinets.

The walls ^{show off} of my kitchen are tiled with ceramic tiles which also ^{well cover} the floor. I have an enormous fridge looks pristine which is in the left corner of my kitchen. My oven ^{rests} is on top of ^{the} microwave (and both are opposite my fridge) and next to that I have ^{a well-stocked} liquor cabinet.

My cabinets are dark brown and all of them have double doors. Currently, I am cooking macaroni and chicken. The ^{flavour of} chicken has a smell of ~~curry~~ and the macaroni is hot and watery. wafts through the kitchen. SMELL

My ~~the~~ smooth ^{shiny} marble countertops ^{reflect...} are my all time favourite, they add to the elegance of my kitchen.

123 words

C3
23 $\frac{10}{20}$

Chedlee

Florian Müller

1.1 (d)

8/11/19

Descriptive Paragraph

A Sunset

It was a lovely Sunday afternoon. We sat on our oval shaped, beige towel. The weather was rather chilly as we sat on our towel which was layed ^{on} over a flowery field. As my girlfriend quickly bent over to take the 1640 year old ^{bottle of} wine bottle out of the braided ~~bas~~ emerald coloured basket, I vividly tapped her shoulder to admire the beautiful sunset. {describe!} As we watched the sunset, I realised that, due to my tapping, I bruised her shoulder and she had let go of the wine ~~with~~ bottle which resulted in the ~~wine bottle~~ breaking, leaving ^{shattered} scattered ^{pieces of} glass pieces scattered all over ^{our} ~~our~~ towel. As we were gathering our ^{belongings} stuff to ^{leave} take on the journey back home, my girlfriend accidentally cut her index finger while picking up the ^{pieces of} glass pieces.

Words = 131

Focus on the actual sunset!

$$\begin{array}{r} C4 \\ 23 \overline{) 8} = \frac{4}{10} \end{array}$$

C. Fiedler

46
93
A descriptive essay:

1.1 (e)

06.11.2017

Topic: A restaurant

SENSES

Staring into his reassuring dark blue eyes, I am thankful to be sitting across from my calm loved one, feeling protected from the chaotic, busy atmosphere of the restaurant. Over the conversation of the loud table next to us, I can hear the soft and soothing jazz music playing in the background. Swiftly, our waiter delivers our mouthwatering dessert, quick to fulfill my sweet cravings for generously covered chocolate strawberries. As I eat them slowly, my mouth explodes with fruity and decadent flavours, the chocolate melting against my warm fingers. My one hand caressing the rough hand of my loved one, and the other searching for my cold and refreshing drink in the dimly lit beautifully decorated restaurant. I can smell a mixture between my boyfriend's fresh cologne and the delicious, appetizing meals being delivered from the impeccably clean kitchen to the other noisy tables. Once again I am overjoyed to be sitting across from my loving boyfriend in this extremely romantic, yet chaotic restaurant. ORIENTATION HERE?

C1

L1 $\frac{18}{20} = 9$
10

A excellent description

Checker

08 November 2017

English 1.1(F)

Topic: Hospital Room

ORIENTATION

As I stand there at my hospital bed, the ^{strong} enriched,
nausea-inducing ammonia stench ~~that~~ fills the room,
~~but it~~ does not affect me anymore. I turn around and look
at my bed, where I see doctors restlessly trying to revive
me. SMELL, SIGHT

I start to feel an abnormal tingling in my body and have
a sour taste in my mouth. All of a sudden I am pulled back
into my body and open my ^{eyes to} see bright, white lights.
The ammonia smell is back and the pain starts flowing
back. TASTE, SIGHT

SIGHT I hear the doctors cheer happily. I turn to the right
to drink pick up a glass of water from the shiny, clean
tray. ~~Then~~ I then ^{lie} back onto the soft, comfortable
~~hospital~~ hospital bed. I look around to see if everything
is still the same.

I see the unrealistic looking plastic flowers standing on the
brown, glossy nightstand. I look at the heart rate monitor which ^{screen} shows
^{cheerfully moving} the colours representing
is brightly showing my heart heart rate and beeping loudly
and calmly.

