

**A Professional Development Intervention in the Teaching of
English in a Rural High School in Lesotho**

by

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Faculty of Education

University of Pretoria

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Pretoria

DECLARATION

I Mamolete Iris Mofolo declare that this dissertation titled **A Professional Development Intervention in the Teaching of English in a Rural High School in Lesotho** is my own work and has not been submitted for any degree at any university before and that all the sources acknowledged in this research have been included in the list of references.

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the master's dissertation titled **A Professional Development Intervention in the Teaching of English in a Rural High School in Lesotho** by **Mamolete Iris Mofolo** has been edited for grammar errors. It remains the responsibility of the candidate to effect the recommended changes.



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This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the following individuals:

- My daughter, Keneuae Anacletta Mofolo, who has filled my life with joy and gives me a real reason to live. Her tolerance and understanding when I had to study and had no time to attend to her even at such a tender age gave me the courage to follow my dreams.
- My family in general, especially my mother Ntsoaki Belinda Lenetha, who has been supporting me at all times and did babysitting to give me time to study; and all my in-laws who have supported me with prayers to see that I reach the completion of my study.
- All individuals who have a desire to change their professional practice and change the lives of those who surround them.

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All the learners who participated in my research and from whom I learnt so much; without you I would never have completed my research. Thank you for helping me change my practice and bringing my dream to fruition.

ABSTRACT

The focus of this research is on implementing a professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practice of teachers teaching English as a subject at a rural high school in Lesotho. The study presents the way in which I as the principal researcher and my English teacher colleague facilitated learning, using innovative methods in our English classes in a way that promoted learner-centredness. In this study improvement of the teaching practice of teachers of English was intended to reduce the overuse of mother tongue in English classes to promote the teaching of English through English (Cook, 2005) and to improve learners' proficiency in English as a subject.

The study was conducted using an action research design. Action research was used as a professional development process with a view to improving educational practice; it enabled me as the facilitator of the professional development intervention and my colleague to rethink our approaches to facilitating learning of English in order to innovate our teaching. A mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used for collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in one study. These approaches were used to promote an in-depth understanding of the research problem under investigation.

Open-ended interviews, observations, observation sheets, reflective journals and a questionnaire were used as data collection procedures that created a convergence of viewpoints, methods and conclusions. The conceptual and theoretical framework that guided the study emerged from the literature review. Findings of the study revealed that the innovative methods implemented in the English classes at a rural high school have contributed to the improvement in professional development and the teaching practice of teachers of English. Although learners preferred the use of both English and mother tongue in their English classes, findings of the study have revealed that there was an improvement in learners' proficiency in English as a subject which was facilitated using English.

The study recommends that the whole brain thinking model, multiple intelligences and action research as a constructivist approach be utilised daily in English classes and in all learning areas in Lesotho high schools as a basis for transformation and facilitation of learning that promotes learner-centredness.

LIST OF KEY WORDS

English as a second language/ English foreign language

English language learners

Facilitating learning of English

Learning opportunity

Medium of instruction

Mother tongue education

Professional development

Rural school

Teaching practice

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
Form B	Grade 9
Form C	Grade 10
Form E	Grade 12
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
L1	Mother tongue
L2	Second language
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
RSA	Republic of South Africa
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this study was to explore the implementation of a facilitative professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practice of teachers of English in a rural high school in Lesotho. Lesotho is a country completely landlocked by the Republic of South Africa and is found on the South Eastern part of South Africa. It is about 33 000 square kilometres in area and home to approximately 1.9 million people (Lesotho Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, 2007). In the Lesotho education system, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) is responsible for all education in the country, from the *Kindergarten* schools to higher education institutions (HEIs). The official languages of Lesotho are Sesotho and English and these languages are used as medium of instruction in schools (MoET, 2008). According to Avenstrup, Liang and Nellemann (2004), Sesotho is used as the official medium of instruction in the initial years of school from pre-school to Class 3 (equivalent to Grade R to Grade 3 in South Africa). From there on, a switch to English as a medium of instruction has to be made throughout the primary school to higher education level because all examinations across these levels, including the national external examinations for Class 7, Form C, and Form E (equivalent to Grade 7, Grade 10 and Grade 12 respectively in South Africa) are administered in English (MoET, 2008).

However, in the rural school in question, instruction and learning are conducted mainly in the mother tongue (Sesotho) including the English classes throughout all levels of education despite examinations being written in English. Therefore the need for teachers to be professionally developed remains a challenge, specifically in the domain of utilising English in the classroom. I am aware that teachers need to be constantly developing their full potential and instilling the same in their colleagues (Du Toit, 2012). Thus, my study focused on implementing a facilitative professional development intervention whereby teachers who teach English as subject were mentored and guided to use English instead of the mother tongue in the classroom, to improve their teaching practice and the learners' proficient use of English as a subject. De Clercq (2008) regards poor teaching practices, the context of schooling, inadequate instruction and learning resources as the main factors contributing to poor learner achievement in developing countries. Kumar and Parveen (2013) agree that the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by the development of

teacher competence and motivation through continuous professional development that my research was aimed at addressing.

This intervention was implemented to address the issue of mother tongue that is currently being overused by teachers teaching English as a subject in Lesotho rural high schools, resulting in poor English results. Apart from the practice of using a mother tongue for learning an additional language – in this case English – it has been observed that the teachers currently use traditional teacher-centred methods of teaching, which implies that they rely on a one-way mode of transmission of knowledge. However, my study set a platform where new and innovative methods of facilitating learning of English were introduced within English classes with the view to improving our teaching practice and the learners' competent use of English (Yesilbursa, 2011). I view teaching as a lifelong process of refining skills and developing new methods of facilitating learning (New Jersey Department of Education, 2006). Thus, new methods of facilitating learning of English that encourage mastery of English as a subject were introduced by us as teachers of English in the Lesotho school.

When individuals in their different fields of specialisation have the intention of improving their work, it is not only for the benefit of the individual, but also for the benefit of others and the organisation at large as suggested by Du Toit (2012). In my study new methods of facilitating learning that my colleague and I used were a form of intervention aimed at transforming our teaching practice to encourage the teaching of English through English (Cook, 2001). Macdonald (1993) maintains that teaching English entirely through English makes the language real to learners and allows them to develop an in-built language system in the target language. Furthermore, the new and innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English encouraged a reflective teaching practice where we reflected on our classroom practice on a daily basis with the aim of transforming our practice. Reflection was done with the purpose of gaining a better understanding of complicated ideas and activities that occurred in our classrooms so that new insights could be gained and a change could be made (Moon, 2013). The change in the teaching practice of teachers of English was intended to assist in promoting learners' mastery and proficient use of English in their academic future and daily life. Green (2008) encourages teachers to be critically reflective on their classroom practices to improve them. This action research study assisted me as a teacher of English to reflect on my own teaching practice for innovative and successful methods of facilitating learning to be continuously implemented. Avalos (2010) mentions that teachers who learn by transforming their practices through new competencies for the benefit of the growth of their

learners also develop professionally. The study also set a platform for continuous interpersonal relationship through working collaboratively with my English teacher colleague in assessing our capabilities with a view to improving our practice, our professional development and learners' proficient use of English as suggested by Klapwijk (2012).

1.1 MOTHER TONGUE EDUCATION

Marungudzi (2009) defines mother tongue as a first language that one learns and speaks from birth. In my study I focused on mother tongue education in the Southern African¹ and the international context because there is a gap in the literature regarding the teaching practice of teachers using mother tongue in their second language classes (English in particular) beyond the six to eight years of schooling, and especially at high school level in the context of the rural areas of Lesotho. Moreover, no study has been conducted on the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools in Lesotho, making it a unique area of interest and study to carry out.

1.1.1 The Southern African context

The South African Constitution on language policy, Act 108 of 1996, Section 29 (2) guarantees the children of South Africa the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in any public education institution where that education is reasonably practicable. However, the issue of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools still remains problematic (Churr, 2012). Although there are eleven² official languages, Taylor and Von Fintel (2016) state that English and Afrikaans are the main languages of instruction in education. The majority of teachers are not native speakers of English but they find themselves teaching English, despite the fact that it is neither their mother tongue nor that of their learners (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012). Due to the status of English and Afrikaans the majority of black South African citizens feel that the other nine official languages are not regarded as equally important as English and Afrikaans (Banda, 2009).

When English or Afrikaans is used as the medium of instruction in schools, Prinsloo (2007) argues that many children are made to switch abruptly from their mother tongue to either

¹ For the purpose of this study, "Southern Africa" refers to South Africa and Lesotho only.

² English, Afrikaans, Sepedi, Sesotho, isiSwati, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, Setswana, isiXhosa, isiZulu.

2. Different phases include Foundation, Intermediate, Senior and FET Phases (Lesotho has only 3 beginning phases).

English or Afrikaans as medium of instruction even if they are under-prepared. Scholars in South Africa such as Desai (2012), Foley (2008) and Gabela (2007) emphasise the importance of adhering to the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools during the initial stage of school (the Foundation Phase). However, they maintain that there has to be a switch to the target language (English) at some point because English will ease access to training, work possibilities and economic freedom of society, while also act as a stepping stone to the international arena. According to Desai (2012), Prah (2009) and Walter (2011) learners in developing countries in Africa require four to five years of mother tongue instruction when they begin their school before a transition is made to any second language. This assists learners in learning to read and write in their mother tongue, which later becomes an essential tool in acquiring skills and vocabulary easily when English or Afrikaans is used as a second language.

Foley (2008) found that the medium of instruction in minority³ languages that are the mother tongue of many Black South African learners becomes difficult because learning material and all instructional media essential to facilitate learning in these nine minority languages (including Sesotho as a focus in this study) does not exist. These nine South African official languages are lagging behind in development with regard to technical terminology compared to English and Afrikaans, which are considered to be languages that have scientific and technical literature (Mamabolo, 2009). This problem is experienced in the Lesotho education system. In Lesotho, the Lesotho Constitution (1993) and the Ministry of Education and Training (2008) state that Sesotho and English are the two official languages in Lesotho. While it is acknowledged that there are other minority language communities (e.g. Baphuthi, Ndebele, Xhosa, etc.) besides Sesotho and English; Sesotho as a mother tongue to most learners in Lesotho is used as a medium of instruction from initial education to the age of six years before a switch to English can be made (MoET, 2008).

To improve the status of the minority languages, Hays (2009) argues that it is the responsibility of the government to provide all required learning material in the minority languages for use at school level as well as in teacher education so that all South African official languages can be used as the medium of instruction but this has not yet been fully addressed by the South African government. Similarly, the Lesotho government and education system has not yet provided learning material that can promote the use of Sesotho as a medium of instruction in schools after six years of initial education to learners.

³ The other nine official languages besides English and Afrikaans are called minority languages.

1.1.2 The international context

The debate on whether English language classrooms should include or exclude learners' mother tongue has been a controversial issue in the international context for a long time (Brown, 2002). Some scholars such as Cook (2001), Tang (2002) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2009) believe that effective learning of English as a second language by both children and adults can be achieved through the use of English as medium of instruction. The reason for this is the fact that they regard mastery of English to be helpful in predicting the academic success of learners who should be competent in using English. Internationally, the population of learners taking English as a subject has been increasing since 1990 and this fact has encouraged all the European education systems to place more value on the inclusion of foreign languages as medium of instruction due to their highly multilingual and multicultural societies (Echevarria, Short & Powers, 2006; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian, 2005; Goldenberg, 2008; Lasagabaster, 2008). Cummins (2007) points out that languages are inter-dependent, therefore the teaching of English should build on learners' prior knowledge by linking English concepts to concepts in the learners' mother tongue. Although mother tongue is encouraged as a medium of instruction, authors such as Alshammari (2011), Georgiana (2012) and Kavaliauskiene (2009) suggest that mother tongue used as medium of instruction in second language classes can be used for specific purposes such as when organising tasks and maintaining discipline in the classroom. Besides, studies conducted by McMillan and Rivers (2011) have demonstrated that learners' comprehension and performance in a second language can be enhanced if mother tongue is not dominant in second language classrooms but used only when necessary, such as when offering instructions.

Regarding the professional development of teachers, Richards and Farrell (2005) are of the opinion that it is a continuous process of growth where teachers of English understand that their teaching methods and their role in the classroom can change, depending on the different learning needs of the learners they are teaching. Du Toit (2016) maintains that professional learning brings about a change that leads to growth, and growth is a continuous process throughout the lives of teachers as professionals. In the South African context Moyo (2001) states that only 20% of teachers of English are first language speakers; therefore considerable upgrading and continuous development of teachers' language skills and teaching methods is necessary with a view to enhancing the quality of learning English. In the Lesotho context, all

teachers of English are second language speakers. Thus, policies and procedures designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes behaviours and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider community should be put into place to promote effective instruction and learning in English language classrooms (Kumar, 2013). According to Steyn (2004) professional development factors that should be taken into consideration in order to improve teacher quality include the following:

- Teachers' approaches to teaching.
- Teachers' commitment to their work.
- Availability of resources for facilitating learning.

Blank, De las Alas and Smith (2007) emphasise that professional development that focuses on learners' learning and that helps teachers develop their pedagogical skills so that they become competent in teaching specific subjects has a strong positive effect on practice. I would argue in this case that my study encouraged innovative ideas in facilitating the learning of English at my school for the betterment of my practice, my professional development and that of my colleague and for learners' competent use of English.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

I have been a teacher of English in a rural school for the past nine years. This is the school where my action research study was conducted. The rural high school is situated in the Leribe District, about 26 km from the busiest town, namely Hlotse. The majority of the group of learners in the school consist of low achievers who have passed their Class 7 with low marks. Many learners who have passed well opt for schools in urban areas with a high pass rate and that they regard to be of a higher standard. The rural school consists of a cohort of about 300 learners, who are divided into classes of fewer than 60 learners. The school has only five classes from Form A to Form E (equivalent to Grade 8 to Grade 12 in South Africa). Introducing a facilitative professional development intervention in the school was aimed solely at promoting the professional development of teachers of English in the school through the improvement of teaching practice. Bransford, Darling-Hammond and LePage (2005) are of the opinion that teachers are expected to meet high standards of teaching to improve learners' achievement.

Another reason that prompted me to undertake my research on implementing a facilitative professional development intervention to improve the teaching practice of teachers of English

was the experiences I had in my English classrooms of Form A up to Form E. Such experiences included the predominant use of mother tongue in English classes, which led to learners' poor mastery of the subject English. Yurtsever (2013) points out that English has become the predominant language in all fields in today's global world, and there is a widespread need for English language speakers. However, learners in rural schools have a negative attitude to English and therefore they use it to a very limited extent. Learners also regard English as a subject that is very difficult and not easy to pass, despite the fact that it is a language in which all internal and external examinations in Lesotho are set (MoET, 2008). Therefore teachers of English in the rural school have changed to overusing Sesotho as their language of instruction in English learning opportunities to aid learners in mastering English. Seemingly, this affects learner performance in the subject negatively as indicated in the final English results at the end of the school year. Foley (2008) holds the view that when learners are reliant on mother tongue, they find it extremely difficult to read texts written in the standard form of any second language, as well as to write essays and assignments and to answer test and examination questions posed in English.

Regarding the teaching practice of participating teachers, teachers of English have always used one dominant teaching style, namely that of question and answer. In addition, teachers of English conduct lessons that are geared towards memorisation of facts tested in examinations (Ansell, 2002). Allwright (2005) suggests that a classroom should be conducted in a way that provides opportunities for experimentation, exploration and change for both teachers and learners. My study provided a platform for teachers to use new and innovative methods of facilitating the teaching of English that were anticipated to contribute to a change in teaching practice and promote the teaching of English through English. Moyo (2001) argues that if English is to remain the medium of instruction in schools and the language of examinations, learners should use it in more authentic and diverse communicative and academic situations to promote its mastery. The use of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that were implemented in my study also encouraged us to reflect on our practices with a view to making sense of our messy reality, to learn through reflecting on it and by constructing new meaning guided us to learn from our work and improve our practice (Schön, 1983).

In the context of formal educational settings, learning is most effectively facilitated when both learners and teachers speak the language of instruction well (Walter, 2011). Tang (2002) and Cook (2001) found that the occasional use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction

by both learners and teachers in second language (L2) classes increases both comprehension and learning. Yavuz (2012) points out that an overuse of mother tongue as medium of instruction in second language classes may result in learners who are lazy and put no effort in trying to acquire skills in the second language. The role of a teacher is multidimensional and very complex, so it necessitates teachers to possess multiple skills (Singh, 2011); therefore my reasons for carrying out this research were to bring about positive change and an improvement in my teaching practice and to that of my colleague who teaches English as well. I envisaged the outcome of the study to be the following:

- To give direction on how the standard of the instruction and learning of English can be upgraded in my school, and also to inform the teaching practices of other teachers of English in the rural areas of Lesotho.
- To create an opportunity for professional development on the part of teachers of English while also benefiting learners to hold a different view of English as a subject, and to become proficient with a view to being able to use English in future – academically and in real life.

Most of the literature on introducing innovative measures aimed at improving the professional development of teachers that has been used in my study was acknowledged from literature sources within the Southern African (Lesotho and South Africa) and the international context. This was done because existing research on implementing a facilitative professional development intervention geared towards improving the teaching practice of the teachers of English remains limited and narrow in focus in Lesotho literature. To this end my research aimed at building upon existing but primarily international theory on the professional development of teachers, specifically theory on implementing a programme to improve the teaching practices of teachers of English in a predominantly mother tongue environment. My research may add to existing literature on teacher professional development as well as mother tongue education from a Lesotho perspective.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of my study was to explore the outcome of a facilitative professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practice of teachers of English in my school. My research was exploratory in nature. An exploratory study is described by Stevens and Wrenn (2013) to be research that involves the search for clues that will reveal what happened or is currently taking place. An exploratory design was used in my research

because it would enable me to add to the literature by building rich descriptions of complex situations and by giving direction for future research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The strength of exploratory studies is acknowledged by Creswell (2005) who points out that an exploratory study leads to an understanding of how participants in the research react to any incident or intervention that is introduced to them.

I chose to explore this facilitative professional development intervention that was aimed at improving the teaching practice of teachers of English at my rural school, based on the idea of Fernandez and Inserra (2013) who argue that teachers' understanding and use of research-based practices and the response to intervention in their classrooms might contribute to strategies of facilitating learning that they could utilise to meet the needs of English language learners (ELLs). My study was envisaged as being a contribution to the improvement of the teaching practices of teachers of English in the rural high school in question. It was also envisaged that the study would contribute to their professional development while also assisting in promoting to learners' proficient use of English, which is currently one of the subjects in which learners are not performing well.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the collection of information on the research topic.

1.4.1 Primary research question

How does critical reflection on new methods contribute to improving me and my colleague's teaching practice of teaching of English in a rural high school?

1.4.2 Secondary research questions

- i. What are our experiences of the application of innovative ideas in our teaching practice as part of professional development?
- ii. How do the changes in our teaching practice contribute to my professional development as a facilitator of the professional development intervention?
- iii. How does the implementation of the new methods of facilitating learning contribute to our learners' proficiency in English?

1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework acts as a thinking tool and guide for the researcher in terms of what are admissible questions relating to the study and what evidence there is to address these

questions (Maree, 2012). A conceptual framework was used in my study because it justifies the selection of participants, variables for the study as well as the design (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For a facilitative professional development intervention to improve the teaching practices of teachers of English at a rural high school in Lesotho, the concepts represented in Figure 1.1 below were derived from the literature study and form the core of my study. The concepts are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

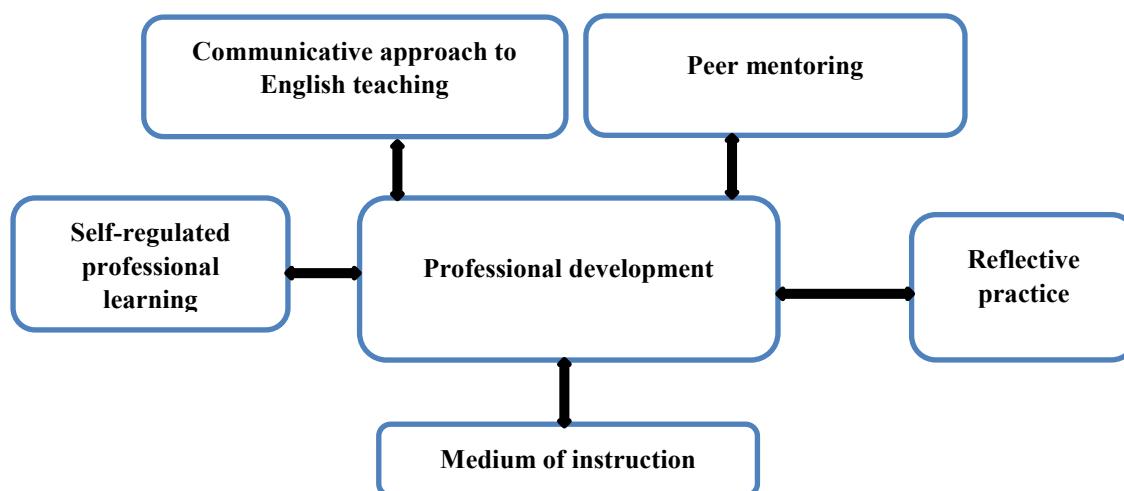


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework

Mother tongue used as a medium of instruction poses many challenges, especially when used in educational settings beyond primary education. Traditional methods of instruction that teachers use to facilitate learning in their classrooms can hinder learners’ effective and efficient learning of a second language – English in the case of my study – and this demands an improvement in methods of facilitating learning so that learners’ mastery of competencies in English is enhanced. To achieve an educational change, there is a need for teachers to become innovative as they facilitate instruction. Teachers need to select methods of facilitating instruction that are best suited to all learners in ways that are well thought through. Such teachers who think critically about their practice become reflective practitioners and they are flexible and innovative in their construction of new meaning for the betterment of their teaching practice (Du Toit, 2008).

1.6 CONCEPTUAL PARAMETERS

In this section I discuss the key concepts used in this study to ensure a clear understanding as they are frequently used throughout the reporting of my research.

1.6.1 Implementation

Ball (2010) defines implementation as the process of mobilising people and resources to carry out a new programme. For Ndamba (2013) to implement means to put into action what has earlier been agreed upon by a group of people working together. In this study, implementation was used as a process for carrying out a set of activities designed specifically for teachers of English to improve their English teaching facilitation and to improve learners' mastery of the language.

1.6.2 Facilitator of the professional development intervention

Concepts related to the professional development intervention are discussed separately in the subsections that follow.

1.6.2.1 Facilitator

In this study a *facilitator* of a professional development intervention refers to the teacher who is in charge of the implementation of the professional development intervention and the mentoring process of teachers of English for their professional development. My role as the facilitator of the professional development intervention was to offer guidance and support to my English teacher colleague to ensure improvement in our teaching practice and in learners' competent use of English.

1.6.2.2 Professional development

Mizell (2010) explains that *professional development* encompasses the strategy that schools and their districts put in place to ensure that educators continue to strengthen their teaching practice throughout their careers. In this study the construct *professional development* is used from the point of view of Tembe (2011) who emphasises that professional development is about growth in the profession, based on an individual's planning, and the desire to achieve higher and improved levels of knowledge, skills and values. All activities and new methods of facilitating learning that are implemented by teachers of English in their English classes to improve their teaching practice are considered part of their professional development.

1.6.2.3 Intervention

Intervention research is research that is done in a field context whereby the researcher works with practitioners to design and assess any activities or programmes that they introduce to their teaching practices and that are aimed at bringing a positive change in their teaching (Comer, Meier & Galinsky, 2004). In this study, *intervention* refers to innovative ideas that

teachers of English implemented in their classes to better their teaching practices through a change in methods to facilitate English learning as Echevarria (2009) proposes.

1.6.3 Teaching practice

Gauthier, Dembele, Bissonnette and Richard (2005) describe *teaching practice* as the strategies and activities and techniques that teachers implement during their teaching to support learners' achievement of the learning outcomes set in the curriculum. In this study *teaching practice* refers to different ways in which teachers of English facilitate learners' acquisition of knowledge and mastery of skills as a means of improving their approaches to teaching English in the classroom.

1.6.4 Teachers of English

A *teacher* is viewed as an expert and as someone who commands authority and trust, both in the school and outside (Ndamba, 2013). In the context of Lesotho MoET (2008) considers a teacher as someone from a higher learning institution who is registered by the teaching service department of Lesotho. Teachers specifically teaching English in a rural high school were participants in this study and are referred to as teachers of English.

1.6.5 Rural school

Rural schools refer to schools that are under-resourced, understaffed and lack the expertise needed to deliver quality curriculum (Du Toit, Van der Merwe & Rossouw, 2007). They are schools located beyond the borders of urban areas where a lack of learning material and basic services, like water and electricity, hinder the easy functional daily running of the school. A *rural school* in this study refers to schools that have extremely poor educational facilities and little funding, are characterised by learners and teachers with a low proficiency in English and schools where learners are disadvantaged by practices of multi-grade teaching and code switching in the language of instruction and learning (Webb, Lafon & Pare, 2010).

1.7 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODS

In this section I present an overview of the significant issues of how data was collected and documented. Analysis procedures and issues of quality criteria and ethical considerations adapted for the study are also presented. The design, methodological strategies, quality measures and ethical considerations are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Table 1.1 provides a summary of the methodology strategies that were relied on in this study. The table illustrates that a constructivist paradigm guided the direction of this study. Constructivism was employed as it allows reality to be created through one’s active real-life experiences to promote a learning process where teachers re-shape their own learning, beliefs and practices (Van Niekerk, 2005). Action research was the design that I used to explore the outcome of a facilitative professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practices of participating teachers in this study; it was implemented as the main aim of action research is to improve educational practice and to bring about change in the classroom through improving teachers’ effectiveness (Mertler, 2006). To provide an in-depth description of the teaching practice of teachers in question, data collection tools such as interviews, observations and an observation sheet, a questionnaire and reflective journals were used, and data was documented in the form of field notes, interview transcripts and in a reflective journal.

Table 1.1 below provides a summary of the methodological perspectives that guided the data collection and its analysis and the ethical measures that were followed.

Table 1.1: An outline of the research methodology

Paradigm	Constructivism
Research design	Action research
Approach	Qualitative and Quantitative approaches were utilised to produce qualitative and quantitative data
Selection of participants	Convenience sampling: An English teacher colleague, myself and ten learners from a Form B class.
Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group interviews with learners • Participant observation of classroom practice and observation sheet • Learner questionnaire • Reflective journal for participating teachers
Data documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field notes and observation sheet • Tape recorder and interview transcripts • Reflective journal
Data analysis	Thematic analysis

Measures of quality criteria	Credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and reflexivity.
Ethical considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed consent and voluntary participation • Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity • Protection from harm

The study utilised both qualitative and quantitative approaches to produce both qualitative and quantitative data with the view to constructing knowledge about real-world issues in a flexible way that allows multiple data collection methods to be used and the best strategies that address the research questions to be selected (Maree, 2007). The use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches were best suited to this research because they provided a more elaborate approach to addressing the research questions for the study and produced a deeper understanding of the teacher practice that was investigated (Maree, 2007). Furthermore, as the principal researcher in my study, I decided to work with ten learners from a Form B class in my school because Van der Stoep and Johnston (2009) consider convenience sampling as a means of involving people whom the researcher knows or people who live close to the research site. I purposefully selected the ten learners who were five boys and five girls using their performance levels; average, above average and below average. They were interviewed using two focus groups, and responded to a questionnaire to acquire in-depth data for my study. I analysed and interpreted data using thematic analysis as it organises, manages and analyses textual and audio data (Creswell, 2008).

1.8 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

To answer the research questions emanating from this study and provide an overall report of how the study was conducted, the study was documented in six main chapters as illustrated in Figure 1.2. A brief overview of each chapter is then provided.

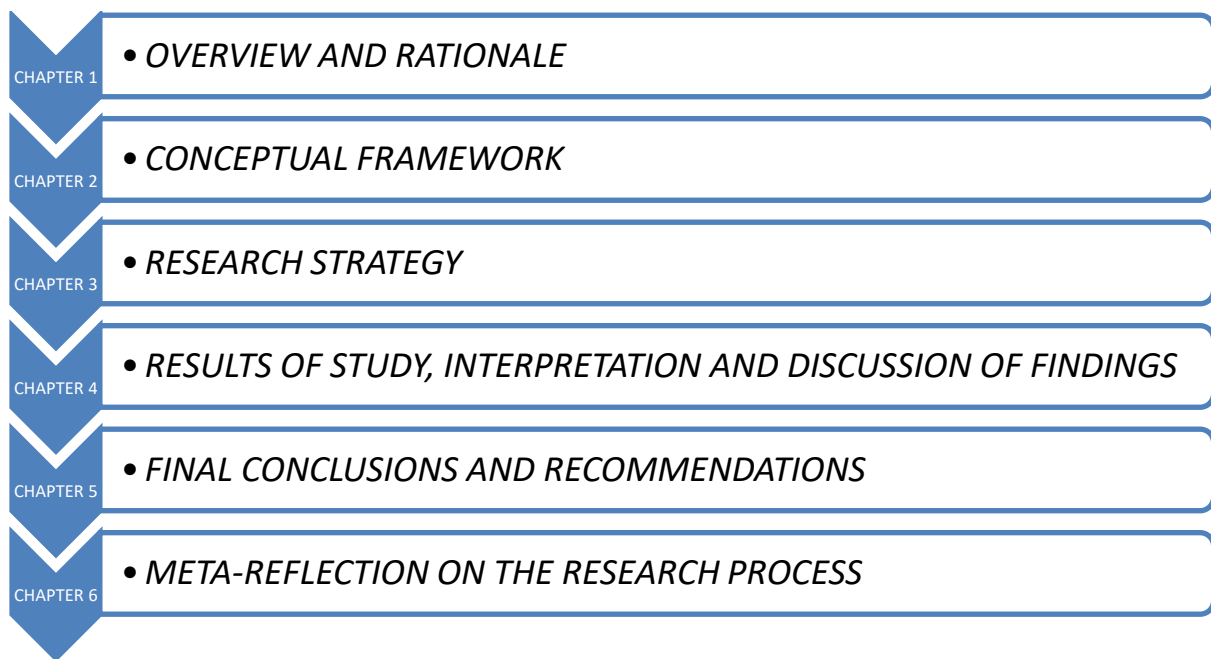


Figure 1.2: Visual representation of the outline of chapters

Chapter 1: Overview and Rationale. The first chapter includes an introduction to the research topic, the rationale and research questions. The purpose of the study, a brief discussion of methodology as well as the clarification of the concepts, are provided in terms of how they were used in the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review. This chapter provides a conceptual framework of the relevant and authoritative literature on the key concepts and theories relating to the implementation of a facilitative professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practices of teachers of English at a school from a local and international perspective.

Chapter 3: Research strategy. This chapter provides an outline of the research design and the entire research process. The proposed methods of data collection, data analysis and interpretation are outlined and justified.

Chapter 4: Results of the study, interpretation and discussion of findings. A thorough presentation and discussion of data obtained during the implementation of innovative approaches of facilitating learning within English classes at the school in question are addressed in this chapter. Data that was analysed is reported, followed by a detailed discussion of findings and the interpretation of results based on the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5: Final conclusions and recommendations. In this chapter the results of the study are linked to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The contributions and challenges of the study are presented, and recommendations for further research, practice and interventions are made.

Chapter 6: Meta-reflection on the research process. As action research includes continuous reflection, this chapter offers a reflection on the reflection – therefore the construct *meta-reflection*.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The chapter provided a detailed background to why I conducted my research and why the idea was worthy of being fully researched. Appropriate questions that informed the findings were posed and the rationale and purpose of the study clearly discussed. The design and methodology for the study, and key concepts were stated. The following chapter accounts for the conceptual framework selected for the study from relevant literature.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) describe a literature review as reading some background information that is published and is relevant to the research topic. Delpont and Fouché (2005) assert that a literature review helps a teacher-researcher to make clearer and informed understanding of the nature and meaning of the research problem under investigation. They further point out that a literature review builds a strong foundation for the concepts underpinning the study.

In this chapter I report on literature from various sources such as journal articles, books, dissertations, documents as well as various electronic sources pertaining to the implementation of a facilitative professional development intervention for improving the teaching practice of teachers of English at high school level that I have reviewed. The literature review takes the form of a conceptual framework that sheds light on concepts such as *professional development interventions, teaching practices, self-regulated professional learning, innovative ideas, reflective practice* as well as *mother tongue* as medium of instruction in schools as they contribute to understanding of how teachers of English in rural high schools can improve their teaching practice to promote their professional development.

In an attempt to acquire a more clearly informed understanding of teacher practices that lead to their professional development and learners' competent use of English, my literature review answers the following questions as posed by Maree (2012):

- What is known?
- What are the limitations in the existing literature?
- How can the proposed study contribute to the existing body of knowledge?

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

A conceptual framework is used in my study because it helps in informing my data collection process to be in line with the research questions and purpose of the study; it assists in validating the research questions posed in Chapter 1 against the literature from the concepts studied. The conceptual framework used draws from the literature reviewed pertaining to

implementing innovative methods of facilitating learning of English to avoid an overuse of mother tongue in English classes in my school.

The concepts represented in Figure 1.1 are the critical concepts that shed light on the teaching practice of teachers of English at a rural high school in Lesotho; they are discussed in detail to shed light on the professional development of the teachers of English and learners' proficient use of English.

2.3 MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN EDUCATION: THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONTEXT

All over the world, including in Lesotho and South Africa, teachers are facing new challenges of rapidly increasing numbers of linguistic and culturally diverse learners in their classrooms (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012). In the Lesotho education system, the problems of inadequate and poorly organised in-service teacher programme remain a hindrance in promoting quality education within the country (Lesotho Government, 2010). Although the Lesotho government's share in the control of education is increasing, it is nowhere near where it should be in terms of management and monitoring of education access, learner participation, and completion at any level (Ntho & Lesotho Council of NGOs, 2013).

Owing to the currently limited literature available on the research topic in the context of Lesotho, the literature review in this study explores the literature based on the South African (RSA) and international context, in relation to the Lesotho context.

Evans and Cleghorn (2012) report that English is the main language of instruction in many South African schools despite official policy that advocates bilingualism. They add that it still remains to be seen if the education system of South Africa will promote a bilingual or multilingual school system that gives a chance for all eleven official languages to be used as medium of instruction in schools.

Marungudzi (2009) maintains that a medium of instruction is a language used by a teacher and learners for the instruction and learning activities in the classroom. It is a language through which teachers and learners communicate with one another during the instruction and learning process, which plays a vital role in learners' comprehension and achievement level (Jawar, 2012). Ball (2010) describes *mother tongue* as a language that one has acquired in one's early years, and that normally becomes one's instrument of thought and communication. Some authors, such as Heugh (2006), suggest that learners should remain engaged in mother tongue instruction through the first six years of their formal education

because it is the language they speak at home and that they can learn to read and write easily. He declares that, when learners are competent in using their mother tongue, it becomes easy for them to switch to an official language, such as English, when used beyond the Foundation Phase of their education. Evans and Cleghorn (2012) maintain that the development of literacy in two or more languages can help learners to see different representations of the same idea, while at the same time acquiring skills that can assist them to function later on in varied social contexts.

Mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools has been a thorny issue in the language policies of many countries since the early 1960s (Mamabolo, 2009). In the South African context before 1994, English and Afrikaans were compulsory languages for all other racial groups such as White, Coloured, African and Indians in the curriculum although English continued to be dominant as a medium of instruction in education (Gabela, 2007). The dominant use of English as medium of instruction in South African schools left no choice to speakers of minority languages.

To accommodate minority languages as a medium of instruction in education in the Southern African context, the then minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, delivered a speech at a language conference in Pretoria in 2006 in which the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction was extended from the Foundation Phase to the Intermediate Phase (up to Grade 6). Madiba (2012) and Benson (2004) argue that the six years of mother tongue instruction suggested by the minister is still an early switch to English because learners at this stage have to proceed to English before developing strong foundational academic language in their home language. Therefore, extending the use of mother tongue in early education to a reasonable number of years until tangible results of this effort can be harnessed may significantly contribute to quality education in Africa (Prah, 2009). For Prinsloo (2007) inadequate use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction hinders the acquisition of basic skills of an acceptable standard and denies children their right to choice of a language that they find suitable as a medium of instruction.

Irving (2005) undertook a study in Gauteng province model C schools. According to Webb, Lafon and Pare (2010), model C schools are schools that in the apartheid era mostly admitted Asian, Black and Coloured learners and received state funding of up to 75%. Most white schools became predominant as Model C schools and today these schools are called Ex-model C schools (Van Rooyen & Rossouw, 2007). The aim of Irving's study was to compare learners' achievement in comprehension reading in Model C schools with learners who began

their education in their mother tongue. It was found that the 5th and 7th graders in Ex-model C schools where English was used as a medium of instruction from the Foundation Phase performed worse than their peers who began childhood education in their mother tongue.

A study by Vermeulen (2001) using a questionnaire was conducted in the Vaal Triangle to understand the perceptions of teachers of the language of instruction and learning in their second language classrooms (English classes). It was found that teachers do not use English as medium of instruction in their second language classes but rather African languages in and out of class, even beyond the Foundation Phase. These teacher practices were found to contribute to the lack of quality teaching and to a low mastery of English as a second language.

2.4 MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN EDUCATION: THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Internationally immigrant learners in different countries face similar challenges, such as difficulties adapting to a new culture and unfamiliarity with new languages (Suarez, 2011). At the secondary level, teachers assume that learners have already mastered sufficient levels of oral language and literacy skills in English that will enable them to participate effectively in language-rich content classrooms (Harper & De Jong, 2004). However, the level of proficiency and academic achievement for English language learners lags significantly behind in comparison to that of their native-English speaking peers (Echevarria *et al.*, 2006). In USA language classes, little or no accommodation is made for the specific language development needs of English language learners and this remains a challenge to the success of these learners (Short, Fidelman & Louguit, 2012). In the UK, although the second language learner population is increasing and 32 000 learners arrived in 2005 to study there, these learners were regarded as contributing to lower standards of performance in many secondary schools as they came with different needs that could not be accommodated (Reynolds, 2008).

Harper and De Jong (2004) propose that teachers who teach second language classes should not assume that the learners will progress toward English language proficiency at the same rate as learners who speak English as their mother tongue. Hassanzadeh and Nabifar (2011) stipulate that if the mother tongue is maintained and supported in educational settings, it plays a fruitful part in the instruction and learning processes because it helps learners experience less difficulty in learning and comprehending different subjects. Cummins (2007)

suggests that teaching English should build on learners' prior knowledge of their mother tongue by linking English concepts with learners' mother tongue as these help learners to gain a deeper understanding of how to use mother tongue effectively in learning English as a foreign language. Benson (2004) argues that the use of the mother tongue at least in the early years should be encouraged so that learners can acquire and develop literacy skills that can be gradually transferred from their mother tongue to a second language. Switching a learner's language of instruction to all-English can cause a cognitive slow-down for English language learners that can last for several years (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

The majority of learners in USA classrooms speak another language than English as their mother tongue; these learners spend most of their time in classrooms where instruction is in English (Harper & De Jong, 2004). Van Patten (1993) is of the view that to develop the advanced language skills necessary to communicate for academic purposes, learners in second language classrooms need exposure to academic language in a second language that is comprehensible, by being allowed to become active participants in second language learning. He explains that when English language learners are actively involved in a second language, they can draw upon a more sophisticated linguistic and conceptual base than young children. A study undertaken by Short *et al.* (2012) in middle and high school second language classes in New Jersey was aimed at improving the academic language proficiency of English language learners entering secondary school in the USA. Teachers used varied and best teaching approaches that actively engaged learners in learning English over a period of two years; the findings revealed that there was an improvement in the language proficiency and scores of English Language learners after the use of these varied teaching approaches.

Research conducted by Hayes (2009) on secondary school teachers teaching English as second language in Thailand focused on how their teaching practice contributed to the acquisition of English by learners learning English as a second language. Hayes (2009) found that more teachers had a need for using English to facilitate learning in their English classes than the mother tongue. I agree with Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011) who indicate that the best way for learners to learn to communicate in a second language such as English is by actually communicating in that language. For the purpose of my study, participating teachers of English maximised the acquisition of a second language such as English by facilitating learning in classes through mainly employing English as a second language.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2011) researched the language competencies of learners in English medium schools in India in comparison to the language competencies of learners in regional

government schools where mother tongue was used as medium of instruction throughout the grades. Her findings revealed that learners in English medium schools demonstrated that they knew English better, but after eight years they struggled because they had not been able to develop a high level of CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), neither in English nor in their mother tongue. Therefore she is of the view that mother tongue should be used in early education to improve learners' achievement of learning outcomes even at a later stage in their education.

Gulzar (2010) used questionnaires and interviews to determine the perceptions of English teachers in Pakistan of the idea of using mother tongue, particularly that of code-switching in English second language classes. The results indicated that although the majority of the teachers did not know the limits to which they could use code-switching, and for which reason they should code-switch to cater for their learners, they encouraged systematic employment of code-switching in English classes at beginner levels to facilitate acquisition of English as a second language. Macaro (2009) agrees that code-switching has no negative impact on learners' acquisition of a second language and that if code-switching is used systematically in English classes it may improve the acquisition of English as a second language.

The review of literature related to the mother tongue used as medium of instruction in the international and southern African context encourages mother tongue to be used as medium of instruction in educational settings, especially at early stage. Then, from this level of education, there has to be a switch to English as a second language. If mother tongue continues to be used, it should serve a specific purpose but using English should be maximised in second language classes to support learners in becoming competent in mastering English as a second language. However, this is nonetheless not a common practice in the English second language classrooms of a rural high school in the school in question as mother tongue continues to be overused. My study aims to gain insight into how improved teacher practices in English classes could affect the teaching practice of teachers of English and their professional development as well as learners' mastery of English as a subject.

2.5 IMPORTANCE OF SYSTEMATICALLY USING MOTHER TONGUE AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES

Gabela and others state that strictness against mother tongue usage in English classrooms is decreasing and effective learning could be achieved more readily through the use of mother

tongue as a medium of instruction in second language classes (Gabela, 2007; Yavuz, 2012). The way in which learners learning English as second language learn to speak, listen, read and write English is different from that of a native speaker (Elliot, 2008). Therefore Skutnubb-Kangas (2011) encourages teachers to facilitate learning in mother tongue, especially at the initial stage of school because mother tongue acts as a prerequisite for more abstract thinking and reasoning necessary in the higher grades and in later life. Learners entering school are able to learn best when their mother tongue is used as medium of instruction, and a second language such as English is more easily acquired if the learners already have a firm grasp of their mother tongue (Dutcher, 2003; Foley, 2008; Kavaliauskiene, 2009; Sailors, Hoffman, Pearson, Beretvas & Matthee, 2010).

Ndamba (2008) argues that when learners are confident in using their mother tongue, the skills they have acquired can easily be transferred to any second language. However, I support Lin's (2008) view that more opportunities for using English should be provided in English classes, especially at a high school level; more opportunities for practising using English than the mother tongue should be provided to enable learners to master not only English vocabulary and grammar but also the way in which English is used in academic subjects. Scholars such as (Harmer (2007), Hayes (2009), McMillan and Rivers (2011), and Yavuz (2012) noted that during the process of facilitating learning in second language classes, mother tongue can be utilised only when explaining vocabulary, offering grammar instruction, for classroom management purposes and to enhance the general social atmosphere in the classroom. My research aimed at using only English to facilitate learning of English, using innovative methods. However, mother tongue was used for basic instructions and classroom management purposes as well as for creating a social atmosphere in the class because without mother tongue, every child's right to learn and to become a skilful adult who is able to participate independently in society is at risk (Churr, 2012).

2.6 PROBLEMS POSED BY USING MOTHER TONGUE AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES

The use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in educational settings is highly encouraged in early childhood education. However, Harper and De Jong (2004) insist that too much reliance on mother tongue can have complicating effects on how learners learn a second language. Marungudzi (2009) is of the view that teaching in the mother tongue has manifested in more difficulties than instruction through the medium of English, even at secondary school level. He argues that mother tongue instruction often results in less

meaningful learning because there are no textbooks in the mother tongue that can be used to teach many subjects and that the mother tongue has limited vocabulary. Kavaliauskiene (2009) and Cook (2001) state that the negative impact of mother tongue use in second language classes is that too much reliance on the mother tongue may undermine the interaction and exposure to English, which is essential in learning English as a second language. A study of the experiences of learners in a second language classroom in Pakistan revealed that overuse of Sindhi or Urdu as their mother tongue made learners feel very uncomfortable when they had to learn the English subject matter by means of English rather than when their mother tongue was used as a medium of instruction. However, learner performance in the secondary level where mother tongue was used was better than in the Intermediate Phase where the medium of instruction was English.

2.7 OVERVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section I discuss how the professional development of teachers contributes to reshaping the teaching practice of English teachers in especially rural schools. The professional development of teachers is discussed because if teachers engage in such activities in their schools, their teaching practice together with the academic performance of learners in English can improve.

Professional development, teacher learning, and teacher change have been the subject of discussion in literature in recent years. The focus is on case studies of classroom teaching, assessment of detailed approaches to improving instruction and learning, and surveys regarding experiences of teachers about their pre- and in-service professional development (Suarez, 2011). Professional development forms the essence of this study because through developing themselves professionally, participating teachers in the school in question adopted practices that contributed not only to their professional growth and improved teaching practices but also to the learners' academic prowess in English. Milligan and Littlejohn (2014) encourage all professionals in different career fields to take responsibility for their own professional development by blending formal courses, which emphasise factual knowledge, with non-formal opportunities from their practice environment to learn experiential, socio-cultural or self-regulative knowledge that will enhance their own practice.

Mizell (2010) describes professional development as the different types of educational experience that are related to teachers' individual work, which they engage in so that they could improve their performance in the world of work. No matter how good pre-service

professional development for teachers is, it cannot be expected to prepare teachers for all the challenges they will face in their careers. I agree on the view of Jovanova-Mitkovska (2010) who argues that professional development is vital for every teacher's effective teaching and that it should start from the beginning of preparation for the teaching profession and then continue until the end of life. As teachers, we are faced with new learning needs in our different classrooms on a daily basis; these require us to advance our professional development. My study aimed at supporting the professional development of teachers of English at my school, based on the following benefits of professional development contemplated by Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009, 46-53):

- Professional development encourages teachers to facilitate learning in a way that promotes active involvement of learners in their own learning.
- Professional development helps teachers choose the best methods to facilitate learning that help learners to learn how to learn and to master language skills.
- Professional development provides opportunities for active and hands-on learning.
- Professional development enables teachers to acquire new knowledge, apply it to practice, and reflect on the results with colleagues.
- Professional development is part of a school reform effort that links curriculum, assessment and standards of professional learning.
- Professional development is collaborative and collegial.
- Professional development is intensive and sustained over time.

2.7.1 Teacher professional development

Various factors in the world of work, such as teaching experience, school culture, school administration as well as job satisfaction could affect the professional development of teachers (Ozer & Beycioglu, 2010). However, many activities exist that are relevant to improving the professional development of language teachers. It has been noted by Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) that the most useful professional development activities that can be utilised in English classes are those that emphasise active facilitation of learning, assessment, observation and reflection rather than abstract discussions. Dall'Alba and Sandberg (2006) underscore the fact that teachers who become innovative in their practice and use methods of facilitating learning in language classes that create opportunities for learners to find information on their own develop professionally and remain up-to-date with the aim of bringing about a change in their classes. For Killen (2010) learners who have a freedom of choice in terms of using their own ideas and thoughts in a classroom situation

develop a positive attitude and outlook. Buysse, Sparkman and Wesley (2003) maintain that knowledge is situated in the day-to-day lived experiences of teachers and that knowledge is best understood through critical reflection with other teachers who share the same experiences. My study created a platform for teachers of English to engage in collaborative structures, such as sharing lessons and using systematic note taking to inform us about our work. Our collaboration as participating teachers was done based on the idea of Vescio, Ross and Adam (2008) who regard collaboration among teachers with a focus on learners' learning, teacher authority, and continuous teacher professional learning as factors promoting improved classroom practices. According to the South African Council for Educators (2008) and Suarez (2011), teachers who learn from their life experiences, from their own professional practices, their peers and seniors in their schools, the teaching profession at large and from their professional reading with a view to improving learners' learning contribute to their professional development. Yurtsever (2013) maintains that it is the responsibility of a teacher to select the relevant activities and learning resources to be used in the classroom that will contribute to effective learning and learners' mastery of language skills.

Guskey (2000) considers improving professional skills and knowledge for all teachers as valuable to promoting teachers' competence and the academic performance of their learners. According to authors such as Jovanova-Mitkovska (2010), Rouse (2007) and Russell (2013) the development of teachers' competence that contributes to improving their teaching practice could be achieved through professional development measures, such as workshops that provide teachers with learning resources that will help them to facilitate learning effectively. However, during the interventions in my study, professional discussion sessions in the form of peer mentoring sessions with my colleague were used to facilitate sharing ideas and views on how our teaching practice could be improved.

The purpose of a professional development programme should be to create opportunities for professional learning during which teachers acquire professional competence that will enable them to facilitate learning effectively, no matter their professional background (Day & Sachs, 2004). My study contributed to our competence and confidence in teaching English as a subject through positive and valuable changes to our teaching practice. Suarez (2011) maintains that teachers who work together in professional learning communities to ensure that learners are not only taught but that they also learn effectively, gain a sense of commitment and joy of teaching.

Guskey (2000) claims that professional development of teachers in the world of work occurs every time a learning opportunity is presented, an assessment is administered, a curriculum is reviewed or a professional journal or other academic publication is read. I agree with Lessing and De Witt (2007) and Maistry (2008) who regard the professional development of teachers as an ongoing process that should address the needs of teachers in a specific context with the aim of improving their teaching practices. According to Russell (2013), teachers of English may enhance their professional competence by participating in professional development programmes, such as workshops, seminars and conferences as these have proved to be valuable to their teaching practices. However, during the intervention in this study, only workshops for mentoring sessions with my teacher colleague were used to share ideas on improving our teaching practices.

For the purpose of my study, the following section discusses only the professional development programmes that were implemented during the intervention, namely peer observation and professional reading that were aimed at improving our teaching practice, our professional development and the academic performance of learners in English.

2.7.2 Peer Observations

Mizell (2010) considers observation as a mode of professional development process where teachers are observing their teaching practice. Observation can take the form of teachers observing other teachers or as an individual teacher observing his or her practice while in action or after action – watching a video recording, for example. Participating teachers observed one another's English classes during the implementation of the innovative ideas in teaching English and shared ideas that helped them to facilitate learning effectively and improve our teaching practice. By sharing teaching practice and engaging in professional sharing of information, ideas and opinions with my teacher colleague, we were able to build a collaborative culture that fostered learning in professional learning communities (Starkey, Yates, Meyer, Hall, Taylor, Stevens & Toia, 2009; Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011). Eckert (2006) encourages teachers to work together in a socially supportive environment because they are able to help one another improve their professional practice, effectiveness and reach their full potential. Other benefits of peer observation that served as an enriching experience in classroom practices for both our learners and us as participating teachers were that learners became more effective and active in finding information for themselves and our professional development improved. This is in accordance with what Russell (2013) found.

2.7.3 Professional reading

Twenty-first century classrooms rely on effective teachers to possess a conceptual understanding of the knowledge and capabilities of their learners; therefore teachers need to devise appropriate methods of facilitating learning that accommodate the strengths and weaknesses of their learners (Suarez, 2011). Teacher professional learning is seen as a critical component that contributes to enhancing the quality of instruction and learning outcomes. Ramsey (2000) states that professional reading is necessary throughout a teacher's career and that it starts from initial undergraduate education, through school practicum, internship, induction to ongoing lifelong learning. Throughout my research I continuously reflected on my teaching practice when the innovative methods of facilitating learning of English were implemented to grow in my teaching profession as suggested by Du Toit (2016). Teacher learning can occur in various ways in the world of work and in their everyday lives, and contributes to the professional development of teachers.

Hoban and Herrington (2005) declare that technology is increasingly becoming a part of our everyday home and work lives and therefore needs to be infused into the work habits of teachers. Throughout my research, as a facilitator of the intervention, I engaged in intensive reading on the internet and various sources of academic publications before implementing any of the innovative ideas in my class. This assisted me in using the best possible methods of facilitating learning in the classroom that helped all learners to be fully engaged in their own learning. Jovanova-Mitkovska (2010) asserts that teachers who have an easy internet connection in their schools are able to deepen their knowledge. Based on new insights gained from their studying through the internet, teachers can acquire new skills and techniques that could assist them in improving their practice. Internet usage was also helpful to me as the facilitator of the intervention because I was able to support my teacher colleague by identifying and sharing ideas and strategies of facilitating learning that she employed in her English classes to improve her practice.