C2
20 14 = 7
Creditee 20 10

1.2(a)

P.O. Box 1103
Windhoek
Namibia ✓
18 October 2027

Dear Ms Jacobie ✓

ORIENTATION

No words can express how grateful I am for granting my class, 9B, a day off. Not only did I have a day off but I had a long weekend due to the Teacher's Day on the 5th October, considered as a school holiday.

During the long weekend, my family and I had a memorable adventure out in the ^{bush} woods. We camped out at Hotsprings, a breathtaking ^{from} resort. In addition, we saw astounding animals and had a spectacular encounter with wild animals, game? → elaborate!

REMARK
EVENT

I am sure I don't speak only for myself when I say we appreciate the fact that you accepted our request. Not only did we have a delightful, long rest, but we also had a long, productive weekend. - what request did you have?

This weekend was definitely much more special in comparison with other weekends we've had as ^{learners before} school kids.

Yours sincerely

C3 11
L3 20

Cfahke

+
- 130 words

1.2(b)

P.O. Box 8896
Windhoek
Namibia ✓
18 October 2017

Dear Ms Jacobie ✓

16

I would like to thank you for allowing us to take a day off after we won the Dragon Boat Race. ORIENTATION

REMARK
EVENT

The day off was well deserved and we enjoyed it. It was surely used to its full potential. It was even well scheduled and we had a long weekend to enjoy ourselves and not think about ⁽¹⁾ school. Although not some of us were not there, including me, I supported the team spiritually and encouraged ⁽²⁾ them the day before the event. The children ^{who were} that ^{was} at the event ⁽³⁾ told me how much they enjoyed it, ^{and how proud they felt at} being champions. ^{However,} the other children from other classes did not take our victory too well.

In ^{the} conclusion, we would just simple like to thank you for granting us the day off.

Kind
Our regards

→

-1

See letter

(similar wording)

C3
23 11-1
20

=10
20

CF

1.2 (c)

PO Box 779

Windhoek

Namibia ✓

18 October 2017

Dear Mr Jacobie, -/ (not in English → only in German salutation)

We trust that you are doing well. We would like to thank you for granting us ^{an} off day for winning the Dragon Boat Race ⁱⁿ for the junior category. ORIENTATION

REMARK
EVENT

The day was ^{very} enjoyable. The ^{different} ^{were} ^{class} ^{was} given a chance to mingle with each other, even though not all our classmates could participate. It also gave us the chance to put the various traits we all learned ^{at} from the Character Camp into action, and work as a team. Seeing as the boys were stronger than the girls, we put them in the front of the boat, and the girls were placed at the back. Mrs Plant and the rest of our classmates who did not row were excellent cheerleaders. They helped us boost our self-esteem and enthusiasm, and it was evident that we were going to win. Our parents also cheered us on and congratulated us on our class victory.

All in all, we enjoyed our long weekend. It gave us time to rest before we ^{got} ^{to} ^{begin} ^{to} work with revision for our upcoming examinations in November.

Kind regards, -/

The 9B Class of 2017

$$\begin{array}{r} C1 \\ 22 \end{array} \frac{16}{20} - 2$$

$$= \frac{14}{20}$$

CFeckler

1.2(d)

Write a letter to Ms Jacobie PO Box
Thanking her for granting your Windhoek
class an extra holiday for winning Namibia ✓
The Dragon Boat Race 19 October 2017

Dear Ms Jacobie ✓

ORIENTATION

I hope you had a great morning. I would like to show my gratitude ^{for} day off ^{for} ^{arranging the Dragon Boat Race} ^{the 9th} ^{last} ^{you} provided us with. Thank you.

The day off was right after Teachers' Day, giving us a four day weekend. We had won the Dragon Boat Race for the junior section and that is why maxin gave us the day off. The day was well spend, that I can assure you.

To tell you the truth ~~mean~~^{mean}, I did not do much. Most of the day was spent studying for ~~an~~ upcoming Life Science tests and sleeping. I could not do much considering that most of my ^{other} friends still had to attend school.