Recent studies on professional development by Tembe (2011) explored professional development interventions for improving the teaching practices of lower primary school teachers in Mozambique. She came to the conclusion that among the many ways of achieving growth in their teaching practice, teachers preferred regular meetings, peer observation and classroom observation as the preferred models of intervention for their own continuous professional development.

Phenduka (2013) researched the internal quality of a distance education programme in Lesotho. He found that central to the programme is the need for the continuity of staff development as this assured the quality of a teacher education programme offered at a Lesotho institution. Professional learning that is aimed at developing teachers professionally occurs in many different aspects of practice, including their classrooms, their school communities and professional development courses or workshops with the aim of improving the quality of learning and the general teaching process (Lessing & De Witt, 2007; Opfer *et al.*, 2011). I agree with Richards and Farrell (2005) who emphasise that teacher development serves as a long-term goal that contributes to growth in understanding the process of facilitating learning and of ourselves as teachers.

Mlombo (2013) observed eight language teachers in Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces participating in continuing professional development workshops offered by the district facilitators or any other education organisation with the aim of offering them opportunities for professional development relating to aspects of language teaching. In his study, Mlombo (2013) found that although workshop facilitators' methods of facilitating workshops for language teachers are informed by certain professional learning theories, they do not use innovative methods that could help teachers improve practice in their language classes. Innovative methods of facilitating learning of English were employed in my study with a view to improving our professional development and contributing to learners' mastery of competency in English. In his study on the perceptions of, experiences in and expectations for professional development of Foundation Phase teachers in the selected schools in Limpopo rural areas, Somo (2007) established that the professional development of teachers is vital to improving the performance of individual teachers and their schools. He maintains that teachers who plan and prepare learning opportunities prior to teaching, create a positive learning environment where learners are actively involved in their own learning. I agree with Desimone (2007) that the professional development of teachers in different educational contexts is essential because it contributes to improvement in the quality of education of that particular society.

2.8 PEER MENTORING

Fajana (2002) defines mentoring as the process of using specially selected and trained individuals to provide care and advice that will help to develop other employees. Greyling and Du Toit (2008) regard mentoring as raising employees' awareness of how they construct

their work-related realities to promote conscious choices, a sense of control and wellness. Teachers need to enrich their knowledge and improve their abilities regarding instruction and learning (Mohono-Mahlatsi & Van Tonder, 2006). Therefore peer mentoring in my study was seen from the point of view of Braimoh (2008) who regards mentoring as a highly effective means that leads to teacher professional development. Throughout my research peer mentoring acted as an enriching learning opportunity for all of those who were involved (Du Toit, 2012). Participating teachers of English interacted with one another during the study for purposes of mentoring one another and this created a platform that was helpful for both institutional growth and individual professional learning while simultaneously contributing to a change in our teaching practice (Burley & Pomphrey, 2011). Zachary (2005) mentions that effective mentoring is not only about a mentor and a mentee but involves the world of work that provides a climate that encourages people at all levels to facilitate learning, grow and learn from one another to create a mentoring relationship that leads to employees who are more productive.

Mentoring was used in this study by participating teachers because it assisted mentors (in this case myself as the facilitator of the intervention) to show acceptance of and support for mentees (in this case my English teacher colleague) to help her set and achieve goals that led to the betterment of our practice (Short, 2012). This interaction supported us in making decisions based on our contexts, our classroom goals, acquiring current and new professional knowledge, and identifying the needs of our learners (Vescio *et al.*, 2008). The interaction between mentors and mentees was a valuable process that assisted in the professional and personal development of teachers. For Wilkins (2008), mentoring one another as colleagues in the work setting contributes to teachers' self-confidence, their self-esteem and their readiness to implement new ideas in their teaching. He elaborates that mentoring creates a platform for teachers to identify what went well during their classroom practices while also outlining areas that need further attention.

2.8.1 Mentoring sessions (Workshops)

Learning that happens at work in the form of formal, deliberate training or any professional development activity is identified as learning that contributes to the development of different forms of expertise and an improvement in teacher practice and learner achievement (Milligan & Littlejohn, 2014). Participating teachers of English in this research engaged in a collaborative effort in which we received support from other teachers in the school during mentoring workshops that were presented at school by myself as the facilitator with my

colleague to share knowledge and values that address the needs of all learners. Participation in professional learning communities facilitated our professional development that was driven by the need of participating teachers, which was to achieve our goal of improving our teaching practice (Vescio *et al.*, 2008).

According to Guskey and Yoon (2009) effective workshops focus on the implementation of research-based instructional practices, involve active-learning experiences for participants, and provide teachers with opportunities to adapt the practices to their unique classroom situations. The mentoring sessions enhanced participating teachers' enthusiasm for attending further mentoring sessions as we were able to develop excellence by means of competence, and enjoyment by allowing participating teachers to share their experiences and knowledge with one another. I valued the practice where workshops were intended to benefit all teachers in the school in a way that once teachers attended workshops, they would create an environment that allowed them to share information with their colleagues and then look for ways to incorporate the new information in their classroom practices (Bean, 2004).

Mohono-Mahlatsi and Van Tonder (2006) consider effective mentoring to contribute to reduction in professional isolation and provide support and feedback with regard to performance. Clutterbuck and Abbott (2012) claim that mentoring can also contribute to talent recruitment, stress reduction, confidence in mentors and mentees and productivity in various work settings. When teachers work together in a socially supportive environment, they improve their professional practice and reach their full potential, which in turn helps in developing others (Eckert, 2006).

As a facilitator of the intervention research and as a mentor, I held mentoring sessions for my teacher colleague and my role was to help her (my peer) to be knowledgeable in, and become a successful part of the research aimed at improving our teaching practice in the English classes (Kram, 1983; Levinson *et al.*, 1978). According to Jason and Rhodes (1989) peers are more credible role models than any other person, and thus recipients of tutoring and helping interventions are more likely to respond to them positively. Although a mentee learns from a mentor, I fully support Katkus (2007) and Le Cornu (2005) who suggest that mentors should also be open to learning from their mentees as this was relevant to my role as a facilitator of the intervention and a mentor in this study. However, Mohono-Mahlatsi and Van Tonder (2006) suggest that the relationship between mentor and mentee needs to be built on mutual trust, respect and professionalism; this creates an environment that is conducive to encouraging honest sharing of information and reflecting on experiences. I argue that these

behaviours between myself and my English teacher colleague promoted a culture of sharing that contributed to effective instruction and learning environments in the school and in our English classes; they contributed to improving our teaching practices. Acting as a peer mentor allowed me as a facilitator to think about my own experiences and respond personally to any situation that arose during the implementation of innovative ideas in our English classes with my fellow colleague (Newton & Ender, 2010).

Figure 2.1 below represents the mentoring process that my colleague and I were engaged in throughout my study to improve the strategies of facilitating learning within our English classes. The mentoring process by Keller (2005), as presented in Figure 2.1, was adopted for use in this research because the processes contributed to quality mentoring and improved teaching practices of teachers of English in the school.

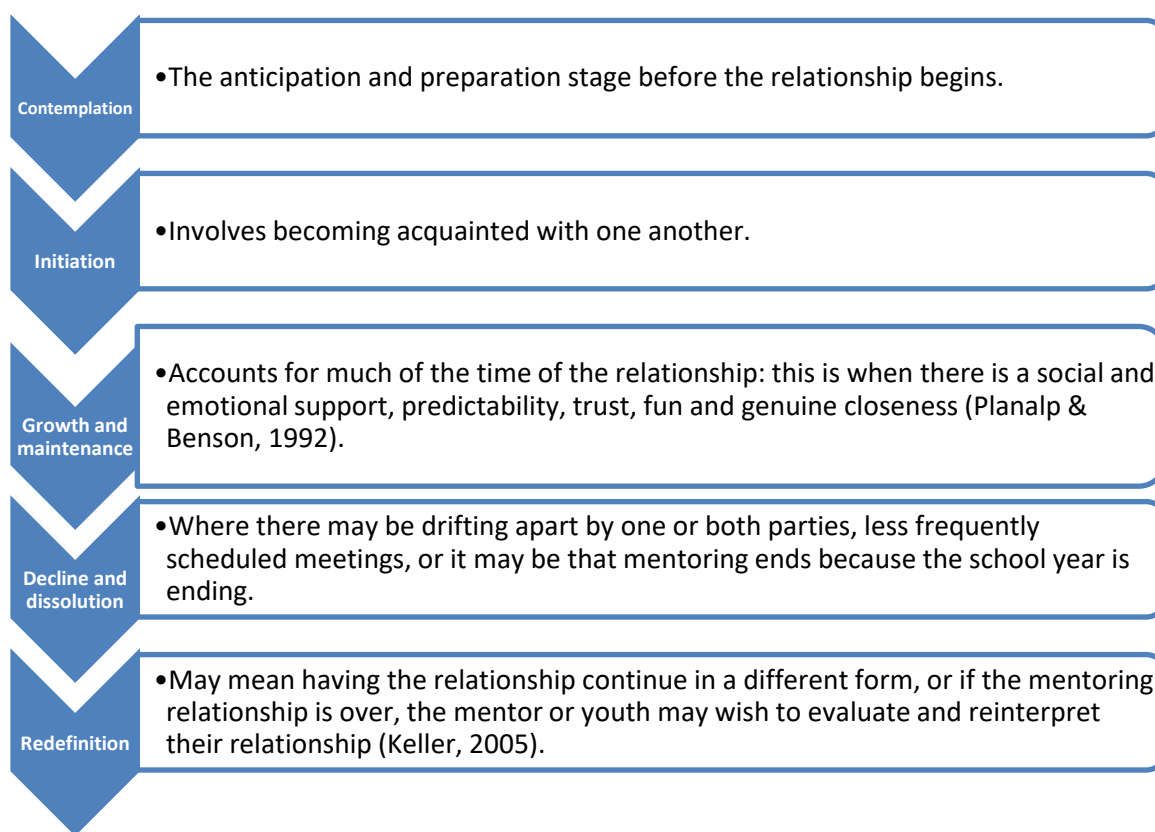


Figure 2.1: The mentoring processes by Keller (2005)

2.9 COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Moyo (2001) regards communicative language teaching as a way of learning a language successfully by communicating real meaning through the target language. A communicative classroom promotes language acquisition by encouraging expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning and by emphasising learners' fluency in the target language because

learners become meaningfully engaged in their learning (Kumaravadivelu, 1993). Brown (2007) highlights the following characteristics of a communicative learning environment:

- The emphasis is on the communicative function of language and classroom goals are not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
- Teaching is learner-centred and not teacher-centred.
- The focus of the process of facilitating learning should be to encourage learners to communicate and use language to perform various learning tasks.

Facilitation of learning through a communicative approach stresses the need for teachers to create a learning environment that stimulates self-regulated and active learning, acknowledge differences between learners, and an environment that is connected to authentic and real-life contexts (De Kock, Slegers & Voeten, 2004). According to Harper and De Jong (2004) effective teaching in a second language classroom requires English language teachers who have an understanding of the language learning needs of their learners as well as the language demands of their subject areas and their classrooms.

The quality of English instruction and learning can be achieved through communicative language teaching because language is seen as a tool of communication rather than as a subject for academic study. In all educational settings, learning opportunities need to be presented in a more flexible way that creates opportunities for learners to share their ideas and knowledge with one another so that learners of different learning needs can benefit from the learning process (Hoban & Herrington, 2005). Hayes (2009) insists that classroom instruction should employ many, varied and frequently imaginative approaches that encourage English language learners to communicate through interaction in the target language. Short *et al.* (2012) encourage teachers to promote an effective communicative environment in their second language classrooms by changing their instructional practices and using methods of facilitating learning that create a platform for learners to talk to one another with a view to instilling a sense of elaboration, justification, and persuasion among learners. I acted the role of a facilitator in my class by promoting learning environments that were inspirational for all learners and that catered for the differences among them as Du Toit (2016) suggests. Rossouw (2009) suggests that teachers who are able to solve problems regarding their teaching practice and make thoughtful and reflective decisions on ways of facilitating learning in a way that makes learners actively find information for themselves in the classroom develop professionally. Al-Mekhlafi (2011) encourages the use

of group work activities in the language classroom as these give learners a certain degree of control over their own learning.

A case study conducted in Japanese secondary schools regarding the use of the communicative approach in language classrooms revealed that the overuse of the mother tongue is viewed as a barrier to effective instruction, and that efforts to encourage teachers to move beyond traditional grammar-translation methods and adapt a more communicative approach to learning are being put into place (McMillan & Rivers, 2009). Although communicative language teaching encourages an English-only approach to learning, I regard the idea of Rivers (2011) that mother tongue should not be totally abandoned as true, but should be used judiciously and selectively to enhance the effectiveness of communicative language teaching.

A study was conducted by Hayes (2009) on non-native English second language teachers in Thailand to explore their teaching experiences. The results indicated that teachers supported a communicative approach to language teaching by placing a high value on the need to use English to communicate in English classrooms. In a different study, Al-Mekhlafi (2011) undertook a study in the Gulf region of Arabia to determine the attitudes of English foreign language teachers to communicative approaches in teaching English as a second language and how they implement them in their classrooms. It was observed that EFL teachers in this region use communicative approaches moderately in their English classes. Ye (2007), and Christ and Makarani (2009) found that communicative language teaching principles in classrooms are rarely found and that only a fairly limited use of communicative principles are evident in syllabus design, structuring of learning opportunities, and content. There is still a need for improvement in the use of communicative language teaching in the English classes.

2.10 PROFESSIONAL SELF-REGULATED LEARNING

Boekaerts and Corno (2005) maintain that there is no single straightforward definition of self-regulated learning. Postholm (2011) regards self-regulated learning as the learner's thoughts, feelings together with planned and adapted actions that are all managed by the learner to reach set learning goals. In Brockett and Hiemstra's (1991) view, self-regulated learning is aligned with being self-directed in that self-regulated learning enables an individual to take primary responsibility for personal learning endeavours to develop the skills needed to continue learning throughout life. When applied to various educational contexts Pintrich (2004) argues that self-regulated learning can promote an effective learning environment that

contributes to improving the teaching practice of teachers by mediating the relationship between the context, learner characteristics and performance. Du Toit (2012) declares that learners vary in the way they learn, and they cannot plainly see the importance of what they learn and how to learn it, therefore self-regulation must become part of the daily life of a teacher. Self-regulation offers teachers the opportunity to promote specific learning strategies that will help learners to attain expected learning outcomes, and to monitor their progress to ensure timely intervention or adjustments in strategy use if such a need may arise (Zimmerman, 2000). Through professional self-regulation, teachers are able to create a learning environment in which learners are allowed and inspired to design their own learning experiences (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005). I share the view of Du Toit (2012) who points out that our professional growth as teachers is an intrapersonal act that has to do with our becoming self-regulated, flexible, reflective practitioners who can monitor our own progress.

Figure 2.2 below shows the professional self-regulated learning model that was adopted during my study to improve our teaching practice and professional development as teachers of English in the school. The model was used particularly to guide the recording of our reflective journals.

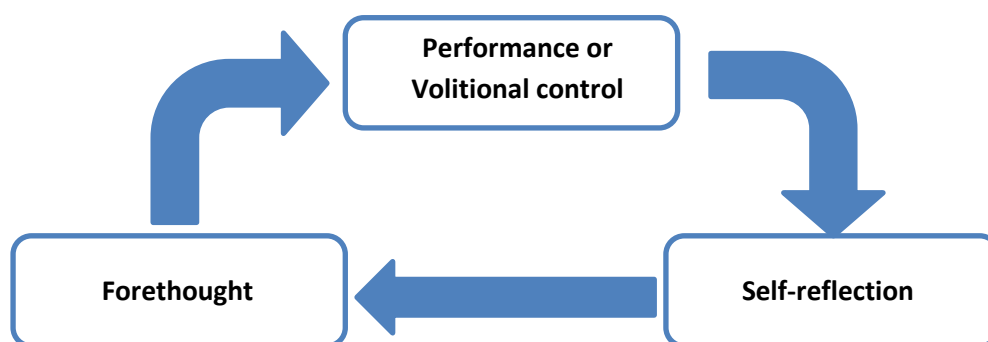


Figure 2.2: The self-regulated learning model (Zimmerman & Schunk, 1998)

Figure 2.2 shows that implementing innovative methods of facilitating learning in our English classes involved three different stages. The model begins with the setting of educational objectives for innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English to be implemented in our classes and the discussions and decisions that teachers engaged in in selecting the best approach for facilitating learning that contributed to promoting all learners to become actively engaged in their own learning process prior to facilitating learning. This process can be conducted individually or collaboratively with other colleagues with a view to promoting a culture of professional learning and creating a learning organisation within the

world of work (Du Toit *et al.*, 2010). Lessing and De Witt (2007) state that self-regulated learning promotes flexibility in terms of the sharing of existing knowledge with peers and enhancing support of peer groups. The second cycle for performance entails putting into practice appropriate learning strategies to evaluate learning outcomes that have been planned for. The last cycle is about reflection on classroom practice to find out what went well and what needs further improvement (self-reflection). By becoming self-regulated professionals, teachers develop a better understanding of their own behaviour and skills that may contribute to improving or destroying their learning attempts (Baruch, 2006). Darling-Hammond (2006) argues that self-regulated professional learning promotes critical reflection and assists teachers in helping one another to adapt knowledge to specific contexts.

Zimmerman and Schunk (2001) suggest that improvement in learning can be achieved through motivational strategies that get individuals to select structure, and create advantageous learning environments that provide a broader choice regarding their learning proactively. Teachers have to be exposed to self-generated thoughts, feelings and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to help in the attainment of personal goals through forethought, performance and self-reflection (Zimmerman, 2000). When applied to teaching practice, the cyclical stages of professional learning create an opportunity for teachers to reflect on their practice and devise suitable learning strategies to improve the academic performance. A study on the teaching practice of teachers was conducted by Oostdam *et al.* (2013) in a secondary school in the Netherlands to find out how they enhance self-regulated learning during facilitating learning. It was found that teachers promote innovative learning environments and that these innovative learning environments focus more sharply on the learning process and require learners to become active and independent. In my study I aligned myself with the idea of Bembenutty (2008) who suggests that effective self-regulation entails setting appropriate educational goals for learners, implementing effective learning strategies, monitoring learners' academic progress, and reflecting on one's practices with the aim of improving classroom practice.

Zimmerman (2000) encourages teachers to use methods of facilitating learning that are suitable for the task at hand and the setting so that learners can master a skill successfully. This will enable teachers to organise instructional media, and a range of assessments for their learners prior to facilitating learning in order to improve the learning standards of their learners (Dole & Donaldson, 2006). Zimmerman (2008) declares that self-regulation can also be best applied in other forms of social learning, such as seeking help from peers and other

teachers and this collective participation from teachers can promote effective professional development. The literature from (Knowles; 1975; Zimmerman; 2000 and Zimmerman & Schunk; 2001) was used to contemplate the benefits of adopting self-regulated learning in our teaching practice:

- Improving our motivation and responsibility for own learning endeavours.
- Promoting our psychological maturation and self-sufficiency through becoming independent.
- Improving our performance through reflection.
- Improving the academic performance of learners.

Implied in this role of engaging in self-regulated learning to better teaching practice is that teachers of English have to engage in personal and professional development activities, such as ongoing reflection on their practices, peer mentoring and communicative approaches to facilitating the learning of English, which was explored through action research in our English classes as this contributed to competence and growth in the teaching profession. Also, through self-regulation, I was able to promote a learning environment that was relaxed and supportive to learners, promoted a hands-on activity-based, fun learning environment and offered learners a choice regarding learning goals and timeframes (Corrigan & Taylor, 2004)

2.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE STUDY

In this section I discuss theories that formed the theoretical framework for my study and contributed to an understanding of how teacher practice at my school brought about insight into our professional development as participating teachers and the academic performance of learners of English. I looked into how theories of reflective practice, experiential learning, multiple intelligences and whole brain thinking guided the construction of new meaning as the complementing epistemology is constructivist in nature.

2.11.1 Schön's (1983) theory of reflective practice

My study explores the implementation of a facilitative professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practice of teachers of English in a Lesotho rural high school using Schön's (1983) theory of reflective practice. The work of Schön is central to my understanding of reflection as he helps professionals to explore the fundamental nature of their work in their context.

Reflection involves teachers who are constantly thinking about their practices by interacting with and modifying on-going practices so that learning takes place effectively (Leitch & Day, 2000). Teachers have a marked influence on their learners, and they must be well equipped in terms of their knowledge, pedagogical skills and character (Avalos, 2010). Green (2008) and Steyn and Van Niekerk (2005) encourage teachers to be critically and continuously reflective of their classroom practices as this contributes to enhancing their teaching practice and the academic performance of their learners.

In his work, Schön (1983) regards reflection as an integral part of professional development where teachers regard their work as subject to self-examination and continuous learning. For Du Toit (2016), scholarly reflection is an intrapersonal act with a view to improving what one is doing (Du Toit, 2016). Classrooms have daily demanding challenges that teachers need to be prepared to overcome so that they can meet the needs of their learners. Schön (1984) suggests that continuous reflection of one's own teaching encourages one to appreciate the complexities that may be encountered in classroom teaching and to find better suitable strategies of addressing them (Schön, 1984).

The purpose of reflecting on teaching practice is to help teachers gain a better understanding of what went on in the class so that insight into complicated ideas can be gained. When a teacher reflects on his or her practice with a view to achieving anticipated educational outcomes the personal development of such a teacher and the development of all teachers involved in the reflective process are encouraged. Suarez (2011) maintains that critically reflecting on classroom practice is a means of thinking of possible ways of problem solving that allow teachers to find solutions to issues in their different classrooms and in different schools (Suarez, 2011). Teachers must be able to control and change their behaviour through thoughtful consideration of their experiences when applying knowledge in practice, depending on different conditions experienced in the classrooms. Continuously reflecting on teaching practices assists teachers to challenge learners according to their individual needs by not utilising identical classroom instruction for all learners but varying instructional methods as Suarez (2011) suggests. For my study, reflection allowed researchers to think critically about classroom teaching by focusing on, observing, selecting, synthesising and interpreting ways of transforming. Through implementing new instructional methods, learners became actively involved in their own learning; in turn, the practice and professional development of teachers who were involved improved (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009).

Ferraro (2000) claims that the primary benefit of reflective practice is to assist teachers in gaining a deeper understanding of their own teaching styles as this contributes to greater teacher effectiveness in classrooms. Redmond (2004) argues that an alternative method of appreciating and fostering practice competencies is needed and that such a method should be based on the notion of reflection and reflective practice (Redmond, 2004). Schön (1983) refers to two main processes of reflection in professional practice, namely reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. The two processes are discussed in the following sections.

Table 2.1 below provides a summary of the two processes of professional reflective practice that, if adapted to instruction and learning environments, can promote improvement in teaching practice, the professional development of teachers and learner achievement.

Table 2.1: Reflection-in-Action and Reflection-on-Action (Brockbank & McGill, 2006)

No.	Reflection-in-Action	Reflection-on-Action
i.	Spontaneous reflection that occurs as a result of a need to understand and respond to experience.	Planned intervention to support learning from experience.
ii.	Learners organise reflection themselves.	The learner is supported by the educator.
iii.	Reflection occurs at any time, but usually when understanding of the circumstances is necessary and when time is available.	Reflection is planned for specific times.
iv.	Reflection usually occurs in the workplace.	Reflection usually occurs when the learners are away from the immediate workplace
v.	Reflection is an active process.	It involves contemplation.

2.11.2 Reflection-in-Action

Schön (1983) emphasises that reflection-in-action involves thinking about our teaching practices in the midst of our actions, thus thinking about what we are doing while we are doing it. Brockbank and McGill (2006) insist that this form of reflection requires a kind of checking function where professionals reflect while the action is happening, and if there is to be any modification arising from the reflection-in-action, an adjustment will take place to resume normal practice. Teachers who think about how to better their teaching methods during their facilitation of learning in class create an opportunity for immediate remedy that promotes an effective learning environment for learners and that improves educational practice (Schön, 1983).

2.11.3 Reflection-on-Action

Reflection-on-action involves thinking about previous personal experiences, analysing them and then developing personal theories of action (Beard & Wilson, 2006). Practitioners, who

have the aim of improving their practice, always need to reflect on their actions and think critically about what happened in class to improve their next practice. While these forms of reflection processes are necessary, Schön (1983) claims that reflection on teaching practice could be strengthened through continuous control and modification of behaviour in response to changing classroom conditions, which he qualifies as knowing-in-action. Brockbank and McGill (2006) argue that reflection-on-action allows teachers to become flexible to adjust methods of facilitating learning at all times when a learning opportunity is conducted to accommodate learners of different abilities rather than expecting learners to modify themselves to fit into a similar learning process all the time. Miles (2004) insists that many methods and techniques of facilitating learning have their place, depending on the differing circumstances of the teaching environment. Therefore reflection assists teachers in selecting the best approaches to facilitating learning. At the foundation of their argument, Brockbank and McGill (2006) emphasise that reflection-on-action with others in dialogue encourages critical reflection on the actions one has undertaken that will more likely be effective in promoting effective reflective learning and improved practices.

2.11.4 Herrmann Whole brain model

The Herrmann Whole Brain Model deals with how the brain thinks, learns, creates, solves problems, communicates and adjusts to different circumstances so that all learners can master a learning task (Herrmann, 1995). Each individual is a unique learner with learning experiences, preferences and avoidances that are different from those of other learners. Therefore Herrmann (1995) suggests that learning opportunities be designed in a way that accommodates the uniqueness of each individual learner. Du Toit (2011) agrees that a learner will effectively learn and master a learning task if his or her whole brain is engaged in learning. Through this model teachers are also able to develop holistically in their teaching profession as individuals because they are able to learn from their experiences and inform their practice (Du Toit *et al.*, 2011). Teachers are able to select the appropriate methods of facilitating learning that accommodate each individual learner with a view to promoting the active engagement of all learners in their own learning processes. Taking the whole brain into consideration for education and training in general is vital as teachers are able to learn individually.

Figure 2.3 below illustrates the holistic approach to facilitating learning that teachers could adapt in their different learning environments to promote effective learning. The holistic approach can also assist teachers with the best choice of methods of facilitating learning that

could inform their practice, their professional development and the academic performance of their learners.

Herrmann's model identifies four thinking quadrants that encourage effective learning. The A quadrant entails the intellectual self, which is about an individual who relies on straightforward facts, is analytic and logical in applying information. The B quadrant is about the safe-keeping self that relates to individuals who favour organised, planned and detailed information; thus they do not wish to go beyond what they have planned. The emotional self is reflected by the C quadrant and individuals in this quadrant favour information that involves feelings and emotions. The experimental self is the D quadrant and relates to individuals who are creative and do not hesitate to explore new ideas.

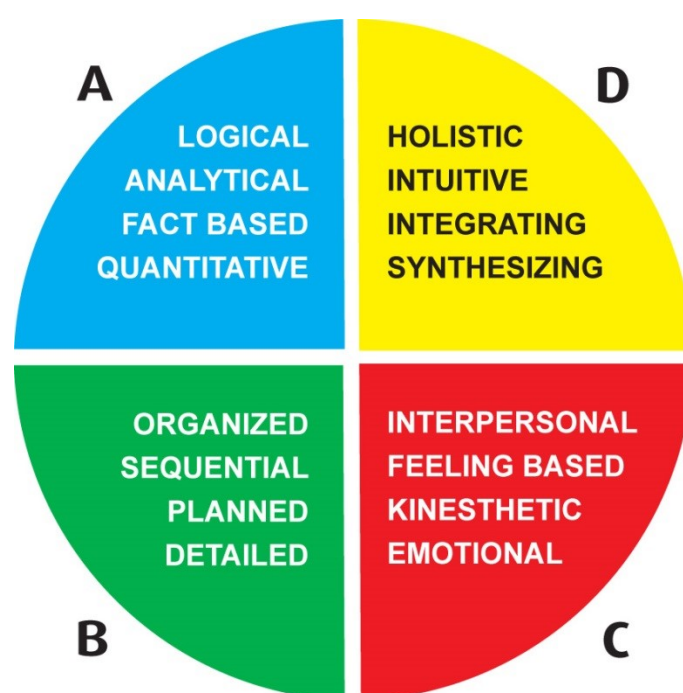


Figure 2.3: The comprehensive Herrmann Whole Brain Model (Herrmann, 1995; De Boer, Du Toit, Scheepers & Bothma, 2013)

The innovative methods of facilitating English learning that my study aims to introduce in English classes utilise the comprehensive whole brain model with the aim of enabling us as participating teachers to design learning opportunities in a manner that caters for learners with different preferences as this will promote mastery of English. Du Toit *et al.* (2010) insist that teachers who strive to use new and different designs and methods of facilitating learning by engaging learners in each of the four specialised quadrants, improve the learning experience of their learners by providing different learning options. However, teachers must

plan thoughtfully for this flexible way of facilitating learning so that they do not overburden learners with multiple tasks that might overwhelm them as Du Toit *et al.* (2010) suggest.

2.11.5 Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Model

Gardner and Hatch (1989) recognise intelligence as the capacity of an individual to solve problems that may be experienced in their work environments. According to Gahala and Lange (1997), the application of multiple intelligences in classroom learning helps teachers to provide learning media that maximises learning and understanding with a view to helping learners take responsibility for their own learning. Multiple intelligences offer English second language teachers a platform to examine their best teaching techniques and strategies that accommodate learners' individual differences with a view to promoting active learning in English classes (Halley, 2004). Gardner (1997) proposes nine intelligences that are latent in every individual and states that when these intelligences are integrated in classroom learning, they can stimulate various senses, brain and physical development to create an active and effective learning environment.

Figure 2.4 below represents the nine intelligences that contribute to learner-centred learning when applied to teaching practice. The nine intelligences can also promote the professional development of teachers who apply them to facilitate learning.

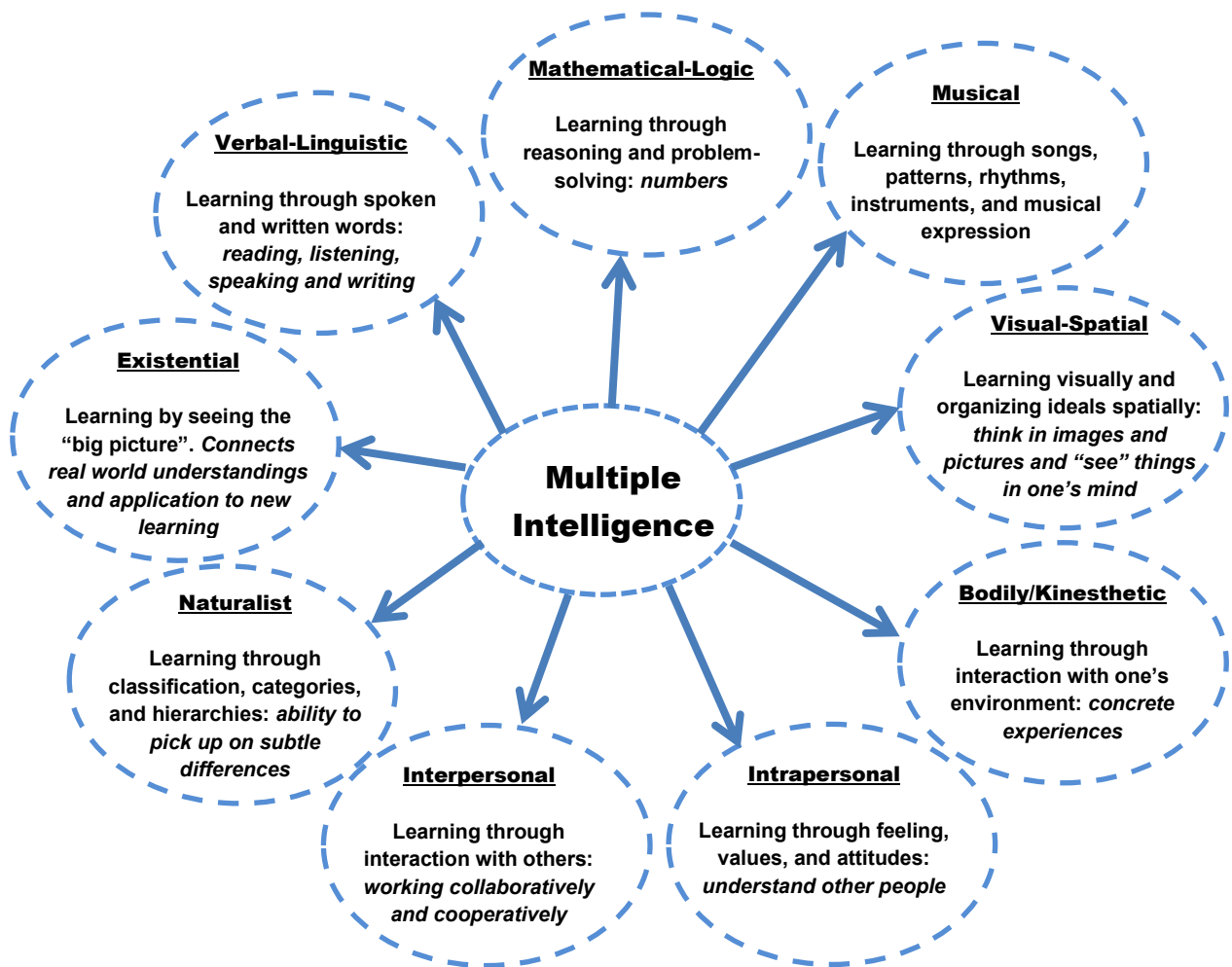


Figure 2.4: Multiple intelligences model (<http://mydiscoverypreschool.org/theory-of-multiple-intelligences/>)

The nine intelligences that can be employed in various learning contexts to improve teacher practice, learners’ academic achievement and motivation are verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily/kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic and existential. These intelligences allow teachers who have failed to reach learners by implementing traditional instruction to use various methods that can promote effective learning for learners of different learning needs (Armstrong, 2009).

According to Gardner (2000) verbal-linguistic intelligence allows individuals to communicate and make sense of the world through the use of language. In the classroom setting verbal-linguistic intelligence allows learners to be able to use language to express themselves and to remember information. Logical-mathematical intelligence enables individuals to think logically and carry out mathematical operations, like calculations while visual-spatial intelligence makes it possible for people to perceive and manipulate images to solve problems. Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence allows individuals to use parts of their body

to create products or solve problems while musical intelligence allows people to compose, communicate and understand meanings made out of sound. Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to recognise and understand other's feelings and interact appropriately with them. It allows individuals to be able to communicate verbally and nonverbally. Intrapersonal intelligence helps individuals to distinguish among their own feelings, to build accurate mental models of themselves, and to use these models to make decisions about their lives. Naturalistic intelligence helps one to recognise and categorise plants, animals and other objects in nature while existential intelligence deals with sensitivity and the capacity to tackle profound questions about human existence, such as why we die or how we got here. My study aimed at applying the multiple intelligences theory because it offers teachers an opportunity to develop innovative methods of facilitating learning that help to address the different learning needs of learners (Stanford, 2003).

Gardner (2000) asserts that teachers do not have to incorporate all nine intelligences in facilitating learning at the same time, but they can select the intelligences that are best suited to addressing the learning goals and needs of their learners. Armstrong (2010) found that instruction that is designed to develop the strengths of learners through the use of multiple and relevant methods of facilitating learning, activities and assessment techniques can also trigger learners' confidence to develop areas they are not strong in. Methods of facilitating learning of English such as drama, debate and public speaking through presentations and composing songs that are aimed at improving teaching practice will contribute to the academic growth of unsuccessful and unmotivated learners when exposed to the multi-faceted interventions and approaches of multiple intelligences theory (Janes, Koutsopanagos, Mason & Villaranda, 2000).

2.11.6 Kolb (1984) Experiential Learning

Kolb (1984) defines learning from an experiential learning perspective as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience and resulting from the combination of grasping and transforming experience. Therefore, the effectiveness of such learning depends on the learner's ability to learn from the experience (Le Roux, 2007). Kolb developed a model that maintains that knowledge results from grasping and transforming experiences through four cyclical processes. The stages allow learners to engage in a continuous cycle of learning experiences that contribute to helping them master competencies in English through having an experience, reflecting on the experience, learning from their experience and trying out what has been learned (Kolb, 1984).

Figure 2.5 illustrates a model of experiential learning that could be adapted to different educational contexts. When applied to the classroom context the model can inform teacher practices and their professional development.

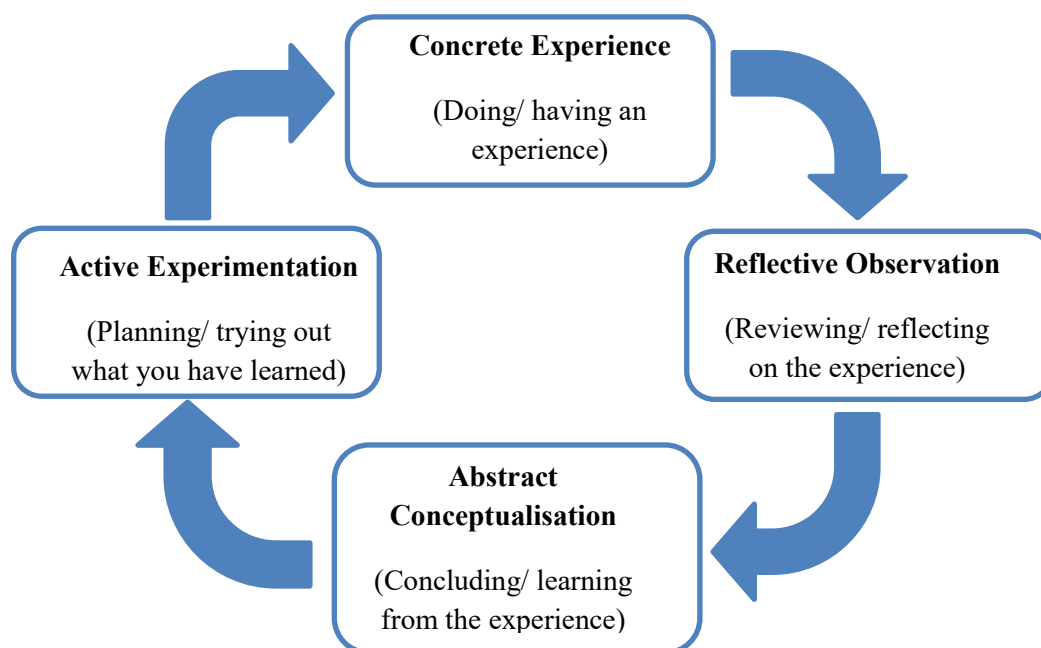


Figure 2.5: Experiential learning model (Kolb, 1984)

The experiential learning model of Kolb (1984) portrays two logically related modes of grasping experience, namely concrete experience and abstract conceptualisation; and two logically related modes of transforming experience, namely reflective observation and active experimentation.

Experiential learning is a process of constructing knowledge that involves learning through experience by engaging in hands-on learning. In this cycle (Figure 2.5) the learner comes into contact with all the bases, namely, experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting in a recursive process with a view to creating an opportunity for active engagement in a learning situation and the learning task at hand (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Concrete experiences entail direct practical experience where the learner is actively engaged in a learning activity. According to Kolb (1984) concrete experiences are the basis for observations and reflections that are assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts from which new implications for action can be drawn. These implications can be actively tested and serve as guides in creating new experiences. Reflective observation is about learners who are consciously reflecting on their experience. In this cycle learners use their learning experience to observe, examine, analyse and interpret the impact of a specific concrete experience. In abstract conceptualisation,

meaning is given to discoveries by relating them to other discoveries and other forms of knowledge. This makes learners try to conceptualise a theory or model of what is being observed. Finally, active experimentation is when the learner plans how to test a theory or model for a forthcoming experience.

Experiential learning theory is relevant to educational contexts because it encourages a continuous feedback that provides a basis for a continuous process of goal directed action on the part of the learners and an evaluation of the consequences of that action. I share the view that educational practice could improve if learning in our English classes engaged all the cycles of this model as the model can promote learners' efficacy, teaching practice and professional development.

2.12 SUMMARY

In this chapter I reviewed previous academic resources pertaining to second language learning in second language classrooms. Relevant theories and concepts addressed in this chapter explain in detail how improvement in teaching practice in English second language classes can be achieved to promote the professional development of teachers, particularly teachers teaching English as a second language with the aim of improving the academic performance of learners in English.

In the next chapter I address in detail the methodological strategies that were adopted for the study in responding to the research questions stated in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of my study is to determine how participating teachers of English – my colleague and I – employ the professional development intervention that was aimed at improving our teaching practice, our professional development and learners’ proficient use of English. This chapter explores the research design adopted in my research to maximize the depth of information acquired. It also discusses in detail the different strategies of data collection, data analysis procedures and the ethical considerations that guided my study.

3.2 ACTION RESEARCH

Du Toit (2008) describes action research as the vigorous application of eclectic research methods by a practitioner to investigate his or her own practice with a view to innovating it through the construction of new meaning. According to Burns (2003), action research enables researchers to inquire about classroom problems and take action to solve them. My study aimed at implementing a professional development intervention with the focus on new methods of facilitating the learning of English in a Form B class at a rural high school in Lesotho using action research.

Action research was implemented because it contributed to improving my teaching practice and that of my colleague. I modified my classroom practice through engaging in a systematic cycle that involved the processes of observing, reflecting, acting, evaluating as well as continually modifying my teaching practice in a way that led to new directions (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009). Du Toit, De Boer, Bothma and Scheepers (2010) consider reflection as an integral part of action research that can contribute to professional development for all teachers because teachers learn from their experiences and then encourage colleagues to do the same. Wolvaardt and Du Toit (2012) are of the opinion that action research can also lead to personal growth and better teaching practice, and the growth of the school in becoming a learning organisation, provided it is conducted well.

Action research was used as the main aim of action research is to improve educational practice and bring about changes in the classroom through improving teachers’ effectiveness and their professional growth (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Mertler, 2006; Parsons &

Brown, 2002); it enabled me as the facilitator of the professional development intervention and my colleague to re-think our methods of facilitating learning of English to become innovative in our teaching as suggested by Wolvaardt and Du Toit (2012).

3.2.1 Action research and the educational context

In the education context and in my facilitative professional development intervention, action research assisted me in identifying areas that needed more attention and that hindered learners' progress. Based on what I had discovered, I used systematic means by which I could address them. I organised lessons to accommodate learners to be actively involved in using English continuously within their English class through oral interactions and more reading and writing using English (Short, Fidelman & Louguit, 2012). Action research became a useful tool in helping me as the principal researcher to plan for interactive learning in my class on a daily basis, formulate effective strategies for facilitating the learning of English and design assessment strategies that assisted me in addressing problems such as under-achieving learners or exceptionally problematic groups of learners (Stringer, 2014). Parsons and Brown (2002) indicate that teachers who think about their classroom practice through the use of action research improve their problem solving skills, their professional development, their confidence and their self-esteem.

3.2.2 Action Research cycles adapted for my study

For the purpose of my study, two action research models were adopted during the employment of innovative methods of facilitating learning of English that were introduced in a Form B English class. These models, namely the visionary action research model for transforming teaching practice and the action research model for professional development adapted from Stringer (2014) were used because they can be easily adapted to a specific education context and the steps in the model are easy to follow.

Figure 3.1 below represents an action research model that guided the implementation of the innovative methods of facilitating learning of English that were introduced in the English class in my school. The model adopted aimed at contributing to improving our teaching practice, our professional development as well as the learners' proficient use of English for academic purposes.

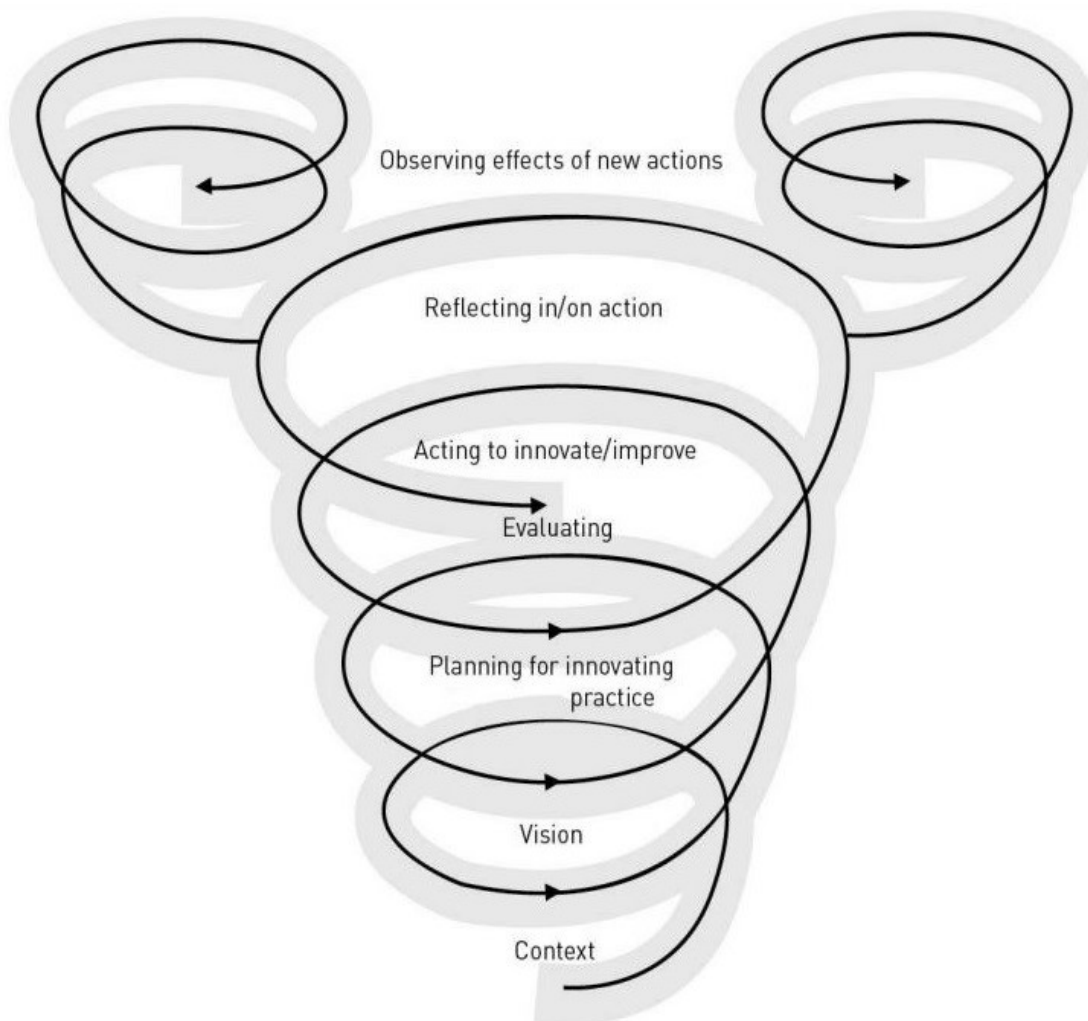


Figure 3.1: Action research model adopted from Du Toit (2011)

Figure 3.1 represents the action research model that my colleague and I adopted in our classes with the aim of improving our practice, using systematic steps. As participating teachers, we followed the steps of the above action research model and conducted mentoring sessions before and during the implementation of the innovative methods where we mentored each other and planned learning opportunities together. During these sessions we discussed the best way in which the innovative methods of facilitating learning of English could be implemented in our English classes. The procedures and scope for observation during facilitating learning were also planned. These mentoring sessions also assisted us to reflect together on what had worked or what needed to be improved during the process of facilitating learning of English. Then we observed each of our classes to assess how the effects of our new practices had improved our practice and how these contributed to our professional growth and development.

According to Du Toit (2011), action research is not a clear and one-way cyclical process but a messy one. Some of the steps had to be repeated many times before moving to the next step. De-routing spirals with their own cycles were included to indicate that sometimes we began our action research with a focus on a particular innovative method of facilitating learning of English but in the middle of our practice, we needed to include a new idea that would help to bring about a desirable outcome.

Figure 3.2 represents the action research process, depicting the peer mentoring sessions that we engaged in during the study to improve our strategies for facilitating learning in our English classes. The action research process was adopted in my study because peer mentoring sessions were conducted before and after implementing the innovative methods of facilitating learning of English, following the action research model below. The aim of conducting the peer mentoring sessions was to equip each other with skills that could lead to transformative learning with a view to helping learners overcome classroom challenges.

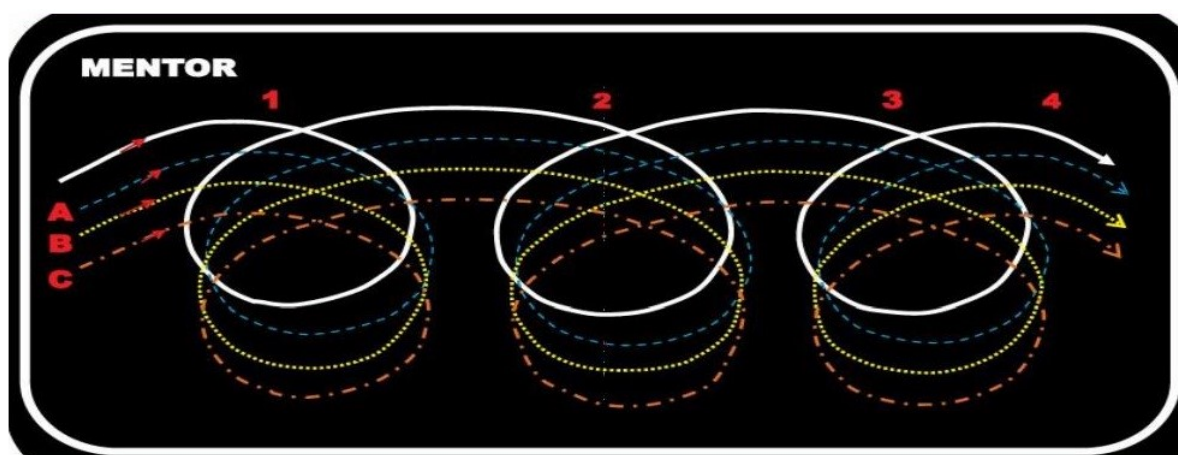


Figure 3.2: Action research model for professional development adopted from Stringer (2014)

The peer mentoring sessions were conducted by both of us represented by the letters *A* and *B* from the beginning of the employment of innovative methods of facilitating learning of English study. Letter *C* represents any additional teacher who may take part in the peer mentoring sessions. Digit *1*, *2* and *3* represent the action research spiral for each of the three innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that were implemented during my study, namely drama, debate and public speaking. Because action research is a continuous cyclic process, the digit *4* represents the fourth innovative method, namely story telling that was planned for but implemented beyond the scope of this research. Each of the innovative methods of facilitating learning has its own spiral that was implemented following the action

research steps where we had to think of the activities of both the learners and teachers, and then reflect upon those activities to see how new innovative transformative practices could be implemented.

3.3 THE QUALITATIVE-QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

To answer research questions posed for the study, my research was guided by both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2007). From Creswell (2008), and Ivankova, Creswell and Clark's (2007) point of view, the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches involve procedures for collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in one study to promote an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. The use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches involves multiple methods of data collection and analysis that create a convergence of viewpoints, methods and conclusions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). However, qualitative data collection strategies were dominant in my study while quantitative ones were secondary. Qualitative data collection methods, such as focus group interviews, classroom observation and reflective journals were used as the main data collection strategies together with the quantitative data methods of a questionnaire and an observation sheet. My study explored how teachers of English at a rural high school in Lesotho implemented new approaches to teaching English that contributed to their professional development while also promoting learners' mastery of English. In this action research study I used both qualitative and quantitative approaches because they contributed to enhancing the credibility of the findings from a single study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Through the use of these two approaches I was able to eliminate different kinds of bias that I may have incurred in researching my own practice to improve the validity and the reliability of findings of my research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

As principal researcher and a teacher of English in the Form B class, the new methods of facilitating learning of English that were implemented were meant to improve the teaching practice of my colleague and myself, contribute to our professional development and improve learners' mastery of English. As participating teachers, my colleague and I observed our practices during our English classes and recorded all the information on teacher and learner practices as field notes and on observation sheets (Appendix I). We recorded behaviour observed in every learning opportunity in our respective reflective journals (Appendix II) for use during the analysis stage. (Appendix II) composed of a set of questions that each of us as participants responded to individually in our reflective journals after every learning opportunity that was conducted using the innovative methods. There were two focus groups

in my study and each focus group was composed of five learners who acted as respondents. The two focus groups were then interviewed by my colleague on two occasions: before implementing innovative methods of facilitating learning of English and after the innovative methods had been employed. The focus groups were interviewed to find in-depth information on learners' experiences of these new methods of facilitating learning of English that were introduced in their classes. The qualitative data from these interviews were handled with confidentiality and the results reported without revealing the identity of the participants or their school. A learner questionnaire was administered to all ten respondents. All the collected data was analysed to find out to what extent the new methods of facilitating the learning of English had contributed to our professional development as teachers of English and to learners' competent use of English.