Even though I believe the day was well earned, I would still like to thank you very much. We appreciate it very much.

Your Sincerely

$$\begin{array}{r} C2 \\ 23 \\ \hline 20 \end{array}$$

Checklist

1.2(e)

4B

P.O. Box 69
Windhoek
Namibia
18 October 2017

Dear Ms Jacobie ✓

I am ^{writing} addressing this letter to you to thank you for granting our class an extra holiday for winning the Dragon Boat Race.

ORIENTATION

The first day of our short holiday was outstanding because it gave us time to rest and finish up our homework. The next day, which was Friday, was even better because we did not have ^{any} school and could sleep late.

REMARK:
EVENT

On the extra day you granted us we did fun and exhilarating activities. Our class had a get-together together ^{during which} we went mountain climbing, hiking and swimming. The Friday which was Teachers Day we made a gift basket for our register class teacher. After that, our whole class went for a picnic on a hill in Prado Park.

All in all we had a great time and we enjoyed the extra holiday that was granted to us.

C2
23 12
20

Cfecker

Yours ^{sincerely} affectionately → use for ~~close~~ persons closer to you eg mother, close friends, family

136 words

1.2 (f)

9B

24 October 2017

9B

Topic: Write a letter to Ms Jacobie thanking her for granting your class an extra holiday for winning the Dragon Boat Race (120-150 Wards)

P.O. Box 54
Windhoek
Namibia ✓
24 October 2017

Dear Ms Jacobie ✓

ORIENTATION

We would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to take part in the annual Dragon Boat Race and granting us an extra day off ^{for winning the junior section of the race.} for our win.

REMARK
EVENT
Our class was extremely excited and ready to give our best to win the trophy. This experience has shown us that we can work together as a team and achieve great things ^{together} as a class. We thoroughly enjoyed our day off, even if most of us probably spent the day doing nothing productive.

We were overjoyed and extremely surprised when we received the news that we made it to the finals, and our determination to win increased even more. And the sense of honour we felt when holding the trophy after we won was undescribable.

Therefore, we would like to thank you once again for giving

us the day off after our victory.

Yours sincerely
Class 9B ✓

C1 16
22 20

Cfeckler

A good letter!

2.1(a)

Blacht
25 September 2030
Grade 9D

Signals

Topic 2

THESIS I believe all "booze" and drinks should be prohibited under all circumstance after or before all sport events and games however.

Drinks and alcohol can help people in positive ways, but when abused ~~when abused~~ it can lead to total ~~to~~ chaos. Many people who drink have problems ^① controlling themselves, ~~and~~ in the same way.

People who drink tend to suffer from liver problems ^② and extreme addiction which sometimes leads to suicide ^③. People also tend to use violence ^④ when they are drunk, which can be brutal at a huge event or game. After the game, car accidents ^⑤ can happen, because the person is under the influence of alcohol leading to harming innocent lives. ~~on the other~~ and on the other hand.

People are stressed after their team lost, ^{and they} could ~~but~~ violently ^④ abuse fans from the winning team, ~~and~~ therefore.

REITER Alcohol should be banned after, ~~or~~ before and during games.

Words: 150

250 - 300 words!

$$C3 + L3 = \frac{18}{40}$$

Topic 5 2.1(b)

9c

Argumentative Essay

Blacht
29/9/17

SIGNAL

Smoking is a selfish, dirty, unhealthy habit that should be banned

THESE
We agree ^{to} that the statement, ^{that} smoking is a selfish, dirty, unhealthy habit, ^{that} should be banned. ^{that} Since smoking around people causes conflicts and it might influence teenagers. Smoking is also bad for the environment and causes air pollution.

Smoking is ⁽¹⁾ selfish because people ^{who} are smoking, don't ⁽²⁾ care about who is around them. It causes conflicts between people, for example, non-smokers might get to ^{that} ^{is not} personal and start a fight. Similarly businesses put up signs to tell people ⁽³⁾ ~~no~~ smoking allowed. Instead of putting up signs one should just ban smoking, since people don't ⁽⁴⁾ follow rules.