3.4 SAMPLE

My investigation into the innovative methods of facilitating learning of English that were implemented in the Form B class was conducted using a sample of 12 participants. Ten learners from a Form B class acted as respondents while two teachers of English – my colleague and I – acted as participants in the study. I selected my sample conveniently because both learners and my colleague were readily accessible to me as the facilitator of the intervention. Convenience sampling was used because findings were not generalised beyond the Form B class to a wider population, but only an in-depth description of the experiences of us as teachers of English and the Form B learners on the new methods of facilitating learning of English within the English class was provided (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

To select these ten learners, I used the class mark-sheet to group learners within the Form B class into the three performance levels (above average, average and below average). Then, I explained in detail the procedures and scope of the research so that learners were clearly informed that they could pull out at any time and that they were not going to be penalised in any way for not participating in this research. From each of the average and above average performance levels, three learners who had a desire to participate in this research voluntarily selected themselves while four learners volunteered from below average performance level to constitute a sample size of ten learners.

3.4.1 Profile of learners in the Form B class

The Form B English class consisted of 40 learners. There were 25 girls and fifteen15 boys. Their ages ranged from 14 to 17 years. Learners in the English class varied according to the three performance levels, namely average, above average and below average learners. From this class only ten learners participated in the study (five girls and five boys) through focus groups and responding to a questionnaire.

3.4.2 Profile of participating teachers

My English teacher colleague and I as the researcher and facilitator of the intervention were involved in this study. She is a female teacher in the age group 40 to 45 years and held an honours degree; her subject majors were English Language and English Literature. She taught English in different grades besides the Form B class and had thirteen years teaching experience. As the facilitator of the intervention, I was in the 30 to 35 years age group and I hold an honours degree. I teach English in different grades including the Form B class with nine years teaching experience.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection for this study commenced after the issuing of the ethical clearance certificate by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria. Permission was granted by the Ministry of Education in Lesotho and by the school principal to conduct the research in my school. The use of multiple data collection methods contributed to the process of crystallisation that increased the trustworthiness of the study and promoted an in-depth understanding of our teaching practice as participating teachers (Maree, 2012).

Table 3.1 below summarises the data collection methods that were applied in my study in terms of the procedure followed and the time frame for each of the data collection methods.

Table 3.1: Data collection process for the study

Participants	Data Collection Method	Procedure	Timeline
Learners	Focus group interviews and a Questionnaire were analysed	Before intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus group interviews were conducted with ten learners (5 in each focus group).• Questionnaire administered was the one refined after the pilot study. During intervention <p>Learners participated in the implementation of innovative methods of facilitating learning of English that were employed in their class.</p>	Two months

		<p>After intervention Focus group interviews with ten participating learners and the questionnaire administered was the same questionnaire used during the pre-intervention interview.</p>	
Participating teachers (two teachers of English)	Observation Reflective journal	<p>Before intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating teachers planned for innovating practice through mentoring sessions to promote improved teaching practice • My English teacher colleague Conducted focus group interviews with learners <p>During intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating teachers observed each other's classes and completed observation sheets and compiled field notes • Keep a reflective journal and engaged in peer mentoring process. <p>After intervention Participating teachers engaged in peer mentoring sessions to assess their teaching practice and professional development.</p>	Two months

3.5.1 Quantitative data collection methods

3.5.1.1 Questionnaire

Learners responded to a set of items that were the same for all respondents and that were constructed based on the research questions posed for the study as Maree (2012) suggests. The questionnaire that was used to collect data about the teacher and learner practices during the employment of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English was structured (Appendix X). It was structured in such a manner that it gathered only quantitative data and was administered to the ten respondents on two occasions: before facilitating the learning of English using the innovative methods and after the innovative methods of facilitating learning of English had been employed. The questionnaire helped to collect facts and opinions of respondents who were involved and were informed regarding the topic under investigation (Delpont, 2005). It was used because it ensured the anonymity of respondents. This promoted freedom of response in terms of providing a true sense of respondents' experiences of the new methods of facilitating the learning of English that were introduced. The questionnaire also informed us in terms of our understanding of the extent to which the peer mentoring

intervention contributed to our professional development as participating teachers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Before the commencement of my study the questionnaire was used as a pilot questionnaire with learners from the same Form B class who were not respondents. It was administered for about 20 minutes. The purpose was to familiarise learners with the questionnaire and to see whether items in the questionnaire were formulated clearly; therefore data gained from this questionnaire was not used as part of data collection. It did, however, provided insight into how the questionnaire could be refined. After the implementation of new methods of facilitating learning of English had been successfully completed, the same questionnaire was distributed to the ten learners who were respondents and data obtained by means of it was used to explore and describe how the new methods of facilitating learning of English had contributed to improving our teaching practice and the professional development and learners' competency in English.

3.5.1.2 Observation sheet

For the purpose of my study, my colleague observed me in practice during the implementation phase and completed an observation sheet designed to capture quantitative information about our teaching practice during the implementing of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English (Appendix I). Three observation sheets were used to document the outcome of the observations. The observation sheet was designed to respond to the questions posed for my study and comprised three categories: teacher-learner interaction in the class, how teachers integrated different forms of media during facilitating the learning of English and questioning techniques employed during facilitating learning. Whole brain thinking which assisted in the selection of the methods of learning that engaged all learners holistically in the learning process and Bloom's taxonomy which relate to questioning techniques employed during facilitating learning were also included in (Appendix I). Data collected provided insight into our teaching practice and professional development as well as the learners' competent use of English as their second language. Data gathered from the observation sheets was filed for analysis and interpretation.

3.5.2 Qualitative data collection methods

3.5.2.1 Focus group interviews

An interview is a discussion with someone in which the researcher tries to obtain from the participant information such as facts, opinions or attitudes about a topic under investigation

(Thomas, 2009). Interviews were used to gather rich descriptive information that allowed us to understand the reality and to be able to acquire in-depth information on a research topic under investigation (Maree, 2012). To gain deeper understanding of the professional development intervention implemented by my colleague and me, I utilised focus group interviews. A focus group interview is a method of collecting qualitative data from a selected group of individuals (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Focus group interviews were used to provide multiple viewpoints on our teaching practice from different respondents who provided large amounts of concentrated data within a short period of time (Greeff, 2005). Greeff further points out that focus groups are a powerful means of exposing reality and a means of investigating complex behaviour.

To uncover the opinions and behaviour of us as participants during implementing innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English, focus group interviews were conducted on two occasions, before the commencement of the new methods of facilitating learning of English as well as after their implementation. The interview sessions were conducted by my colleague as a means of minimising bias that may be incurred if the focus group interview sessions were conducted by me as the principal researcher and as their teacher of English. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that there is a need for the facilitator of group interviews to be skilled in interviewing groups and in group dynamics. Therefore, before the interview sessions, my colleague and I discussed the best approach that could be utilised to ensure quality and richness of the data obtained during the focus group interviews. We agreed on creating an environment that was free and encouraging to allow respondents to be stimulated by one another's perceptions and ideas, and thus enable them to provide insight into their experiences on the teacher practice during the implementing of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English.

The focus group interview sessions were conducted in a classroom that was noise-free and prepared for respondents to be comfortable and relaxed. The interview sessions lasted for one to one and a quarter hour. An audio recorder was used to record the respondents' perceptions – offering me the opportunity to gather data on facts they shared, opinions they held and attitudes they expressed regarding the new methods of facilitating the learning of English that were introduced in their class. During the interview sessions my colleague took field notes to record the behaviours portrayed by respondents and expressed by means of body language, such as facial expression, shrugging of shoulders, nodding or abrupt pauses. Data gathered from the interview sessions was transcribed and stored as interview transcripts and used for

the purpose of analysis. However, anonymity was ensured with regards to the findings of the study since the results were reported without revealing the true identity of participants and respondents.

The profile of learners who acted as respondents has been described in Section 3.4.1. A set of pre-defined questions (Appendix III) were used to gather in-depth information on our teaching practice and the academic performance of learners in English before and after the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English were implemented. However, to seek clarification, questions took any form of direction to allow for flexibility and to give respondents a chance to comment on their perceptions of the new teaching methods that were introduced in their learning opportunities. Data captured was used to understand the extent to which the new methods of facilitating the learning of English contributed to our improved teaching practice, professional development and learners' proficient use of English. After the pre-intervention and post-intervention focus group interview sessions had been carried out, my colleague and I conducted our peer mentoring sessions with the aim of reflecting on our action research practice to make our final reflection on the practice that was conducted in our learning opportunities. The peer mentoring sessions contributed to improving our confidence in facilitating learning and managing the class and helped us to improve our self-reflection and problem solving skills (Malderez, Hobson, Tracey & Kerr, 2007).

3.5.2.2 Observations

Creswell (2014) describes a qualitative observation as taking notes on the different behaviours and activities portrayed by individuals at the research site. Observations were employed in my study because they helped us to see and record behaviour and events of what was taking place in a research site exactly as they occurred – the Form B English class and that of my colleague in the rural school (Creswell, 2007). During the implementing of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English, my colleague and I became participant-observers to be observed in our learning opportunities (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). There was interaction by participating teachers through peer mentoring during the data collection stage with a view to discussing means of conducting the observations in a more natural and open-ended way (Punch, 2009).

We observed each other in practice and compiled field notes on our teaching practice and learner experience. Field notes that were compiled to record behaviours regarding different activities taking place in the learning opportunity also included activities using body language and facial expressions during the facilitating of learning.

3.5.2.3 Reflective journal

Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) explain that a reflective journal is a way of documenting the understanding of the inner world of an individual, and a way of understanding the professional and personal aspects of participants' experiences and responses. Reflective journals were used to reflect on our teaching practice so that we could become aware of our contribution to the experiences we encountered daily in our professional world (Moon, 2003). Freese (2006) and Luk (2008) maintain that if approached in an informed way, reflecting through writing in a reflective journal can help teachers to think more productively about their practice. As a data collection method we used a reflective journal to record our daily experiences during the implementation of the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English in our classes (Appendix II). We used reflective journals after every session of focus group interview and observation to document our experiences and any other issues arising from our personal experience. Reflective journals are personal documents in which the author may express feelings that would sometimes not be made public; I therefore obtained permission from my colleague before using any data from her reflective journal (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). We used our reflective journals following the action research cycle adapted from Du Toit (2008) to record every detail of classroom practice from planning for innovation/transformation, acting to transform, observation and critical reflection. Data from these journals was used to identify recurring themes during the analysis and interpretation stage.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in a mix of qualitative and quantitative research involves a process whereby both qualitative and quantitative data analysis strategies are combined, connected and integrated in research studies (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Both qualitative and quantitative data was analysed to shed light on the research questions. However, quantitative data was analysed qualitatively by converting it into narrative representations that could be analysed qualitatively through a process of qualitisng as Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) suggest. Cohen *et al.* (2007) explain that qualitative data analysis involves the preparation of raw data by organising and explaining it in themes and categories that reveal participants' definition of their situation while attempting to answer the research questions. Thematic analysis was employed because it enabled me as a researcher to interpret our activities and those of the learners during facilitating the learning English with a view to evaluating meanings, themes, messages and words obtained from the collected data (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

Through thematic analysis all data collected was organised and sorted to facilitate the coding process (Creswell, 2008). Different data sets from observation sheet, field notes, a reflective journal, questionnaires and focus group interviews were read through several times to familiarise myself with their content and to get a feel for the views and ideas expressed (Stringer, 2014). Data from all the audio-recorded focus group interviews was reviewed repeatedly and then transcribed verbatim to ensure that every word recorded was included in interview transcripts. My colleague listened to the recorded interviews and read the transcriptions to ensure that no errors were made during the transcription. Next, I read through all the data sets carefully and patiently to make meaning of what had been said by respondents and us. Only data relevant to providing insight into the research questions that guided the study was incorporated in the process of analysis (Stringer, 2014).

The raw data was reduced to themes through a process of coding and condensing those codes, and finally represented in figures, tables and discussions, which are presented in Chapter 4 (Creswell, 2007). I used generated codes to categorise similar themes and patterns that emerged from the data and to identify the relationship among these patterns and themes and concepts in the literature. The categories provided answers to the research questions posed for my study and they revealed the major findings of the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Maree (2007), and Babbie and Mouton (2001) consider trustworthiness as a means of convincing people that the study results are a true representation of the reality that was investigated and that they are of a high quality. The trustworthiness of my study was enhanced through dependability, transferability, credibility and confirmability (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

3.7.1 Credibility

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explain that credibility is the extent to which results approximate reality and are judged to be accurate and reasonable. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006) argue that credibility proves how well the researcher has established confidence in the research findings. I aimed to establish the credibility of my study through member checks with my colleague and respondents (Merriam, 2009). I presented data captured from the reflective journal of my colleague and its analysis to my colleague to read through and ascertain its accuracy. After all data from the focus group interviews had been transcribed, I sought external verification of all interview transcripts and their analysis from

the ten learners who acted as respondents in my study. This was done to allow them to verify the extent to which the data represented their true feelings and experiences during the intervention. The aim of the member check process was to provide my colleague and learners access to the data to correct obvious errors and to have them provide additional volunteer information, should such a need arise (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Furthermore, multiple data collection methods such as focus groups interviews, observations, reflective journals and questionnaires that were used in my study to capture data on teacher practices during the implementation of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English further promoted the richness and trustworthiness of the findings, thus its credibility (Maree, 2007).

3.7.2 Transferability

Transferability is defined as the degree to which the findings of the study can be applied or generalised to other contexts or to other groups (Ary *et al.*, 2006). My study did not aim to generalise the findings but they can be applied to other similar settings (Thomas, 2009). A thick description of the context and detailed information on the underlying theoretical models, data collection strategies and analysis procedures have been explained with regard to our teaching practice. Based on this description, readers may decide whether to transfer the findings of the study to similar contexts (Morrow, 2006).

3.7.3 Dependability

Merriam (2002) reports that dependability refers to whether or not the findings of a study can be replicated and whether the same study can produce similar results if conducted in another context. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) stress the need to translate information from various sources of data accurately as this improves dependability. To enhance the dependability of my study, I employed member checks from my colleague and the ten learners who were respondents in my study before and after data analysis so that identified themes could be discussed to ensure that they were accurate and dependable (Maree, 2007). I continually sought contributions during the data analysis process from my supervisors to ensure that data was reported accurately to strengthen the possibility of my results being fairly dependable. To eliminate bias that I might have brought to the study as a researcher, I constantly reflected on the research process in my reflective journal to trace my ideas and personal reactions that may have influenced the research throughout the field work.

3.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the findings of the research are the outcomes of the focus of the inquiry and not the biases of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Results are regarded confirmable if they are derived from the participants and the research conditions and not from the opinion of the researcher. Ary *et al.* (2010) argue that confirmable findings can be supported by the studies and academic readings by other researchers who were engaged in similar studies. To confirm my findings, similar studies have been acknowledged in Chapter 2 to offer a wide range of insights into the stages of my research.

3.7.5 Ethical considerations

Maree (2007) emphasises that before commencing with any research, it is important to highlight the ethical considerations with regard to the research. For the purpose of my research that I conducted as a student of the University of Pretoria, an application was made to the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria requesting permission to conduct research of this nature. My study was conducted only after approval by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria had been granted in the form of an ethical clearance certificate (Appendix IV).

A letter was sent to the Ministry of Education in Leribe district, Lesotho requesting permission to conduct research at my school. A detailed description of the research aims and procedures, benefits and participants in my study was provided and the research commenced only after approval by the education officer of the district (Appendix V).

The research was conducted in my school and particularly in my English classes in a Form B class, so I obtained permission from the principal to allow me to conduct the research (Appendix VI). As a teacher of English at the school, I consulted the principal to explain the procedures for my study and specify that the research involved ten learners who acted as respondents and my colleague who acted as a participant. I envisaged that the outcomes of my study could contribute to improving the teaching practice and professional development of teachers of English and learners' competent use of English both academically and in future.

Lichtman (2010) declares that participants should be informed of the nature of the study so that they may choose whether or not to participate. With the principal's approval to conduct the study in the school, I informed all participants (learners and my colleague) in writing and orally about the nature, procedures, benefits and risks pertaining to the study (Appendices VII

and VIII). I made sure that they understood what the study entailed before signing the consent letters or agreeing to participate. Should they feel a need to withdraw from my study at a later stage, they were aware that they were free to do so at any time.

Creswell (2005) urges researchers to respect their participants, honour research sites and report findings honestly. I declared to my colleague and the respondents that it was my duty to treat them with respect and that all information that they shared with me would be kept confidential at all times. Pseudonyms were used instead of real names to protect participants' identity and make them remain anonymous. They knew that they would not be penalised for not participating in the study. The next step was to issue consent letters to the parents of the learners providing a detailed description of the nature and scope of the research (Appendix IX). Benefits and risks that might be experienced and the role of the learners in my study were clearly explained. The study commenced only after all the participants had signed the consent letters to show that they understood the practical scope of the research.

As a researcher I had a dual role in the school, namely that of a teacher of English and that of a principal researcher who acted as the participant observer during the data collection phase. These roles were clearly explained to my colleague before commencing with the research so that we were both able to eliminate any form of possible bias. Merriam (2002) explains that the human instrument can have bias and shortcomings that may have an impact on a study. I therefore commenced the study acknowledging the role of reflexivity. De Vos (2005) describes reflexivity as the practice of researchers doing their research and documenting it, well aware of their role and influence of the events in the study. I therefore used my reflective journal to assist me in identifying any personal bias that might have had an impact on my study.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I discussed the paradigmatic perspective, research design, methodology and data analysis and interpretation procedures that were utilised in my study to understand the teaching practice of teachers of English and how these influenced their professional development. The ethical guidelines, quality criteria of the research, as well as my role as a researcher were discussed.

In the next chapter, I present empirical data emerging from the data collection strategies and its analysis.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter addressed the methodology, research process, data collection and analysis procedures that guided the research study. In this chapter I present the data collected during the implementation of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English in my Form B English classes. The data presented sheds light on our teaching practice, our professional development and learners' proficient use of English. Data was captured in response to the following research questions posed in Chapter 1:

4.1.1 Primary research question

How does critical reflection on new methods to contribute to improving me and my colleague's teaching practice of teaching of English in a rural high school?

4.1.2 Secondary research questions

- i. What are the experiences of teachers of English regarding the application of innovative ideas gained from the professional development intervention in their teaching practice?
- ii. How do the changes in the teaching practice of teachers of English contribute to my professional development as a facilitator of the professional development intervention?
- iii. How does the implementation of the new methods of facilitating learning contribute to our learners' proficiency in English?

Multiple procedures were employed to collect the data. According to Du Toit (2011), triangulation is used to attain a more holistic perspective of what happens in any research context. Data was collected by means of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools. Data that emerged from quantitative data collection tools was captured from a structured questionnaire that was designed to capture only quantitative data and from an observation sheet. Qualitative data emerged from focus group interviews, reflective journals and field notes recorded during classroom observations. Learners acted as respondents. Responses to items and questions were captured by means of a structured feedback questionnaire and focus group interviews. Data generated by the participating teachers was obtained from their reflective journals, field notes and observation sheets.

4.1.3 Sample history

Data for my study was obtained from a sample consisting of 12 respondents. Two teachers of English acted as participants and ten learners (five boys and five girls) who acted as respondents in the Form B English class. During my research participating teachers were referred to as facilitators because they assumed the role of facilitating learning instead of teaching. Real names of participants and respondents were not used for the purpose of ensuring anonymity. The code *Fcl* used in Table 4.1 below represents participating facilitators and the alphabetical codes A and B represent their names. The detailed characteristics of the teachers are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1: Representation of participating facilitator profiles

Role of participant	Pseudonym	Sex	Age level	Subject specialisation	Teaching experience	Qualification
Facilitator of the intervention	Fcl-A	Female	30-35	English Language and Geography	5 - 10 years	B.Ed. (Honours)
English teacher colleague	Fcl-B	Female	40-45	English Language and English Literature	10 - 15 years	B.Ed. (Honours)

Respondents came from the villages surrounding Nqechane High School and from households where Sesotho is the only language used as medium of communication. The detailed characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 4.3 below. In Table 4.3 below the code *Lnr* and alphabetical order (A - J) represent the learners who acted as respondents.

Table 4.2: Representation of respondent (learner) profiles

Learner	Sex	Age level	Achievement level (above average = 75% and above; average = 50% - 60%; below 50% = below average)
Lnr-A	Female	14 - 16	Above average
Lnr-B	Female	14 - 16	Above average
Lnr-C	Female	15 - 17	Above average
Lnr-D	Female	14 - 16	Average
Lnr-F	Female	15 - 17	Average
Lnr-E	Male	14 - 16	Average
Lnr-G	Male	15 - 17	Below average
Lnr-H	Male	14 - 16	Below average
Lnr-I	Male	14 - 16	Below average
Lnr-J	Male	15 - 17	Below average

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

A total of eleven themes were identified during the thematic analysis. These themes are related to the experiences of learners who were respondents with regard to the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that were employed in their class. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to determine which responses from the focus group interviews and feedback from the questionnaire items were relevant to the different themes and sub-themes discussed in this chapter. As stated in Chapter 3, English was not the first language of the learners; therefore their responses were language edited so that the reader can follow the responses of the learners easily. The themes are then discussed in detail according to two phases of the intervention research, namely the pre-intervention and post-intervention phase.

Figure 4.1 below is a visual representation of the themes derived from learners' focus group interview responses. The themes are applicable to the different methods of facilitating the learning of English, such as drama, debate and public speaking. Data captured provided insight into how our teaching practice and our professional development as facilitators as well as learners' mastery of English improved.

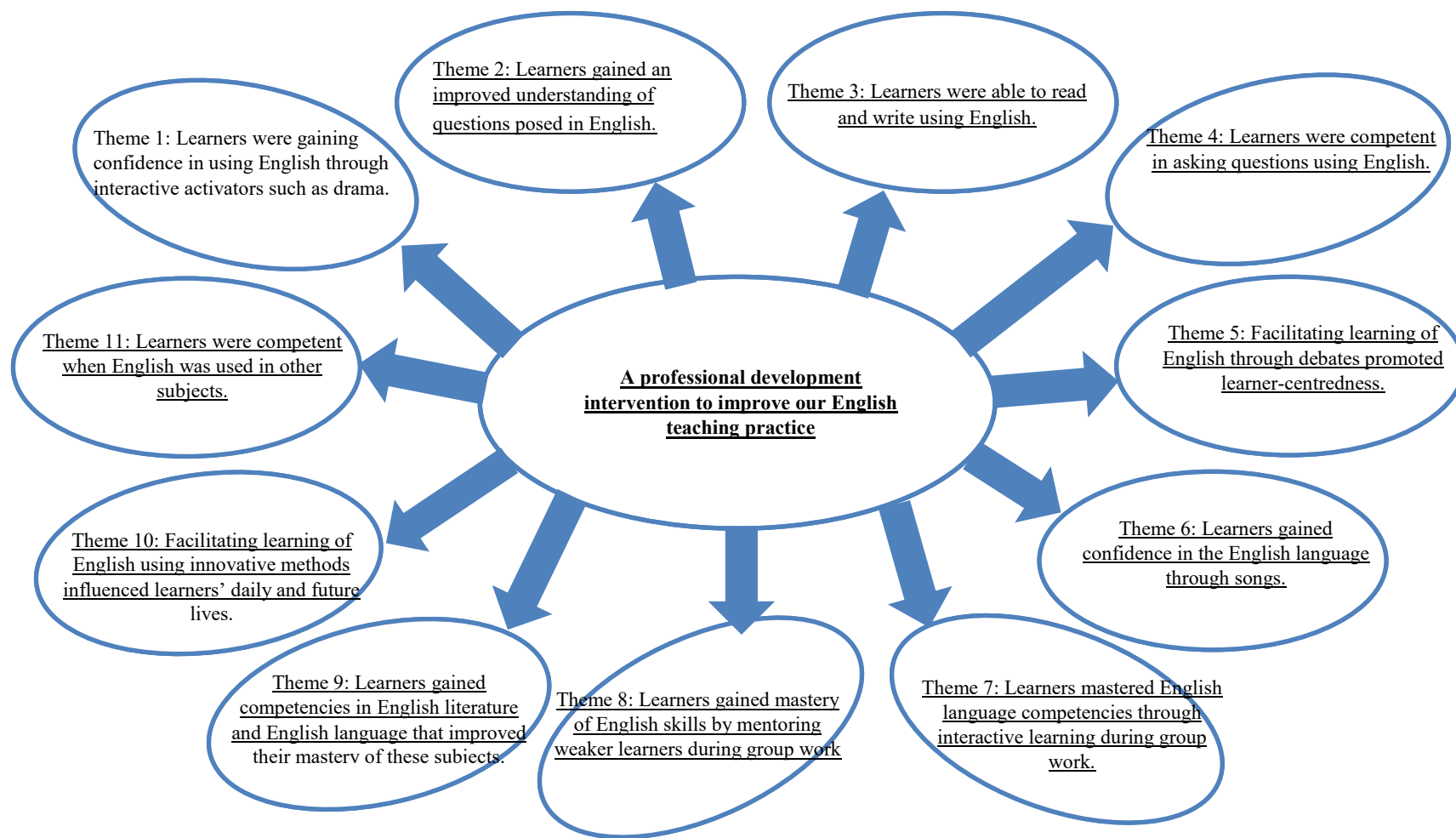


Figure 4.1: Themes derived from analysis of learners' focus group interviews

All data sets were analysed with a view to aligning them with the action research spiral that I adopted for my study from Du Toit (2008). The spiral has steps that we applied in our specific context during the employment of the innovative methods in our classes and were initiated by our vision of transforming practice. Our context, vision and action research process are discussed next.

4.3 CONTEXT

The research was conducted at a rural high school in Lesotho. A detailed description of the school has been provided in Chapter 1. Facilitating learning of English using the innovative methods was employed in the Form A and Form B English classes in my school. As the principal researcher I was responsible for the Form B English class and my colleague for the Form A English class. The duration of English classes was 40 to 80 minutes – taking the form of a learning opportunity during which the focus was on the learners and the execution of tasks.