In addition, ^{who} elders that smoke near their children, will influence ⁽⁴⁾ them to start smoking. A young boy or girl smoking is not a suitable thing, as she or he is growing up they will ^{be} ~~be~~ addicted to smoking which is a defective way. On the other hand, smoking is a hazardous thing to the environment ⁽⁵⁾ as it causes air pollution and can cause lung cancer which will lead to death.

The reason for ^{being} ~~the~~ ^{the} banning of ^{is} ~~is~~ because people ^{only} focus and concentrate when they smoke, ⁽⁶⁾ that's why if they don't ⁽⁷⁾ smoke they feel stressful. On the other hand, ⁽⁸⁾ as smoking makes people feel very well and makes them feel like they are going to places they have never been before.

⁽⁹⁾ Our conclusion is that smoking must be banned, because some people steal money to go buy cigarettes since they don't have money and can not

survive without smoking. It is better to ban smoking, than to keep people suffering from it. ⁽⁸⁾ After smoking people are done smoking, they just throw their cigarettes on the floor, where children can reach the cigarettes and put themselves.

Words: 281

No reiteration

C3+L3 = ⁽²⁰⁾ 40

2.1(6)

26 September 2017

Topic 5

Topic 2

Blacht
27/9/17

People think that having fun at a soccer match is when you are drinking alcohol, but that is not the case. ^{11.9} Therefore we agree that alcohol should be banned from stadiums, due to all the violence that occurs when alcohol is permitted.

We believe that alcohol should be banned ^{11.6} because it causes fights which ~~lead~~ leads to serious injuries or even death. If a bottle is that the people throw is left outside for a ~~tee~~ long time it can start a fire ² causing environmental damage and damage to the stadium.

^{15.10} Furthermore, due to what happens after the soccer match people decide to leave a few minutes earlier, meaning that they do not ~~watch~~ watch the full match because they are afraid of the chaos that happens after the match.

On the other hand ³ some people feel that it would be more entertaining if there is alcohol. Most people also think that it is normal to swear and throw bottles at the players or insult the opponent's fans. In addition people think it is normal to have a drink or two at a soccer match just to have fun.

Therefore that is why we agree. ⁶ The only way to avoid ugly incidents after tense soccer or rugby matches is to ban liquor from stadiums. ² Furthermore to prevent fights that could lead to death. To allow people to watch the match from the beginning ¹¹ till the end without having the fear to stay till the last minute of the match, ¹ lastly to have order at soccer matches.

253 words

off topic This is topic 2
and not topic 5

CS + L2 = ¹⁶ 340

2.1(d)

Blacht

27/09/17

9c

9c

Argumentative Essay

250-300

3. Discuss whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Violence on our screens is harming our 9th graders"

THESIS

Violence on screens, in my opinion, does not harm our 9th graders. I say so, because violence is not only expressed on medias, but can also, very often, occur socially. The brutality seen on screens is not always at disadvantage, but can also be used as an advantage.

Violence is not only portrayed on medias, but is also practised in other ways, such as domestic violence¹. Parents, who are abusive towards their children, or each other, unknowingly cause a reaction, which can also lead to other violence. When the children - for example, see such scenes at home, it gives the child a feeling of this act being right. They then put this action into practice.

Violent scenes watched on screens are also not necessarily at disadvantage, because ^{they} can be used as an act of self-defense². When a 9th grader is bullied at school, he can defend himself, by using newly gain-learned skills seen on television. These skills aren't necessarily death-causingly harmful, but can prevent further bullying.

On the other hand, gruesome images seen³ on television or other electronics, are practised in daily lives, because society portrays it as the right thing to do, though even without

electronics, violence can not be controlled or prevented.

RETT.

All in all, I ^{strongly} still stand on my point, that violence on screens does not harm our 9th graders. Violence does not only exist on screens! Violence is also not depicted from one thing only, but has many different causes.

243 words

C2+L2 = $\frac{28}{40}$

27 September 2017

90.

Blacht

Smoking is a one way street to death.

Smoking is ~~an~~ a ~~obv~~killer and in doing so it will ensure the destruction of the future generation. Although it is a terrible habit it helps with decreasing smokers' levels and benefits the economy. Unclear thesis

People who smoke are selfish and should be fined. It is one of the biggest causes of cancer known to man. Thus I would say it is dangerous² and should not be publicly done. Second smoke^{ng} is selfish and effects people around the smoke. People die daily because of this disgusting habit. By smoking you're only contributing to your own death. Yes, I do note that some public areas have banned this, but it should be prohibited for all.

Not only is smoking ^a their bad habit, but so is littering². Once they're done filling their lungs with poison, they throw the bud on the ground. A ^{the ground is} place reachable for babies and animals to swallow or to chew on. This addition is dangerous, not only to the smoker, but also to the people around him/her. We can avoid so many deaths by stopping people from publicly smoking.

Blacht

We do not ~~de~~emphasize the advantages that smoking has, because there are a few benefits³, such as; smoking decreases stress levels and helps the economy with the money the businesses pay as tax. The money given

is ~~th~~ anyway used to buy medicine and bring professionals into the country to fix the problem smoking has created: Cancer. When smokers do not have their temporary fix, they become aggressive, making smoking a dangerous⁴ activity to publicly doing.

In conclusion; smoking is nothing but a bad habit and a deadly one at that. The economic benefits ~~as well as the fact~~ ^{and} it helps with decreasing stress, is non-existent next to the extensive reasons why it should be publicly banned.

EET.

$$C2 + L3 = \frac{24}{40}$$

2.1(f) ①

Blacht
26 September 2017

9C

English Argumentative Essay

Rugby, soccer, football; It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt. That's what many people say. I love sports, it entertains millions of people and opens doors for career opportunities. Some people criticize but I however disagree that No thesis

Feedback Sport brings families together as a time to relax and enjoy the game. Whether it is at a stadium, restaurant or at home. Sport is a real source of happiness for many people ✓

Another way sport brings joy to many is, it gives many people job opportunities. Fact is not everyone is able to get certain well paying jobs. Maybe due to a person not having receiving a quality education, his or her background or a learning disorder. Sport offers people the chance to use their complete, raw talent. A sport can be very easy to learn and if one gives their hush all, they can become very successful

However, sports can cause major injuries, it can be physically or mentally. Not all sports are safe to play for everyone. People can get hurt either

by not playing by the rules or any accident can happen such as a concussion which may cause the whole team to be affected. Athletes can also get hurt during games such as breaking your leg during soccer which can be permanent and can possibly haunt your life. But there are many risks we take everyday; even just driving to work is a risk as we might end up in an accident.

In conclusion sport even with its dangers is an amazing thing, not only to play, but to participate in.

$$C.2 + L.2 = \frac{26.28}{40}$$

22(a)

Abicht
21/10/17

17.10.2017

Formal Letter

P.O. Box 81115

Windhoek

Namibia

17. October. 2017.

The Manager
Ocean Basket
P.O. Box 1975
Grovemall
Namibia

C2+L2 = $\frac{7}{10}$

Dear Sir / Madam,

Subj. line

Complaint regarding Bad Service

ORIENTATION

I am writing this letter, to inform you that I have experienced very bad service at your restaurant, Ocean Basket. 29 Intro.

I was very shocked that the service can be so bad. Ocean Basket is one of my favourite restaurants, I am just to disappointed in your services. My friends and I waited for a waitress / waiter for an hour. ^{us} We then decided to leave your restaurant. I would like to give your beautiful restaurant another chance. REMARK. EVENT Details

I advise you in a very kind way to change the service, this could lead to a very bad way of losing a lot of customers. Solutions

2.2(b)

120-150

9c

Blachl
21/10/17

Letter of complaint

P.O.Box 84
Windhoek
Namibia
17 October 2017

Manager
Ocean Basket
P.O.Box 227
Windhoek

$$C2 + L1 = \left(\frac{8}{10} \right)$$

Dear Sir/Madam

Complaint regarding bad service Subj. line

17 I am writing this letter to inform you of my dissatisfaction with the service of Ocean Basket. ORIENTATION

On October 16th, I ordered a sushi plate. ^{On} my plate, I also found a scarlet, plastic fingernail. When I called the waiter, who was in charge of my table, I received a rather rude response. I then asked for the chef, to explain to him the situation. When the chef arrived, he explained to me, that he could not prepare a new plate of sushi for me, and that I could merely take out the nail, and eat the food. I was utterly disgusted! and After a hasty discussion, I was forced to leave the restaurant. Details