The English curriculum for the Form B class comprised two parts, namely English literature and English language. English literature deals with reading English prescribed books such as novels, poetry, short stories and plays that are prescribed in the English curriculum at that level. English language comprised elements of grammar and language structures in English, as well as comprehension and summary writing skills. Both these parts of a Form B language curriculum are assessed as part of the national examinations for Form C (similar to Grade 10 in RSA).

4.4 VISION

The aim of employing the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English formed the basis of the study. I was driven by my vision to become an innovative, transformative practitioner in my work environment. My vision was to assist teachers of English in the school to transform their teaching from that which is content-driven to facilitating learning, using innovative methods that were learner-centred. This intervention in the form of the employment of innovative methods of facilitating learning, such as drama, debate and public speaking aimed at improving our teaching practice, our professional development and the proficient use of English by learners both for academic purposes and future life. The employment of the innovative methods were used to improve the process of facilitating learning of English by using content from the English curriculum, which emphasises factual

knowledge with non-formal opportunities from our practice environment to learn experiential, socio-cultural or self-regulative knowledge that would enhance our own practice as facilitators as Milligan and Littlejohn (2014) suggest.

4.5 THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

The action research process consisted of three cycles. The cycles represent the different innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that were introduced in the Form B class. In each cycle feedback from focus group interviews, a structured questionnaire (consult Appendix XI for summary of respondents' responses), an observation sheet and reflective journal are provided to give insight into teacher practice, their professional development and learners' proficient use of English. In the questionnaire (Appendix XI) the numbers agree and completely agree were merged into agree and the numbers disagree and completely disagree were merged into disagree.

4.5.1 Cycle A: Drama

Drama in education is a method that was employed to facilitate a learning opportunity where learners dramatised the events of the prescribed book that they were reading as part of their English literature curriculum. The book titled *The Rainy Season* was one of the books to be assessed in the national external examination for Form C (i.e. a year later after successful completion of Form B). Drama helped learners to be actively involved in their own learning, improve their English speaking skills and to be able to solve problems regarding their own learning through their exchanging ideas and knowledge with one another. This method of facilitating learning was employed only in my Form B class and not in my colleague's class.

4.5.1.1 Planning for innovation

On April 3, 2016 my English teacher colleague and I conducted a mentoring session where we sat together during study time to plan for the next day's learning opportunity during which the employment of the innovative methods of facilitating of English would begin. Then we discussed how best to employ drama as an innovative method of facilitating the learning of English using the prescribed book in the Form B class. We continuously discussed and shared ideas on how to become more innovative with a view to transforming our teaching practice. The session created a platform where we discussed how best to promote learner-centredness that contributed to learners who were independent, creative and active in solving their own learning problems.

4.5.1.2 Acting to transform

Facilitating the learning of English using drama as one of the innovative methods began in the Form B class on April 4, 2016. Drama learning opportunities were conducted for four consecutive days and I introduced them by using probing questions based on Bloom's taxonomy to determine learners' pre-requisite knowledge so that they could bring their experiences to learning. I asked questions such as, "Have you ever taken part in any drama sessions? How do characters perform their roles, what makes a drama more interesting?" and learners discussed these questions in their groups to provide them a chance to share their knowledge and reach a conclusion. In return, learners also asked questions such as, "How is a drama different from a movie?" They wanted to know what they should do to remember the dialogue as they performed their drama, why they needed to perform a drama and whether they were supposed to act the plot exactly as it appeared in the text or whether they could introduce their own improvements. These questions that were aimed at improving mastery of English competencies were directed to the class to respond to with a view to giving each learner the opportunity to participate and be actively involved in the learning process. In this session learners were able to use their logical thinking and linguistic intelligence to convince other learners of their points of view (D quadrant).

Then, learners volunteered to act the parts of various characters in the *Rainy Season* such as Thandie, Haroun, Selina, Nomusa, Amanda, Anand and others. The learners who did not have roles to perform formed groups with the main characters to discuss and share ideas about the characters. Learners used their texts as a reference to help characters master their performance tasks. They guided them on what each character could say, when to say it and what to do in order to prepare for their acting of the drama, thereby incorporating their intra- and interpersonal intelligences and engaging their whole brain in their learning through stating facts (A quadrant). The use of drama as a method of facilitating learning of English helped learners to contribute actively to finding solutions to their own learning problems.

4.5.1.3 Observation

During facilitating the learning of English using drama, my colleague observed the effects of this strategy in the class. The learning opportunities using this innovative method were designed to engage learners actively in the learning process through the use of activities from the four quadrants of the whole brain thinking. She used an observation sheet to document the learners' and my activities. Only quantitative data was captured using the observation sheet

that I designed to capture data on teacher-learner interaction, media integration and questioning techniques. Every time evidence of interaction, media integration or questioning technique was displayed, a tick was used in the relevant box and analysis was done to reveal both learner and facilitator activities (Appendix I).

It can be observed in Appendix I that in learning opportunity Number 1, two comprehension questions were posed to me as the facilitator. On the second day, the number of comprehension questions increased to three and one application question was asked by the learners to ensure mastery of tasks. Every time a question was asked it was redirected to the learners to share their knowledge as a class; the number of redirected questions equalled that of application and comprehension questions. After the drama had been performed, only nine recall questions were asked by learners to other learners and I probed learners four times to promote further understanding. Three high order questions (synthesis and evaluation) were asked.

Feedback from the focus group interviews reflected that learners gained confidence in using English through interactive activators such as a drama; they gained an improved understanding of questions posed in English and they were able to read and write using English.

4.5.1.3.1 Theme 1: Learners were gaining confidence in using English through interactive activators such as a drama

Learners indicated that the employment of drama helped them to express themselves better using English. They said that drama improved their confidence in carrying out different learning tasks using English, which fostered the mastery of English competencies.

The comments below reflect learners' feedback on the learning process in their English class before the introduction of drama:

Sometimes when she's teaching, she makes the jokes then we laugh and when we don't know the questions, she tells us (Respondent D; Grp-I).

We used to read the book only and finish it without dramatising it (Respondent E; Grp-II).

Our teacher was just coming to class and teaching us, and then giving us home work, and we were not doing dramas and presentations (Respondent E; Grp-II).

The following statement provides feedback from a questionnaire with regard to learners' confidence gained in their English classes in the pre-intervention stage:

Seven learners agreed that their English classes boosted their confidence in dealing with English tasks (Extract from questionnaire item 17).

The respondents provided the following feedback after facilitating learning using drama in the post-intervention stage:

I like dramas because when we are acting in the drama, I've seen that we are building more confidence as we can now speak English in front of anyone and we cannot forget what we have acted when we are in the exams. For example, last time we were writing June exams, so I've remember what I have acted in the drama (Respondent H; Grp-I).

The more we making dramas, the more we become more motivated to learn English and we become confident (Respondent H; Grp-I).

In the drama I was talking in front of the class so I'm not afraid of asking questions in the class, I can be able to speak to anybody from anywhere with English (Respondent E; Grp-II) .

When I was participating in the drama, I feel more confident than last because I was afraid of doing things in front of people but now I'm able to talk and speak English in front of the class (Respondent G; Grp-II).

The following statement provides feedback from a questionnaire with regard to learners' confidence in English after the employment of drama:

Eight learners agreed that English classes boosted their confidence in dealing with any English tasks assigned to them (Extract from questionnaire item 17).

The following quotations on drama as an innovative method of facilitating learning of English were captured from the reflective journals:

During the drama performance, many characters performed their roles with confidence and they were no longer shy. They were audible and seemed to master their performance and enjoyed learning English through drama. All characters performed their roles with confidence so they performed competently (Extract from my colleague's reflective journal dated 7 April, 2016).

The lesson was entirely learner-centred because learners performed their roles from the 'Rainy Season' without distraction and with confidence to the end (Extract from my reflective journal dated 7 April, 2016).

4.5.1.3.2 Theme 2: Learners gained an improved understanding of questions posed using the English language.

Learners mentioned that the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English contributed to their understanding of questions posed by either their classmates or their facilitator. Learners indicated that when they were writing tests and examinations, it was easy for them to understand questions posed in English.

The responses below captured during the pre-intervention interview represent learners' views on their comprehension skills:

In English class, mostly the teacher change words to Sesotho when we don't understand them, so when we are writing, no one explain them, so sometimes I don't answer that question (Respondent I; Grp-I).

When the teacher is still talking and I would not be understanding, I am afraid to say something because sometime the teacher will say we should speak English and sometimes I'm not confident when I speak English (Respondent C; Group-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire with regard to learners' understanding of questions posed in English:

Six learners agreed that English classes have helped them understand questions posed using English; two learners disagreed and two could not tell for sure whether they understood questions posed in English (Extract from questionnaire item 15).

During the post-intervention, the following quotations were captured from the post-intervention interview to support learners' views about their comprehension of questions posed in English:

When we speak English in the class when dramatising, when we are writing a test or exam, it becomes clear to me what the question wants so I can understand it better than before (Respondent B; Grp-I).

When a student was participating in the drama or in the presentation, he or she was able to understand the story or the song she was singing using English, so she can be able to answer

questions when he or she is asked because he or she cannot forget things that she was doing. (Respondent A; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire on learners' understanding of questions posed using English during the post-intervention stage:

Eight learners agreed that English classes have helped them to understand questions posed using English while two learners disagreed on the statement (Extract from questionnaire item 15).

The following quotations on learners' ability to understand questions posed in English after the introduction of drama in their class were captured from the reflective journals:

In their groups, learners were able to ask one another questions as they tried to help the character to master the dialogue. As the drama was performed, the class asked questions to the different groups to get clarification of what they should do to master the presentation and this contributed to more understanding (Extract from my colleague's reflective journal dated 7 May, 2016).

Learners were able to ask questions in class and to answer when asked by either their classmates or the facilitator without fear of what other learners would say and this helped them to understand and to be able to complete English tasks assigned to them (Extract from my reflective journal dated 7 May 2016).

4.5.1.3.3 Theme 3: Learners are able to read and write using English

Learners stated that drama as a method of facilitating learning of English contributed to their mastery of English skills, such as reading and writing. They indicated that because they were able to communicate in English in their groups and in drama sessions, it became easy for them to read and write in English.

During the pre-intervention interview, learners described their reading and writing skills as follows:

When the teacher is teaching English, she should even explain other things in Sesotho so that we can be clear with what is meant because when I write I can remember better in Sesotho (Respondent B; Grp-I).

When we are reading the literature books, she must make example of the behaviour in the book with the person in the class and when we are writing, we cannot forget (Respondent G; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire on learners' competence in reading and answering questions asked in English:

Nine learners agreed that English classes have helped them to read and write questions asked in English (Extract from questionnaire item 14).

In the post-intervention interview, learners expressed themselves with regard to reading and writing using English in the following way:

I would like to talk about dramas because when the actors are still acting, I remember everything that they have talked about and acted because they show it by action so when I'm still writing, because some of them do things in funny way so I can be able to remember everything that they were talking about (Respondent I; Grp-I).

We are different, so other people are not able to read from their books or write but if they can see with their eyes in the drama, they were able to write the exams (Respondent J; Grp-II).

During the exams, we can be able to read the questions that are asked and to answer them because we have been helping one another in our groups when we are doing debates and dramas (Respondent J; Grp-II).

Because we are participating in drama and presentations, we are able to write and answer questions asked because we cannot forget what we were doing (Respondent G; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire on learners' reading and writing skills using English during the post-intervention stage:

All ten learners agreed that English classes have helped them be able to read and write questions asked in English (Extract from questionnaire item 14).

The following quotation on learners' reading and writing skills using English after the introduction of drama in their class was captured in my reflective journal.

Some learners wrote essays on the topics of their choice and brought them for assessment. This is a very important step in their learning as they are now able to write on their own

without being forced. They enjoy doing work on their own and this helped in improving their writing skills (Extract from my reflective journal dated 11 April 2016).

4.5.1.4 Critical reflection on drama

After every learning opportunity of facilitating learning using drama, my colleague and I discussed feedback captured from our classroom observation and noted points that needed to be improved. Next, we reflected on how to engage more learners in the learning opportunity, such as providing learners who were not performing a drama with a platform to give directions to the actors to promote the mastery of competencies in English. Learners then had a platform to pose questions on every performance made, which were then redirected to the class to share their views and ideas and this helped learners to learn from their experiences. The drama sessions were concluded with learners writing an essay about how Haroun and Thandie showed their love for each other.

4.5.2 Cycle B: Debate

Debating is an innovative teaching method that was employed in facilitating writing an argumentative composition. Learners chose a topic related to learning English and had to decide whether to agree or disagree about that topic. Then they presented their views in English to the class to share their ideas and knowledge about the topic. The debates were useful in promoting learners' speaking skills, contributing to their motivation and self-confidence through intra- and interpersonal intelligence. This method of facilitating learning was also employed in my colleague's Form A English class.

4.5.2.1 Planning for innovation

The next mentoring session where we discussed the employment of debates as an innovative method was held on 4 May 4, 2016. In this session, as facilitators, we planned how to engage more learners by giving priority to learners who did not take part in the performance of the drama to be involved in a debate as only six learners could take part in debating sessions. We discussed promoting learner-centeredness by using group work for discussions where learners could learn and mentor one another in acquiring English.

4.5.2.2 Acting to transform

Facilitating the writing of an argumentative composition through debates was conducted on the May 5, 2016 during four consecutive learning opportunities. Each learning opportunity lasted 40 to 80 minutes. During facilitating of learning, we used recall questions that required

of learners to probe whether they had attended any debating sessions, how the speakers conducted themselves, what to do when debating, how to start or end to allow them to plan and organise their own learning; these questions engaged the B and D quadrants and the linguistic and interpersonal intelligence of the learners.

They drew examples from their individual experiences observed from debates occasionally held at school by members of the English club. They engaged the A quadrant by discussing and sharing facts about debates and using language (linguistic intelligence) to recall and reflect on their experiences with a view to applying what had been learnt.

During facilitating learning using debate, a learner volunteered to become the MC and wrote the topic of debate on the chalk board which read ‘*Speaking English in class can help learners to pass. Do you agree?*’ Then the class listed the important debating skills that speakers must master during the debating session, such as confidence, audibility, being able to expand and support the raised points as well as facing the audience. The classroom was then re-arranged and desks were moved backwards to create space at the front of the class, thereby applying the D quadrant. The class became highly learner-centred because when a member of the audience posed questions to the speaker on stage, such as, “Is it important to speak English even when some learners can forget about their culture?” the MC directed the question to the class. Debates promoted interaction through the use of language and body movement and becoming holistic thinkers that presented their facts creatively to convince and argue and share their thoughts and ideas with the class.

4.5.2.3 Observation

An observation sheet (Appendix I) was used to gather data on the facilitator-learner interaction, questioning techniques and media integration used during facilitating the learning of English using debates. Ticks were made by my colleague in the relevant boxes every time there was evidence of interaction, media integration and questioning techniques. Feedback from the observation sheet indicated that more questions were posed during these sessions. Nine knowledge questions and twenty two application questions, including higher order questions like evaluation and synthesis of facts presented were asked by learners. We then redirected all questions asked to the class.

Feedback from the post-intervention focus group interview showed that debates contributed to learners’ competence in asking questions.

4.5.2.3.1 Theme 4: Learners are competent in asking questions using English

Learners indicated that debates as an innovative method of facilitating the learning of English helped them become competent in using English. Learners said that as they were able to ask questions and perform learning tasks in their class they could not forget English skills acquired during the process of learning.

During the pre-intervention interview, learners expressed their views as follows:

Sometimes when we are shy to ask questions or take a long time to answer questions in the class, she is telling us that we are boring and that makes us to be confused as she might just tell us that we should try better next time (Respondent I; Grp-I).

I was a person that cannot ask questions in the class because I was shy so most of the time I did not talk in the class so I did not perform well (Respondent G; Group-II).

When we are writing composition and letters, if we don't understand what we were asked to do, she is able to call us one by one and explain for us (Respondent A; Group-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire regarding learners being able to perform any task in class using English:

Nine learners agreed that their English class helped them be able to perform task using English (Extract from questionnaire item 8).

In the post-intervention stage, the theme about being competent in asking questions in English came through strongly in the interviews, and there is no item in the questionnaire about this. Learners expressed themselves in the following way during the post-intervention interview:

After I have participated in debates, I can now talk and ask questions in class and some students answer you so I could not forget what I had learned (Respondent D; Grp-I).

Sometimes we are doing debating sessions in our class to learn about argumentative composition, so it is not easy to forgot what we have learned when we are writing (Respondent A; Grp-II).

All the students who were not even talking in class were feeling free to ask questions and make debate (Respondent I; Grp-I).

I can ask questions in class when the teacher is teaching because I'm no longer shy as I have taken part in debates (Respondent H; Grp-I).

The following quotations were captured from the reflective journals on debate as an innovative method of facilitating the learning of English:

In their groups, learners formulated points that were either for or against the topic of debate, 'Speaking English in class can help learners to pass. Do you agree?' and shared knowledge among the group. During debating sessions, questions asked by the speakers were redirected to the class to respond to. Learners were free to ask questions and share knowledge as a group and as a class to facilitate learning how to write an argumentative composition (Extract from my colleague's reflective journal dated 5 May, 2016).

The exciting part of the learning opportunity was when learners were able to draw from their knowledge of debates that were conducted in their school by the English club members; this propagated competencies in the writing of an argumentative composition. Learners made use of kinaesthetic movement, using different gestures and body language to share their views with the class. However, learners in the back rows did not volunteer to participate in the classroom discussions unless they were asked about their views by the facilitator. So next time I have to involve them more (Extract from my reflective journal dated 2 May 2016)

4.5.2.3.2 Theme 5: Facilitating learning of English through debates promoted learner-centeredness

The English classrooms became a place where learners were actively engaged in their own learning. Learning was facilitated in a way that created a platform to work together as a class in finding new skills and knowledge for themselves, solve their own learning problems while also gaining competence in English.

Learners said that before the intervention was implemented in their classes, their teacher did most of the work. The following statement supported learners' views about facilitating learning of English during the pre-intervention interview:

When we're in English class, we feel motivated to learn English because sometimes the teacher is talking to us with English so we going to earn more knowledge and skills about English (Respondent F; Grp-I).

When our teacher saw that we don't understand other English words, she explain them in Sesotho, so sometimes we can be able to turn that Sesotho information into English information (Respondent H; Grp-I).

Sometimes when we don't understand the question, she tell us or when she asked the questions, she can give us different answers (Respondent G; grp II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire regarding learning in English classes before debates were introduced:

Three learners agreed that their facilitator created an opportunity for them to find information on their own while two learners disagreed and five learners were not sure about this statement (Extract from questionnaire item 11).

During the post-intervention interview, learners expressed themselves as follows:

When we are debating in the class, our teacher would let us to give the topics we would like to debate with and every student participated, so we gain more confidence when doing things for ourselves because those who are debating would come in front of the class and debate and the rest of the class would be answering questions, so we are able to be motivated to participate in the class (Respondent B; Grp-I).

Nowadays, our English class is very enjoyable because we are learning by doing things ourselves like debates and drama. So when we are doing this things, we become happy and motivated to learn English and we don't forget what we have learnt (Respondent B, Grp-I).

Now when we are writing compositions or letters, the teacher gave everyone a chance to make his or her topic that he or she can write with, and that improved our English knowledge and skills and our marks became high because the teacher allow us to choose what we like and then we helped each other (Respondent G; Grp-II).

When we are debating about some topics, we were divided into groups so that we can help each other to disagree or agree about that topic that we have given out for ourselves, and that made us to never forget what we were doing during debating when we are writing (Respondent E; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire regarding how English classes promoted learner centeredness:

Only eight learners agreed that their facilitator created an opportunity for learners to find information for themselves and two disagreed (Extract from questionnaire item 11).

My reflective journal recorded the following statements on implementing debates during the post-intervention stage:

The innovative teaching method of debating actively involved learners in their own learning by assuming different roles, such as that of MC; others were speakers while some were judges. These learners carried out their roles confidently. The class listened attentively to the presentations and this helped them to answer questions asked by speakers so that everyone was involved in the learning process (Extract from my reflective journal dated 2 May 2016).

4.5.2.4 Critical reflection on debates

After conducting a number of learning opportunities using debates, as facilitators we discussed what to do in the next learning opportunity to promote a learner-centred class. Learners became engaged in mastering competencies in English by being actively involved in group work. Every time learners were in their groups to share ideas on their topic of debate, we facilitated learning by moving around the class, listening to how learners shared knowledge among themselves and offering clarifications where necessary. At other times we attended to all groups just to listen to ideas that learners raised. We also updated our reflective journals after every learning opportunity.

4.5.3 Cycle C: Public speaking

Public speaking is an innovative method where learners were asked to choose a topic from their English language curriculum content such as nouns, questions tags, prefixes and suffixes to prepare a well-researched presentation on the selected topic using English. Next they composed a song as a group on the selected topic to improve the mastery of these English skills. During the presentation learners were asked questions by the class, which they responded to and then composed a song using English skills. This method was implemented to help learners master English language content, improve speaking and listening skills and to help them develop logical thinking skills that would help them in solving problems regarding their own learning.

4.5.3.1 Planning for innovation

Before implementing public speaking as an innovative method of facilitating learning of English, we conducted mentoring sessions to discuss the activities of both learners and

facilitators. The mentoring sessions were conducted on the May 13, 2016 to enrich the process of facilitating learning of English language topics such as nouns, prefixes, question tags, sentence formation and prepositions to prepare for a learning opportunity. In addition we discussed composing a song; learners were allowed to become creative and promote mastery of English competencies by using any activity of their choice that could enhance their understanding. Unlike in drama or debates, public speaking allowed all learners in the class to contribute actively to their own learning process.

4.5.3.2 Acting to transform

Public speaking as an innovative method of facilitating learning of English was conducted during three learning opportunities. During facilitating of learning, learners revisited language topics that were presented, using Bloom's recall questions that required them to list the English topics and record them on the chalk board. Learners selected a topic from the listed topic and dispersed to their different groups to discuss and share ideas on how their presentations could be made using dictionaries and textbooks. Multiple intelligences and holistic thinking were incorporated in the learning process when learners listed confidence, audibility, body movements, creativity and display of proper emotions and feelings as skills that constitute a good presentation. Learners shared tasks as they coached each learner to master the tasks with a view to improving their mastery of English competencies. The presenting group shared their tasks among themselves as one learner was presenting knowledge that learners discovered as a group; another one wrote important points from their presentation on the chalk board and others answered questions asked. Then the groups performed a song or poem to demonstrate their mastery of English.

4.5.3.3 Observation

During the three learning opportunities implementing public speaking sessions, field notes were taken and an observation sheet was completed with the aim of documenting the teaching practice of participating teachers and learner activities. It was observed (Appendix I) that knowledge questions (6) and comprehension questions (8) were asked by learners. Nine application questions were asked and synthesis and evaluation questions were used to promote clarity to the posed questions. Learners were highly interactive and active both as a group and as a class during the presentations as they presented their facts through displaying different emotions, and engaging in logical and critical thinking skills to convince the class.

Thirty cases of learner-learner interaction and fifteen of learner-class interaction were recorded. Probing questions were used by learners.

Feedback from the focus group interviews indicated that the employment of public speaking sessions as an innovative method of facilitating learning promoted learner confidence, interaction in group work and cooperative learning.

4.5.3.3.1 Theme 6: Learners' gaining confidence in English through songs

Learners indicated that by getting actively involved in learning English skills through the use of songs, they were able to gain insight into themselves and build more confidence in expressing themselves in English.

Regarding singing English songs in their classes, respondents expressed the following during the pre-intervention interview:

In the English class, our teacher was just coming to class and teaching us and giving us more work, we did not sing the songs before (Respondent D; Grp-I).

The teacher did not teach us the English songs, but we used to do group work so we don't like it because some students are playing instead of doing the work (Respondent E; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire on learning through the use of songs:

One learner agreed that they liked singing English songs in their class (Extract from questionnaire item 7).

The following responses were captured during the post-intervention interview regarding how songs contributed to learners gaining confidence in using English:

I like singing English songs because when we are singing, I've seen that we are building more confidence because we can be able to talk in English so we cannot forget what we have sang when we are in the exams (Respondent H; Grp-I).

During the presentations, as a person is supposed to stand in front of others, we have more confidence as we have been presenting in the class so some of our colleagues have now went to the fairs and they were able to present in front of many schools (Respondent B; Grp-I).

Singing helped me because as we are writing, when I look the person who was still singing, I remember what she was still saying or what she was still singing so I became more confident when writing (Respondent C; Grp-II).

I feel very merrily when I'm in English class because we are learning by doing many things like singing so I like when we sing because I see that I don't forget what I sang about and what other were singing because some of them were funny (respondent A; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire on learning through the use of songs during the post-intervention:

After singing English songs seven learners indicated that they enjoyed learning through singing songs and only two were not sure about learning English through songs (Extract from questionnaire item 7).

The following quotations were captured from the reflective journals regarding singing English songs in class during the post-intervention stage:

Learners became very excited when they were informed by their facilitator that they had to compose a song to promote the mastery of competencies in English. They tried to rap and share tasks in their groups (Extract from my reflective journal dated May 16, 2016).

Learners presented most their work with confidence because as the presenting group was on stage, other learners asked questions and the presenting group answered them, giving examples where necessary (Extract from my colleague's reflective journal dated May 17, 2016).

4.5.3.3.2 Theme 7: Songs helped learners to master competencies in English through interactive learning during group work

Learners said that facilitating the learning of English skills through singing of songs in their groups promoted their mastery through interaction by sharing ideas with one another in their groups. They acknowledged that group interaction contributed to improving their confidence.

In the pre-intervention stage, learners indicated that they did not learn best through group work. The following responses provide learners' views with regard to group work:

The other thing she used to do when she teach is group work but some students are not doing their work there they are always talking about other things (Respondent D; Grp I).

When we are going to write the summaries, our teacher is saying we should make a group while she is supposed to say we should write individually so that she can see who has a problem (Respondent G; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire on interacting through group work:

Nine learners agreed that many classwork activities such as group work and assignments helped them in improving their English proficiency and only one learner was not sure (Extract from questionnaire item 13).

Respondents had the following to say about their views on group work during the post-intervention stage:

Now we remember what we have learnt as the things that are written in books are not shown by action but as we are student in our groups, we show them by action when singing and making dramas and that make student not to forget them (Respondent B; Grp-I).

I liked presentations because when we are going to other schools for English fair, we had practiced in our class how to present using English and other students help you to know what your presenting about, so there was no doubt we were able to present as we got a trophy in poems during English fair (Respondent A; Grp-II) .