UNRECORDED
EVENT 96

Topic 3 2.2(c)

Blacht
20/10/17

P.O Box 2000
Windhoek
17 October 2017

The Manager

The Manager of the Windhoek Traffic Department

P.O Box 2012

Windhoek

C31L3 = $\frac{5}{10}$

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject line

A letter of complaint regarding the increase in age for drivers

ORIENT. I am here to complain about the change in the age for people who drive and why would they want to start at a young age. This is going to happen all over Namibia and will start next week, but I don't know if you can see it as to such an agreement.

REMARK. EVENT People can start to drive at twenty-one, they should do it earlier so they can be experienced by twenty-four. The children should have dependance and drive around or even help their moms at work by transportation.

Kids need to go to school if their parents are too busy. need to learn how to make decisions and take risks out.

We can make the roads strict so they don't fool around - SOLN.

Yours faithfully,

22(d)

Blacht
21/10/17

9C

C3+L4

(4/10)

P.O. Box 1364

Windhoek

Namibia

18 October 2017

The Ministry of Road safety
P.O. Box 3732
Namibia
Windhoek

Not a letter of complaint?

Dear Sir

X The Windhoek Traffic Department has publicly stated its intention of increasing the minimum age of drivers of all vehicles from eighteen to twenty-one.

I believe that changing the age for minimum vehicle age to be a terrible idea. Because at eighteen it is not only humiliating but also insulting to drive with your parents. Also in doing so, teenagers will start to damage property in anger to ^{prove} ~~show~~ a point.

The teenagers of today see driving at the age of twenty-one to be so long that they have to rely on their parents. As for when driving at eighteen to be their chance at freedom. Further more the teenagers of today are easy to aggrivate, causing their behaviour to be erratic. So many will start desecrating ^{private} property to show they do not except your decision, while many others will harm other people."

22 (e)

Blacht
21/10/17

P. Box 0069
Windhoek
17 October

C31L3

5
10

the Manager
Windhoek Traffic Department
P.O. Box 5834
G Windhoek
Namibia.

Dear Sir/madam

Subject line

Complaint RE: the changing of Driving ages from 18 to 21

I am writing this letter

ORIENTATION I wrote this letter to express my disappointment
about the changing of driving ages from 18 to 21.

REMARK
EVENT I recently read a ^{highly} highlighted statement in the
newspaper claiming the the Driving and licence
Authorities would change the Driving age from
eighteen to twentyone within the next year. I highly
disagree with that statement, I have long awaited
my chang chance. to get behind to wheel, now that its
near, it will be shifted to an even longer time period.
There are many kids in the streets, Driving at eighteen, meaning all
these licences will have to be reissued.

I would not extend the age period from 18 to 21 for it will
cause more problems

Yours sincerely

22(f)

ac Topic 2

Abicht 21/10/17

P.O. Box 20550

Windhoek

17 October 2017

The Manager
Ocean Basket
P.O. Box 1125
Windhoek

$$1 \text{ } Ca + Li = \left(\frac{8}{10} \right)$$

Dear Sir

Subj. line
Complaint regarding Customer Service

I am writing this letter to express my disappointment about your customer service. ORIENTATION

REMARK. EVENT
I ordered and received a plate of food that was extremely cold and when I asked the waitress assisting me to kindly warm it up, she bluntly ignored me and went on her way. This greatly disappointed me, because Ocean Basket is my favourite restaurant. On top of that I had to pay a very expensive bill for food that was not pleasing to the palate.

SOLN.
I highly encourage you to talk to the people who work under you and to tell them that customers are their main source of income and that we deserve respect. Ocean Basket has a lovely atmosphere and I am sure that this will not happen again.

Yours Faithfully