The following statement shows feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire on learners interacting through group work:

All ten learners indicated that classwork activities such as group work and assignments helped them in improving their English proficiency (Extract from questionnaire item 13).

The following quotations were captured from the reflective journals on facilitating learning through group work:

In their groups learners shared knowledge as they tried to prepare a presentation on their different topics. Their voices were loud and hands, facial expressions and a display of emotions were used as they tried to compose songs (Extract from my reflective journal dated 16 May 2016).

In their groups all learners who were presenting shared the work because some were talking or presenting, others were writing important points of their presentation on the chalk board

and then they all sang a song. Their confidence improved when they were singing a song
(Extract from my colleague's reflective journal dated May 17, 2016).

4.5.3.3.3 Theme 8: Learners gained mastery of English skills by mentoring weaker learners during group work

Learners indicated that group work activities helped them acquire more competencies in English through helping learners below average solve problems related to their English learning. Learners said that through group work activities, they had a platform that helped them find information for themselves rather than individually solving problems relating to their own learning.

The following responses were captured during the pre-interventions interview to support learners' views with regard to mentoring one another during group work during the pre-intervention:

You find that if you had made a group, sometimes other people are not concentrating so even if we want to help them, they don't care they just want to copy when we have finished writing (Respondent D; Grp-I).

If we had made groups, sometimes other people are not concentrating, so they waste our time as one person will be doing the work and others will be playing (Respondent G; Grp-II) .

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire on learners mentoring one another during group work:

Only five learners agreed that they enjoyed communicating with friends and classmates in English in their class (Extract from questionnaire item 9).

During the post-intervention stage, learners remarked the following about helping one another in their groups:

When we were doing dramas, when we are not participating well, some students are showing you how to act and how to sing well and make things easy so I am able to perform well (Respondent F; Grp-I).

Even when we were singing, we were divided into groups and other groups were doing different topics. Then we went in front of the class as a group to summarise what we have done on our topic. And the class can now help us where we have problems and that gave us more confidence (Respondent G; Grp-I).

We even made groups when we are going to dramatize, and then after that we choose the characters, and still in our groups we helped the characters about what they are going to do, so that helped us to gain more confidence of speaking English in front of many people and it helped us to remember what is already going on that book (Respondent C; Grp-II).

Some other students participated in drama and others in songs, so in the class, all of us we helped each other so were able to know what we are supposed to learn and there is nobody who can forget what she or he was doing (Respondent G; Grp-II).

The following statement provides feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire that indicates group work as the classroom activity promoting learners' mentoring of one another:

Nine learners agreed that they enjoyed when English was used for communicating with friends and classmates in their class (Extract from questionnaire item 9).

The following quotations were captured from the reflective journals regarding learners mentoring one another during group work activities:

Learners dispersed to their different groups taking their 'Rainy Season' texts to examine the different roles. In their groups one could observe that they helped the main characters to master their lines by referring to their text and demonstrating different body movements. They asked one another questions and consulted the facilitator only when they needed further clarification (Extract from my reflective journal dated April 7, 2016).

The class was mostly learner-centred because during the performance of the drama learners who did not take part in the drama went to the front of the class to demonstrate to the characters how to perform some of the areas that they were struggling with to help them stage a good performance (Extract from my colleague's reflective journal dated April 7, 2016).

4.5.3.3.4 Theme 9: Learners gained competencies in English literature and English language that improved their mastery of these subjects.

Learners mentioned that facilitating learning of English using innovative methods contributed to the improvement in their English literature and English language marks. They mentioned that through the new methods, they all engaged actively in mastering English competencies.

The following statements support learners' views on their marks during the pre-intervention stage:

Our literature marks are low because sometimes the question don't show how many marks we can get after answering that question, so we don't answer it well (Respondent E; Grp-II).

There are students in Form B who are able to answer questions orally in class but when they are writing, they are not able to answer so that's why our marks are low (Respondent B; Grp-I).

Sometimes questions become difficult so much that I don't understand them, so it is difficult for me to answer because they have difficult words, that's why my marks in language are low (Respondent A; Grp-II).

I was getting low marks in language because many times I don't understand the way the teacher is teaching language (respondent C; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire on learners' English marks:

Nine learners agreed that English classes had helped in creating an opportunity to improve their performance while one learner was not sure (Extract from questionnaire item 18).

During the post intervention stage, respondents expressed themselves in the following way:

The new methods have increased my literature marks because when we dramatise the book, so when the question is asked in the exam that has that moment, we are able to answer it easily (Respondent H; Grp-I).

After singing about the topics of language, I have found my marks improving because it was easy for me to remember what we were still singing about when writing a test (Respondent C; Grp-II).

My marks are better because I used to have problem with language but after singing it, I now perform better on language (Respondent E; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire on learners' English marks:

All ten learners agreed that English classes had helped in creating an opportunity for them to improve their performance (Extract from questionnaire item 18).

The following quotations regarding an improvement in learners' English marks were captured from the reflective journals:

When it comes to writing, learners seemed to have improved. They were able to understand questions asked and remembered how they had presented their work during the drama, debate or in public speaking. Learners were able to write the introduction to an argumentative composition, which they had struggled with before the employment of debates (Extract from my reflective journal dated May 6, 2016).

4.5.3.3.5 Theme 10: Facilitating the learning of English using innovative methods has influenced learners' daily and future lives

Learners indicated that facilitating learning of English using innovative methods contributed to a change in the way they viewed English. They admitted that their improved comprehension skills and mastery of competencies in English speaking, reading and writing influenced their daily and future lives.

During the pre-intervention interview learners mentioned that the use of English in their classes was not compulsory, so they did not use it daily, but they still acknowledged its positive role in their lives. Learners' responses were as follows:

I can say that English is important because when you know English, you can go everywhere and you can be able to communicate with other people from other countries (Respondent F; Grp-I).

I used English only when I write tests or exams, I understand better when the teacher is explaining things in Sesotho (Respondent J; Grp-II).

The following statement shows feedback from a pre-intervention questionnaire on the role of English in learners' lives:

All ten learners agreed that English was important in their daily and future lives (Extract from questionnaire item 3).

During the post-intervention stage, learners expressed themselves in the following way:

Sometimes when people have passed Form E, some don't attend the University of Lesotho but they go to other universities, so they'll be able to talk with different people from different countries (Respondent B; Grp-I) .

When we meet with white people, we can be able to talk with them. So when we don't know English, we cannot be able to talk with them (Respondent H; Grp-I).

I didn't know how to speak to people using English but as I was the MC of the debate session in our class, now I was able to be the MC of other things that were happening at school like the awards (Respondent D; Grp-I).

When I was presenting and singing English songs in the class, now I can be able to write my own songs with English, so that makes me to feel happy (Respondent F; Grp-I).

More work is easily found when you have passed your English well (Respondent C; Grp-II).

The following statement provides feedback from a post-intervention questionnaire on how English has influenced learners' lives:

All ten learners agreed that English played an important role in their daily and future lives (Extract from questionnaire item 3).

After facilitating the learning of English using innovative approaches, learners mentioned that they still preferred learning to be facilitated both in English and Sesotho, except for only three learners who preferred an English-only approach. Learners expressed themselves as follows:

I think both Sesotho and English but English should be used most of the time and Sesotho in some situations...such as when we want to understand more about something (Respondent B; Grp-I).

I think English only because when we are doing English, when Sesotho interrupt, some students will not feel motivated because we are talking about English not Sesotho (Respondent F; Grp-I).

We should use both Sesotho and English madam for in case where there are some bombastic words that we cannot understand when just explained in English, they need to be explained again in Sesotho so that we cannot forget it (Respondent C; Grp-II).

The language that must be used in English class is English because we are taught about English, so if we can mix them we can be confused (Respondent E; Grp-II).

4.5.3.3.6 Theme 11: Learners are competent when English is used in other subjects

Innovative methods contributed to improving learners' ability to use English not only in English classrooms but also in other subjects. Learners said they were able to understand questions posed in English in other subjects because they used it daily in their English class.

Learners' responses with regard to using English in other subjects during the pre-intervention stage were captured as follows:

All the subjects except Sesotho are taught in English, so I think we need to practice talking in English more so that we can know many English words because if we know them, we can be able to understand the questions even in other subjects because now there are many English words we don't know (Respondent B; Grp-I) .

Sometimes there are some English words that are asked in English class, when you're asked about them in other subjects; we cannot be able to explain them because now we don't know many English words (Respondent G; Grp-II).

During the post-intervention interview learners expressed themselves as follows:

I would like to make example with Agriculture. Our teacher of agriculture now likes to give us classwork so that we should present. So we were able to present using English because in English class we were able to do so (Respondent D; Grp-I).

Some of the students who were going to participate at St Monicas at business fair were shy at first but because we had practiced how to present in English class, they were able to present about Business Education, so they were able to speak English and have a high confident. That make them to be awarded with the medals (Respondent F; Grp-I).

In other subjects as we are doing them with English, I'm able to understand better the questions asked and to answer them with English as I'm now used to speaking English all the time in English class (Respondent C; Group-II).

Sometimes there in Sesotho subject, we are singing with another thing, so I can remember the things we were doing in English class and turn them to Sesotho so I can understand more (Respondent A; Grp-II) .

4.5.3.4 Critical reflection on public speaking

Public speaking learning opportunities were most effective. After conducting the first learning opportunity for public speaking, we discussed means of creating an opportunity for learners to be creative and enhance their mastery of competencies in English in any creative way that they wished; so instead of singing, some learners composed poems. Learners also selected groups that performed well in their holistic presentations that included confidence,

good presentation and their songs. It was also observed that the three innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English contributed to improved academic performance in English.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The professional development intervention in the form of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that were introduced in the Form B English class contributed to improving their speaking, writing and reading competencies. However, it was observed that although the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English had a positive impact on both learners' proficient use of English and facilitators' professional development, they required much time to achieve maximum results.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, REFLECTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the results of my study that are compared to available literature related to implementing innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English to improve the teaching practice of the teachers at a rural high school in Lesotho. The research questions posed in Chapter 1 are answered and final conclusions and recommendations for further practice are clearly outlined.

5.2 THE INNOVATIVE METHODS OF FACILITATING THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH THAT WERE USED IN ENGLISH CLASSES

The professional development intervention for my study was in the form of implementing the new and innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English namely drama, debate and public speaking. These methods were employed in English classes to transform the teaching practice of my colleague and myself with a view to developing ourselves and for improving the learners' competency in using the English language.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA

The findings from the data analysis presented in Chapter 4 can be divided into two categories, namely positive findings relating to improvement in our teaching practice as teachers of English and an improvement in the proficiency of learners in English. The second category is about data that showed a need for improvement with a view to helping learners to improve their mastery of English.

5.3.1 Data with positive findings relating to improvement in our teaching practice as teachers of English

From the data analysis presented in Chapter 4, it was found that improvement was brought about in our teaching practice. The improvements captured contributed to team spirit and techniques of facilitating the learning of English that are discussed in the following section.

5.3.2 Collaboration and team spirit between the teachers of English

Instruction and learning are no longer considered a routine process where teachers assume an outsider role and simply dispense information that will be helpful in acquiring the set educational outcomes to learners; it is considered by Pine, Cochran-Smith, Barnatt and Friedman (2009) as a role in creating new knowledge in schools that helps to discover inside perspectives and theories. The use of action research, collaborative planning and peer mentoring that we adopted throughout my research study to improve our teaching practice as teachers of English in the school assisted us in gaining a more analytic and creative energy that helped us to become more effective in our teaching as Forte and Flores (2014) recommend. Studies by Guskey (2003) showed that when there is a collective participation from teachers in a department or school that get support from their school, professional development becomes more effective.

As participating teachers, we thought of new ways of addressing the learning needs of different learners through the use of the whole brain thinking model and multiple intelligences. We held mentoring sessions to discuss how best to implement each of the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English before a learning opportunity was presented. Therefore, we gained new ideas by encouraging a reflective and questioning process on our professional practice that improved our classroom management and confidence in facilitating the learning of English as suggested by Bull and Gilbert (2012). Furthermore, my colleague observed my classes and after facilitating learning through the use of a specific innovative method, such as drama, debate or public speaking we discussed and shared ideas on how the next learning opportunity could be improved during our mentoring sessions. It was found by Bull and Gilbert (2012) that teachers who engage in mentoring and observation sessions contribute to both individual and collaborative learning and to the development of a school, which in turn helps them to move forward together to develop their communities of practice. Furthermore, mentoring in my study created moral support that allowed us to overcome failures, frustration and insecurity in our teaching practice while we proactively and creatively solved classroom problems (Forte & Flores, 2014).

5.3.3 Improvement in techniques of facilitating learning of English that we used as facilitators

The dominant teaching methods that we used as teachers of English in our classes before the intervention were teacher-centred, such as the question and answer method. When we

introduced debates, drama and public speaking as innovative methods in Form B classes to facilitate the learning of English, our teaching practice was improved. The innovative and transformative practice that we adopted in facilitating the learning of English allowed us to design learning activities that related learner experiences to the real-world problems so that learners could solve problems as Forte and Flores (2014) suggest.

Scott (2015) maintains that learners excel when they are given a sense of freedom of choice in methods of facilitating learning that are best suited to each individual learner so that they can master any learning. As we employed the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English, we acknowledged learners' feelings and perceptions, minimised control and created opportunities for learners to make decisions regarding their own learning. Learners were given freedom of choice of activities, such as group work and songs that they found suitable for their learning needs. Laal, Khattami- Kermanshahi and Laal (2014) found that the active engagement of learners in the learning process through group work, singing of English songs and group presentations assisted learners in becoming autonomous and creative learners. Every time a learning opportunity was facilitated, innovative methods of engaging learners in their own learning were incorporated (De Boer, Steyn & Du Toit, 2001). Improvement in our teaching practice contributed to our continuous professional development.

5.3.3.1 Data analysis with positive findings relating to improvement in the proficiency of learners in English

The methods of facilitating the learning of English contributed to the improvement in learners' proficiency in this subject. The improvements captured indicated that learners were actively involved in their own learning and that group work acted as the best method of facilitating learning that learners benefited most from.

5.3.3.2 New and innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English promoted learner-centred learning

During the implementation of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English, learning environments conducive to learners regulating their own learning were established (Pauli, Reusser, & Grob, 2007). The intervention was conducted aligning ourselves with the idea of Scott (2015) who encourages the transformation of teacher practices from traditional teacher-centred methods where learning occurs as a one-way transmission of information from the teacher to learners into a learner-centred approach where learners initiate, control

and manage their own learning. The change in our teaching practice contributed to learners who were actively engaged in learning activities, were able to find information, solve problems regarding their own learning and master competencies in English as Smith, Sheppard, Johnson and Johnson (2005) suggests.

5.3.3.3 Use of group work to facilitate learning contributed to the mastery of competencies in English

It was evident from the research that during the employment of drama, debate and public speaking as innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English, group work was one of the teaching strategies that learners most benefited from. Group work is discussed in the following section.

Group work was used to allow learners to share information and ideas as a way of acquiring the skills necessary for mastering English competencies. Learners were able to control their own learning processes through mutually searching for understanding, solutions or meanings and engaging in critical thinking, behavioural and motivational processes to achieve self-set learning goals as suggested by Boekaerts and Cascallar (2006) and Scott (2015). Schuitema, Peetsma and Van der Veen (2012) insist that group work stimulates active imagination and contributes to the adaptation of learners' thoughts, feelings and behaviour to effect their learning through motivation. When learners were motivated by this highly active and dynamic learning activity, they became confident in managing and controlling their efforts in different learning tasks. Scott (2015) agrees that motivation develops the interest of learners, maintains their involvement in the learning process and encourages confidence in their ability to perform a specific task.

Learners were provided with an opportunity to learn independently and from one another in their groups. They had their own learning expectations and collaboration with other learners which contributed to the development of meta-cognition, improvement in formulating ideas, a high level of discussion and debate and sharing of experiences (Scott, 2015). Questions were circulated among the learners in their groups as they worked towards completing different learning tasks and this promoted learners being able to make decisions relating to their own learning. At other times, questions that were attempted in groups were posed to the class, thereby stimulating debate and more clarity that contributed to the mastery of English competencies by all learners.

The findings of my study are aligned with Scott (2015) who maintains that the employment of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English creates learning environments that offer the opportunity to communicate new knowledge and to solve complex problems through peer collaboration to support them in applying their learning to new problems and contexts. Laal *et al.* (2014) emphasise that learners' discussions and active involvement in their learning process assist them in achieving high levels of thinking that result in learners who are crucial thinkers and who become responsible for their learning.

5.3.3.4 Increased usage of English as medium of instruction in the classroom

My study aimed at diminishing an overuse of mother tongue usage that was predominant in English classes. There was an improvement in facilitating the learning of English because it was conducted strictly in English. To master a second language, Tabbers and de Koeijer (2010) suggest that learning requires learners who take ownership of learning activities through interaction, active participation and the use of the second language in authentic contexts. The new and innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English fostered discussion, and the sharing of ideas and experiences by both learners and facilitators using the English language. Moskovsky, Alrabai, Paolini and Ratcheva (2013) emphasise that learners become motivated and their attitudes, aptitudes, self-confidence, communication and learning strategies to achieve long-term goals when learning in second language classes occur in the target language. Prah (2009), however, points out that learners learn better when they understand what the teacher is saying, therefore, in my study, Sesotho was used minimally to provide clarification, manage the class and to explain difficult English words and terms. Research conducted by Probyn (2009) revealed that African languages are widely spoken at home and at community level in most township and rural schools of Africa; therefore learners have little exposure to English outside the classroom. Providing learners with more opportunities to participate actively in class using the English language improved their confidence to express themselves in English. Learners were also stimulated to ask questions in class and in their groups and to coach one another and do presentations in class using English.

5.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE MODELS OF LEARNING ADOPTED FOR MY STUDY

The whole brain thinking model, multiple intelligences and Bloom's taxonomy were used to guide the data collection. Findings from using each of the models are discussed in the following section.

5.4.1 The use of Bloom's taxonomy in methods of facilitating learning

During facilitating the learning of English using innovative methods, Bloom's taxonomy was used to enhance understanding of various learning tasks to promote the mastery of English. Questions on various levels of Bloom's taxonomy were used to direct the learners to finding information for themselves, sharing their ideas and solving problems regarding their own learning. Learning tasks that required learners to compose a song, poem or any activity of their choice to supplement their presentations, perform dramas and take part in debate stimulated learners to think critically and to become creative as they regulated their own learning. The questions also fostered learners' curiosity and helped them to acquire a deeper understanding of learning tasks as they shared their experiences with their peers. Furthermore, every question that learners posed was redirected to the class, or we used probing techniques to encourage learners to become creative and share their insights, expand their thinking and processing of information that stimulated discussion, creativity and critical thinking as suggested by Scott (2015). However, most of the questions that were asked by both the facilitator and the learners were limited to the knowledge and comprehension levels, including a few application questions on Bloom's taxonomy. Only a few complex questions such as analysis and any higher level questions were asked throughout facilitating the learning of English using innovative methods.

5.4.2 The use of whole brain thinking in methods of facilitating learning

The employment of innovative methods motivated facilitators to take learners' learning preferences into account when designing learning opportunities; learners' preferred thinking styles were accommodated and less preferred thinking modes were also utilised as De Boer *et al.* (2001) recommend. In facilitating the learning of English using drama, debate and public speaking, facilitators innovatively conducted every learning opportunity by engaging learners' whole brain through adapting the activities according to the four quadrants of the whole brain model. De Boer *et al.* (2001) encourage facilitators to vary the design and methods of facilitating learning to promote the development of the full potential of the learner. The use of classroom activities that engaged all quadrants provided learners with

different learning needs with an opportunity to engage actively in their own learning. They were able share their personal experiences, use a research-based way of finding information, incorporate clear examples drawn from their context, body language and physical activities and to have a freedom of choice of learning tasks that promoted their mastery of competencies in English as recommended by (Du Toit, 2012).

5.4.3 The use of multiple intelligences in methods of facilitating learning

My research contributed to improving our teaching practice through conducting English learning opportunities using multiple intelligences. The learning opportunities were structured in such a way that most of the nine intelligences were employed to allow learners with different learning needs to construct their own meaning. The drama, debates and public speaking sessions used to facilitate the learning of English promoted the employment of verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial-visual, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, intra-personal, interpersonal, existential and naturalist intelligences. These intelligences contributed to learners that became active participants in their own learning. However, naturalistic and existential intelligences were not employed.

5.4.4 The need for improvement of our practice with a view to helping learners to improve their mastery of English

Facilitating the learning of English was conducted mainly using English; learners were actively engaged in the learning process using English but their proficiency in English still needed improvement. In the post-intervention interviews, learners were able to understand and answer questions posed in English; however, their ability to express themselves was still limited. Probyn (2009) alerts teachers that learners' poor proficiency in English contributes to high failure rates, so improvement in proficiency is yet another aspect of English learning that needs to be addressed. Although Sun (2003) maintains that English drama has been shown to help learners with fluency and vocabulary, learners still had difficulty generating vocabulary and grammatical structures relevant to the learning task assigned. This contributed to most of their responses being language edited as indicated in Chapter 4 so that the reader could understand their views. Hickman, Pollard-Durodola, and Vaughn (2004) encourage teachers to allow learners to learn vocabulary words in context and create an opportunity for oral response so that learners can engage in peer conversations with the aim of promoting comprehension and mastery of competencies in English.

Another drawback was the time factor. The employment of innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English requires more time to be conducted efficiently. To ensure that no teacher in the school was inconvenienced, and that learners had enough time to learn about and share their experiences, the discussion groups were conducted during study time so that learning opportunities were used for learners' presentations.

5.4.5 Conclusion on innovative methods

Innovative methods proved to be beneficial to us as facilitators as well as to the learners. For us, they transformed our teaching practice by engaging us in the thoughtful planning of learning opportunities prior to facilitating learning. Learning opportunities were conducted to accommodate the needs of learners to promote the mastery of competencies in English by all learners. However, there is always room for improvement in both facilitators and learners.

5.5. ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this section I discuss the research questions for my study and draw final conclusions. The secondary research questions are answered first as they lead to answering the main research question.

5.5.1 First secondary research question

What are the experiences of teachers of English regarding the application of innovative ideas gained from the professional development intervention in their teaching practice?

The innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English contributed to improving the teaching practice of the teachers of English. Before the intervention, we used the direct question and answer method where the teacher became the source of information. However, the introduction of innovative methods of facilitating learning contributed to making us become flexible by allowing learners to find information for themselves. Group work was the most effective classroom activity in propagating learning. The change in methods of teaching English improved our confidence in teaching English. Public speaking sessions accommodated the needs of some learners of different learning abilities to participate. Using songs as innovative method of facilitating learning engaged different intelligences in the learning process. When learners were engaged in active learning, they could not forget the learning outcomes; they indicated that when they looked at a learner who was singing, they

remembered everything that was sung. Our everyday classroom experiences contributed to our professional development and to our improved teaching practice.

5.2.2 Second secondary research question

How did the changes in the teaching practice of teachers of English contribute to my professional development as a facilitator of the professional development intervention?

Findings from the data analysis revealed that as a principal researcher of the intervention, the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English helped me to think critically and thoughtfully before implementing them. The transformation of teaching methods that I used as my intervention in English classes was aligned with the view of Avalos (2010) who states that teachers who improve their methods of facilitating learning and educational practices increase learner achievement. Before going to class, I did extensive reading on how each of the innovative methods could be implemented before sharing the information with my colleague during mentoring sessions. The mentoring sessions, which I had never conducted before, helped me and my colleague to share ideas and views on how improvement could be made so that learning could become effective in our English classes. Mizell (2010) emphasises that effective teaching that benefits teachers and learners mostly occurs in settings where they can immediately apply what they have learned. The mentoring sessions helped me to improve my teaching style and methods of facilitating learning and to become creative with a view to improving my professional development on a continuous basis.

As principal researcher, my professional development was improved through adopting a more practical and cyclic way of solving problems relating to my classroom practice through a reflective practice of action research. Reflection has helped me to be an objective practitioner. Through reflection I was able to accommodate different learning needs and to select the most effective methods of facilitating.

5.5.3 Third secondary research question

How did the implementation of new methods of facilitating learning contribute to our learners' proficiency in English?

Innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English were employed in my study to promote learning and the mastery of competencies in English. This was done because only the mother tongue of learners was used by teachers of English and their learners. My study was the result of the need for increasing the usage of English in classrooms, based on the

fundamental idea of Felder and Brent (2009) who agree that learners' authentic communication in a second language perpetuates their active engagement in the second language. Schuitema *et al.* (2012) maintain that learners who have the ability to regulate their own learning process and develop skills that help them to continue learning on their own throughout their lives, are able to have positive learning outcomes.

The analysis of data collected during the pre-intervention interview relating to the mastery of English by learners revealed that their marks in English were either low or average. All learners that indicated their English marks needed to be improved. They attributed their low achievement in English to the teaching methods that the teacher used and to their inability to express themselves in English. However, after the intervention learners said that the innovative methods of facilitating learning contributed to the improvement in their mastery of English and their English marks. The innovative methods of facilitating learning allowed learners hands-on practical experiences that led to the mastery of competencies in English. Schuitema *et al.* (2012) support the idea that learners are more inclined to take responsibility for their learning processes and to engage in self-regulated learning if they perceive what is being learned as relevant to their own lives.

The innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English propagated communication in English. When learners used English daily in their English classes, they mentioned that they were able to read and write in the language. The improvement of their mastery of English led to an improved performance in other subjects since questions in all other subjects in the school were posed in English; learners transferred their competencies gained in the English class to other subjects.

5.5.4 Main research question

How does a reflective practice on new methods to contribute to improving the teaching practice of teachers of English in a rural high school?

The innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English encouraged us to reflect-in-action on our actions with a view to transforming our practice. Through reflection on our classroom practices, my colleague and I were able to assume the roles of facilitators instead of being teachers who conveyed information to the learners.

We used reflection with the aim of improving our next learning opportunity. Reflection helped us to prepare learning opportunities that were well thought through prior to facilitating

the learning of English. Marcos, Miguel and Tillema (2009) maintain that reflection helps teachers to understand their professional activities better and this led to new insights for practice that contributed to improving teaching practice. The reflective journals that we completed on a daily basis helped us to track our practices to improve our methods of facilitating learning each time we went to class.

Reflection conducted during mentoring sessions helped me and my colleague to help each other improve our teaching practice. Maule (2009) encourages teachers to reflect on their practice as they learn about themselves, their learners, their colleagues, and can determine ways to improve, thus allowing teachers to grow and gain confidence in their work. The teamwork that was enhanced by our reflective practice contributed to learners who benefited from group work after the intervention.

Schuitema *et al.* (2012) argue that the creation of innovative learning environments helps teachers to focus sharply on the learning process and this fosters active and independent learners. Through reflection we created learning environments where learners were able to direct their own learning and share their knowledge and views with a view to becoming creative thinkers.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

At the time of the study I assumed the role of the researcher and facilitator in the class; therefore I may have been biased in the interpretation of the results. In addition, the intention of the research was to get my English teacher colleague to implement drama, debates and public speaking as the three innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that were employed during the study. For her, only data from debates was captured and analysed.

5.7 POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

- The results of my study contribute to and augment existing literature on implementing innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English in rural school environments.
- My study also provides literature on the continuous professional development of teachers, both novice and experienced ones especially that of teachers teaching English as a second language in rural schools.

- My study provides insight into how to improve teaching practice in the world of work. The findings of my study can be adapted for different learning environments, such as in urban schools since the goal is to improve teaching practice.
- My study indicated that instruction and learning should not be one directional or teacher-centred. It provides various methods of facilitating learning that promote learner-centred learning environments where teachers have to assume the role of facilitator.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident that professional development is a continuous process that every education system should take into serious consideration if quality education is to be achieved in schools. Learners of varying learning ability, no matter their context, deserve quality teaching; hence the following recommendations are made.

It should be the aim of every teacher to grow as a professional in his or her field of work. The use of various innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English that have been implemented in my study can be adapted in English learning opportunities in different contexts. Teachers can improve their ways of facilitating the learning of English by assuming the role of facilitator rather than that of teacher. The benefit for learners in this case is to have a platform where they are able to direct their own learning, share their different experiences and consult with their peers.

Innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English can also be adopted in other subjects. If conducted within the parameters of the school by all educators, instruction and learning in all subjects can yield life-long positive benefits to learners.

Action research is a continuous process and a practical way of solving problems relating to classroom experiences. If the government of Lesotho can incorporate the cyclic nature of action research and its hands-on practical experiences in their curricula for all subjects, all learners will have a chance of actively solving problems regarding their own learning. Educators will then have a chance to select the best instructional methods that can meet the learning needs of all learners. This can contribute to the improvement of the education system of Lesotho in general, which can be to the benefit of our societies.

To promote a more practical and effective way of solving problems regarding their teaching practice, and to track any changes experienced in implementing innovative methods of

facilitating learning, I encourage facilitators who may adopt action research in their classes to include pictorials and videos to enhance the quality of instruction and learning.

In terms of instructional media employed to facilitate the learning of English, I recommend that facilitators become creative and design learning opportunities for specific learners. Resources such as drawings, paintings and the internet that promote mastery of competencies can be used effectively to enhance the quality of learning in individual subjects and schools.

The aim of the research was to improve the teaching practice of teachers of English by facilitating learning through the use of innovative methods. However, I maintain that learners' mother tongue must be used to a limited extent, such as explaining difficult words, offering instructions and for classroom management in facilitating learning.

5.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The findings of my study indicate that instruction and learning should be regarded as a process that contributes to moulding learners to become independent in future so that they can become active participants in society. Facilitating learning in second language classrooms should be planned with meticulous care.

CHAPTER 6

META-REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the reflection on the entire action research process that I conducted. It includes my journey in undertaking the research from its beginning to its completion. All the challenges and positive achievements that helped in bringing the research to completion are being addressed.

6.2 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

My research journey began by enrolling for the dissertation module CDV 890 in the year 2014. I already had a topic in mind but my supervisors, Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane and Prof. Dr Pieter du Toit helped me in re-shaping my research topic to suit my problem statement. After revisiting the topic several times it was formulated as *A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho*. After a meaningful discussion with my supervisors, we agreed upon action research as the best suitable design in addressing this topic.

Then I explored literature related to the research topic to prepare for a proposal defence that was conducted on the April 1, 2015. Having successfully defended my proposal, I applied for ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria that I obtained in November 2015. I also applied for permission from the relevant stakeholders to conduct the research from January 2016 and therefore, with their permission, I was able to proceed with data collection from April 2016 for two consecutive months. As a part-time student based outside South Africa, having to travel from Lesotho to the University during the course of my studies to attend the support sessions was a very challenging experience. Sometimes I had to skip some support sessions that were organised by the University of Pretoria to empower students due to financial constraints. At other times, as a full-time teacher of English at my school, my work schedule became so burdensome that there was a clash between support sessions offered during school holidays and extra classes that I had to offer to the learners at the school in Lesotho.

During the data collection stage I worked closely with my English teacher colleague to capture data from the English classes. We mentored each other and reflected on how the

teaching practice of the teachers of English at our school could be improved, especially that of myself as the principal researcher in my study. My fellow colleague observed my English classes and I in turn observed hers as we were implementing the innovative methods of facilitating the learning of English. Her feedback on my daily classroom observations and interview schedules that she conducted with the learners who were participants in this research provided further insight for my study.

After data collection I began to present the captured data in Chapter 4 as this was the most challenging chapter for me. I presented my data from June 2016 up to February 2017. However, in these months, I was also able to address comments I received from my supervisors from previous chapters. Another drawback during my study was a lack of face to face contact sessions with my supervisors. I was based outside South Africa and normally face to face meetings occurred only about once or twice a year during the school holidays. However, the email mode of communication that we used for providing feedback, seeking clarification and addressing issues related to my studies was very effective. Despite all the challenges, my dream was to pursue my goal until completion of my research.

The following email extract shows the successful completion of the data collection process in the year 2016:

 Gmail Mamolete Iris Mofolo <paleoqoo@gmail.com>

End of Data collection

Paleo Qoo <paleoqoo@gmail.com>

30 May 2016 at 19:07

Reply-To: Paleo Qoo <paleoqoo@gmail.com>

To: Wendy Malekane <Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za>

Cc: Pieter duToit <pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za>

Good evening Dr Wendy and Prof. Pieter

This is the final week for my data collection since it is the last week of teaching before end of term examinations begin next week. I am completing storytelling this week and am going to do the post-intervention interviews and questionnaires as well.

I really enjoyed trying out new teaching approaches and I do not think I will ever stop because it has been all enlightening and fruitful to me and learners. I think I will definitely have good results in English at the end of the year this year in the national examinations

Thanks to you, my dear supervisors, for your support and patience with me. You have been very good to me I really appreciate it.

God bless.

Kind regards,
Iris

Having successfully presented my data in Chapter 4, I completed the dissertation by writing the remaining two chapters. From there I had to attend to the final comments from all chapters before sending in my dissertation to the language editor and then to the external examiners. I completed the dissertation and handed it in June 2017; it was the achievement of my life.

6.3 MY PLACE IN THE RESEARCH

My research journey has been a long but very enriching one. Throughout this research I have learnt a lot about my teaching practice and about myself as a researcher and a facilitator. The approach facilitators use to facilitate learning in classes can bring feelings of joy towards our teaching profession. The professional growth of teachers starts with improving ourselves by adapting different approaches in our class to accommodate for all learners. When every learner in the class is actively engaged in the learning process, learners develop interest in the class and in the subject itself; which leads to increased motivation, concentration and active learning on the part of the learners. Learners who are highly motivated to learn any subject bring joy and a sense of fulfilment to the part of the facilitator because every day of work becomes a new experience, no matter the work challenges we may face. Furthermore, team work is very vital for professional growth. I have learnt that if all teachers could work together in a socially supportive environment, their teaching practice and professional development could improve. Facilitators are more able to share their views and experiences and try to find solutions to everyday classroom problems in a more effective and efficient way as a team. This also assists in building a mutual relationship as colleagues, which helps in creating a conducive work environment which helps in improving learners' mastery and achievement in any subject.

The following email extract proves that all my hard work in conducting the research has finally paid off. There was indeed an improvement in learners' proficiency and achievement in English in the 2016 national examinations brought about by the new and innovative methods of facilitating learning of English that were implemented in their class.

Mamolete Iris Mofolo <paleoqoo@gmail.com>

Study

3 messages

achievements

Iris <paleoqoo@gmail.com>

5 January 2017 at 22:43

To: Wendy Malekane <Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za>

Cc: Pieter duToit <pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za>

Good day Dr Wendy and Prof.. Pieter

Happy New Year, and best wishes for 2017.

I just could not contain myself so I wanted to share my happiness with you.

Our national results for Grade 10 (Form C) have been published today. This is the group of learners whom I have been conducting my study with for the past two years (since Form B).

Today I am proud to inform you that all the hard work has paid off and learners have performed outstandingly well. The new methods that we have introduced in this group of learners as part of my research have worked wonders ... they have indeed contributed immensely to the learners' mastery of English and to my professional development as their facilitator.

I am proud to tell you that the overall pass-rate (percentage) for English this year is 92% compared to the 65% that was achieved in 2015. I have never achieved such a high pass-rate in my five years of teaching experience. I am so happy.

A big thank you goes to you my supervisors for guiding me into being the best I can be; and helping me to try out new things in my career that proved that everything is possible when one is open-minded. Thank you and God bless.

Beyond this study, I will continue to enrich myself in various ways in my teaching career: this study has certainly opened my mind to different learning opportunities.

Many thanks and much appreciated.

Kind regards

Iris

Pieter duToit <Pieter.duToit@up.ac.za>

9 January 2017 at 12:54

To: Paleo Qoo <paleoqoo@gmail.com>

Cc: Wendy Malekane <Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za>

Well, well

Great news to kick off 2017! Congratulations. Keep up the good work. And continue with your action research.

Prof

>>> Iris <paleoqoo@gmail.com> 2017/01/05 10:43 PM >>>

[Quoted text hidden]

Wendy Malekane <Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za>

13 January 2017 at 11:17

To: paleoqoo@gmail.com

Cc: Pieter duToit <Pieter.duToit@up.ac.za>

Congratulations!!! Iris I am so PROUD of you and all the hard work you have put into your work at school and in your research as well!!!)

Happy New Year to all.

W

Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane

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wendy.carvalho-malekane@up.ac.za

>>> Iris <paleoqoo@gmail.com> 1/5/2017 10:43 PM >>>

[Quoted text hidden]

6.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I provided a detailed account of my research journey from the start of my research until handing in a completed dissertation.

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APPENDIX I OBSERVATION SHEETS

Method	Learning opportunity	Facilitator	Media Integration			Whole brain				Teacher-Learner Interaction					Bloom's Taxonomy						
			Black-board	Textbook	Other	A	B	C	D	Teacher-class	Teacher-learner	Learner-Class	Learner-Learner	Group	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation	
Drama	04/04/2016	Myself	✓✓✓✓✓	✓		✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓		
	05/04/2016		✓✓	✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓			✓
	06/04/2016		✓✓	✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓			✓
	07/04/2016		✓			✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓	✓		
Tally			10	8	0	17	10	16	16	12	11	20	32	3	9	12	7	3	2	1	
Total																				189	
Debate	03/05/2016	Myself	✓✓			✓	✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓		✓	
	04/05/2016		✓✓✓✓			✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓		✓✓	
	05/05/2016		✓✓			✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓			✓✓	✓			✓✓	
	06/05/2016		✓			✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓		✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓			✓
	07/05/2016	Colleague	✓✓✓✓			✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓			✓	
Tally			13	0	0	11	23	13	27	19	13	20	39	3	9	15	22	5	3	4	
Total																				239	
Public speech	16/05/2016	Myself	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓		✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓				✓	✓✓
	17/05/2016		✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓
	18/05/2016		✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓		✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓			✓
Tally			18	7	0	4	6	15	31	7	7	15	30	3	6	8	9	2	3		
Total																				171	

APPENDIX II

REFLECTION OF TEACHING PRACTICE (RESEARCHER GUIDE)

A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho.

Time of interview	_____	Duration	_____
Date	_____		
Place	_____		
Interviewer	_____		
Interviewee	_____		

Improving our teaching practice in our English classes as teachers of English is vital for our professional development and confidence in teaching English. The purpose of this study is to explore the outcome of facilitative professional development in order to improve the teaching practice of teachers of English at my school by means of introducing innovative instructional methods, and teaching strategies. The data collected in this study will serve in research purposes only and treated as confidential. Access to the data will be granted to the researcher and the supervisor only. Thank you for your participation.

Questions:

1. Were you able to accomplish your goal?

2. Was your lesson teacher-centred or learner-centred?

3. What was the most and least successful?

4. Did you depart from the learning opportunity plan? If so, why?

5. How did you respond to different learner needs?

APPENDIX III

PRE- AND POST-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW GUIDE

III-1 PRE-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW GUIDE

Question 1: Which language do you prefer to be taught in in your English class?

Question 2: How often does your teacher use Sesotho in your English class?

Question 3: How do you feel in your English class?

Question 4: How do feel about the way your teacher is teaching English in class?

Question 5: what improvements do you think can be implemented to the way she is teaching?

Question 6: What type of marks are you scoring in English?

Question 7: What are your feelings with regard to English as a subject?

III-2 POST-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW GUIDE

Question 1: What are your experiences in the English class? Have you lately had a good or bad time?

Question 2: What are your feelings with regard to English as a language and subject in your class?

Question 3: Are you exposed to English outside of school?

Question 4: Describe the new teaching methods that have been implemented in your class.

Question 5: How is your teacher's teaching different from before using these methods?

Question 6: Describe how each method that you mentioned earlier helped you to master English.

Question 7: How have you improved as an individual in your English class?

Question 8: How have these methods helped you in other subjects?

Question 9: Would you like to continue using these methods in the English class and why?

Question 10: What else would you like to do in class?

APPENDIX IV

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA ETHICAL CLEARANCE



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

Ethics Committee
24 November 2015

Dear Ms Mofolo,

REFERENCE: HU 15/06/02

Your application was considered by the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee and the final decision of the Ethics Committee is:

Your application is approved.

This letter serves as notification that you may continue with your fieldwork. Should any changes to the study occur after approval was given, it is your responsibility to notify the Ethics Committee immediately.

Please note that you have to fulfil the conditions specified in this letter from the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee. The conditions include;

- 1) *The ethics approval is conditional on the research being conducted as stipulated by the details of all documents submitted to the Committee. In the event that a further need arises to change who the investigators are, the methods or any other aspect, such changes must be submitted as an Amendment (Section E) for approval by the Committee.*
 - *Any amendments to this approved protocol need to be submitted to the Ethics Committee for review prior to data collection. Non-compliance implies that the Committee's approval is null and void.*
 - *Final data collection protocols and supporting evidence (e.g.: questionnaires, interview schedules, observation schedules) have to be submitted to the Ethics Committee before they are used for data collection.*
- 2) *The researcher should please note that this decision covers the entire research process, until completion of the study report, and not only the days that data will be collected.*
- 3) *Should your research be conducted in schools, please note that you have to submit proof of how you adhered to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) policy for research.*
- 4) *The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education does not accept any liability for research misconduct, of whatsoever nature, committed by the researcher(s) in the implementation of the approved protocol.*

Please note that this is **not a clearance certificate**.

Upon completion of your research you need to submit the following documentation to the Ethics Committee:

- **Integrated Declarations Form (Form D08),**
- **Initial Ethics Approval letter and,**
- **Approval of Title.**

On receipt of the above-mentioned documents you will be issued a clearance certificate. Please quote the reference number: **HU 15/06/02** in any communication with the Ethics Committee.

Best wishes,

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn
Chair: Ethics Committee
Faculty of Education

APPENDIX V

CONSENT LETTER TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN LERIBE LESOTHO

Dear Education Officer,

I am a teacher of English at Nqechane High School and I am currently enrolled for a master's degree in Curriculum Design and Development in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria as a part time student. I have to complete a research module that requires me to conduct research and write a report about my work. The research will be carried out in my school and particularly in my Form B English class. I therefore apply for permission to conduct a study in this Form B English class at my school.

The topic of my research is: *A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho*. Teachers of English and learners in my school overuse mother tongue in English classes and this has been reflected by learners' incompetency in the use of English for academic purposes as compared to other subjects offered in the school. English is one of the required subjects in our country and it is of utmost importance that as teachers of English we do everything in our power to improve our teaching practice to improve learners' mastery of this subject. This study is aimed at improving teaching practices of teachers of English in my school in order to promote the teaching of English through English. This will help learners to improve not only their proficiency in English but also their academic performance in English. For teachers of English in the school, improved teaching methods to be implemented in English classes will contribute to our professional development and confidence in teaching English.

The study will be conducted through action research. This means that I will be more focused, analytic and strategic in solving instruction and learning problems in my English classes and try by all means to ensure that I bring a positive change to my teaching practice. The study will help in doing away with overusing mother tongue in English classes in the school in order to promote the dominant use of English by both learners and teachers. The intervention is about me as a facilitator of the intervention and my colleague going to class and introducing new innovative teaching approaches that promote learner-centredness in the class. Such methods are intended to make learners more active in their own learning and able to find information for themselves while at the same time boosting their confidence and knowledge of English. The intervention teaching methods will include group discussions, presentations, debates and acting out their own dramas, as well as demonstrations. The study will therefore not interfere with my daily teaching schedule in the school as it will be conducted during my own English classes and that of my colleague as recorded on the school timetable.

With your permission to conduct a study in this class, all learners in the class will take part but only ten learners (three scoring above average, three average and four below average) will be interviewed and a structured questionnaire administered about this topic to determine their experiences during the intervention. The interview will take place at a venue and time

that is suitable to learners, but it will not interfere with school activities or teaching time and will not take longer than an hour. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed for analytic purposes.

The ten learners do not have to participate in this research if they do not want to, and they will not be penalised in any way if they decide not to take part. If they decide to participate, but change their minds later, they will be allowed to withdraw from participating at any time. Their identity will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know their real names, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. The information they will provide will be used for academic purposes only. In my research report and in any other academic communication, pseudonyms will be used and no other identifying information will be given. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, all material that learners have provided as data will be stored at the university's Science Mathematics and Technology Education Department according to policy requirements. If you agree that I may conduct this research at my school and in my Form B class, please provide your signature below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisors or me at the numbers given below.

Education Officer's

signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

Witness's signature

Date

Supervisors' contact details:

Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane: Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za

Prof. Dr Pieter du Toit: pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za

Mamolete Iris Mofolo: paleoqoo@gmail.com

APPENDIX VI

CONSENT LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL

Dear Principal

As I am currently enrolled for a master's degree in Curriculum Design and Development in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria as a part time student, I have to complete a research module that requires me to conduct research and write a report about my work. The research will be carried out here in my school and particularly in my Form B English class. I therefore request permission to conduct research in this Form B English class.

The topic of my research is: *A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho*. Teachers of English and learners overuse mother tongue in English classes and this has been reflected by learners' incompetent use of English for academic purposes. This study is aimed at improving the teaching practices of teachers of English in the school in order to promote the teaching of English through English. This will help learners to improve not only their proficiency in English but also their confidence in using English academically and for future life. As teachers of English in the school, improved teaching methods to be implemented in English classes will contribute to our professional development and confidence in teaching English.

The study will be conducted through action research. This means that I will be more focused, analytic and strategic in solving teaching and learning problems in my English classes and try by all means to ensure that I bring a positive change to my teaching practice. The study will help in doing away with overusing mother tongue in English classes in the school in order to promote the dominant use of English by both learners and teachers in English classes. The intervention is about me as a facilitator of the intervention and my colleague going to class and introducing new innovative teaching approaches that promote learner centeredness in the class. Such methods are intended to make learners more active in their own learning and able to find information for themselves while at the same time boosting their confidence and knowledge of English. The intervention teaching methods will include group discussions, presentations, debates and acting out their own dramas, as well as demonstrations. The study will therefore not interfere with my daily teaching schedule in the school as it will be conducted during my own English classes and those of my colleague as recorded on the school timetable.

With your permission to conduct a study in this class, all learners in the class will take part but only ten learners (three scoring above average, three average and four below average) will be interviewed about this topic to determine their experiences during the intervention. The interview will take place at a venue and time that will suit them, but it may not interfere with school activities or teaching time and will not take longer than an hour. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed for analytic purposes.

The ten learners do not have to participate in this research if they do not want to, and they will not be penalised in any way if they decide not to take part. If they decide to participate, but change their minds later, they can withdraw from participating at any time. Their identity

will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know their real names, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. The information they will provide will be used for academic purposes only. In my research report and in any other academic communication, pseudonyms will be used and no other identifying information will be given. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the university's Science Mathematics and Technology Education Department according to policy requirements. If you agree that I may conduct this research at this school and in my Form B class, please provide your signature below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisors or me at the numbers given below.

Researcher's signature	_____	Date	_____
Principal's signature	_____	Date	_____
Deputy-Principal's signature (as witness)	_____	Date	_____

Supervisors' contact details:

Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane: Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za

Prof. Dr Pieter du Toit: pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za

Mamolete Iris Mofolo: paleoqoo@gmail.com

APPENDIX VII

ASSENT LETTER TO LEARNERS

Dear Learner

As your teacher of English in your Form B class, I am also a student studying at the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for a master's degree in Curriculum Design and Development in the Faculty of Education. I have to complete a research module that requires me to conduct research and write a report about my work. The research will be carried out in your Form B English class. I would like to inform that you have been identified as one of the ten learners who are the most suitable participants who will make a contribution to this study. I therefore request your permission to include you as one of the ten learners who will participate in this research.

The topic of my research is: *A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho*. You may be aware that teachers of English and learners overuse mother tongue in English classes and this has been reflected by the poor mastery of English competencies by learners at the school compared to other subjects. English is one of the subjects that most of the learners are not proficient in yet it is regarded as a compulsory subject in the external national examinations taken every year. This study is aimed at improving the teaching practices of teachers of English in the school by the teaching of English through English. When teaching takes place in the English language rather than mother tongue, you will be able to improve not only your proficiency in English language but also your confidence in using English for academic purposes and future life. Improved teaching methods to be implemented in English classes will contribute to teachers' professional development and confidence in teaching English as a subject.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be interviewed and a structured questionnaire administered to determine your experiences about this topic. The interview will take place at a venue and time that will be suitable to you; it will not interfere with school activities or teaching time and it will not take longer than an hour. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed for analytic purposes.

You do not have to participate in this research if you do not want to, and you will not be penalised in any way if you decides not to take part. If you decide to participate but change your mind later, you can withdraw from participating at any time. Your identity will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know your real name, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. The information you provide will be used for academic purposes only. In my research report and in any other academic communication, the pseudonym will be used and no other identifying information will be given. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material you provided as data will be stored at the university's Science Mathematics and Technology Education Department according to the policy requirements. If you agree to take part in this research, please provide your

signature below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisors or me at the numbers given below.

Signature of learner	_____	Date	_____
Signature of researcher	_____	Date	_____
Signature of witness	_____	Date	_____

Supervisor's contact details:

Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane: Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za

Prof.. Dr. Pieter du Toit: pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za

Mamolete Iris Mofolo:paleoqoo@gmail.com

APPENDIX VIII

CONSENT LETTER TO MY ENGLISH TEACHER COLLEAGUE

Dear Colleague

As a teacher of English in the school, you are invited to participate in the study that I will conduct in Form B English class at our school because you have been identified as the most suitable participants who can make a contribution to this study since you are my English teacher colleague. The purpose of this study is to explore the outcome of a facilitative professional development intervention aimed at improving the teaching practices of teachers of English in my school. This is a requirement for completing a master's degree in Curriculum Design and Development as a student of the University of Pretoria.

The topic of my research is: *A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho*. You may be aware that teachers of English in the school and learners overuse mother tongue in English classes and this has been reflected by learners' poor mastery of English as a subject compared to other subjects. English is one of the subjects that most of the learners are less-proficient in yet it is regarded as a compulsory subject in the external national examinations taken every year. This study is aimed at improving the teaching practices of teachers of English in the school in order to promote the teaching of English through English. When teaching takes place in the English language rather than mother tongue, learners will be able to improve not only their proficiency in English language but also their confidence in using English academically and for future life. As teachers of English in the school, improved teaching methods to be implemented in English classes will contribute to our professional development and confidence in teaching the English subject.

As a participant in the study, you will participate only during the English lessons for the period of the professional development intervention where new teaching approaches will be introduced in the Form B English class as well as in your Form A English class. You will be observing me using an observation protocol that you will be provided with as I introduce these new teaching methods and I will do the same in your class. As a teacher of English, you will also be expected to take part in the lessons you observe, should such a need arise as you will be a participant observer. You will also conduct interviews with ten learners who form the sample of respondents in my class before and after the intervention process of using the innovative teaching methods in our classes. The interview sessions will be carried out using researcher interview guide that you will be provided with. You will also be expected to record a reflective journal that documents your experiences of the implementation of the innovative methods in English classes.

There are no risks that will be experienced by you or any other learners during your participation in the study. There are no guaranteed tangible benefits in this study but at the end of the intervention, as teachers of English in the school, we will both have acquired innovative approaches of teaching the English subject that will contribute to improving our

teaching practice not only in the Form B class but also in other English classes. Since you will be there to observe me as I introduce the new innovative teaching approaches, you will also implement them in your English classes as well. Again, our professional development will improve due to this improvement in our teaching practice. It is also expected that Form B learners' mastery of English will improve and that learners will be able to use English proficiently in their academic future.

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study. Your participation in this study for the period of the intervention is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw at any stage of the research if you wish. Whatever personal information that you will disclose in this study during the period of research shall remain known only to me as a researcher and my supervisors.

At any stage of the research, you are free to withdraw from the research should any unforeseen reasons arise. Your contribution will mean a lot in this study. If you agree to participate in the research, please provide your name and signature in the provided spaces.

English teacher's signature	_____	Date	_____
Researcher's signature	_____	Date	_____
Witness's signature	_____	Date	_____

Supervisors' contact details:

Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane: Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za

Prof. Dr Pieter du Toit: pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za

Mamolete Iris Mofolo: paleoqoo@gmail.com

APPENDIX IX

CONSENT LETTER TO THE PARENTS OF THE LEARNERS

Dear Parent

I am a teacher of English at Nqechane high School and a student studying at the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for a master's degree in Curriculum Design and Development in the Faculty of Education. I have to complete a research module that requires me to conduct research and write a report about my work. The research will be carried out in my school and particularly in a Form B English class where I am a teacher of English. I would like to inform you that your child has been identified as one of the ten learners who will take part in this research. In this regard your permission to allow your child to participate is highly valued.

The topic of my research is: *A professional development intervention in the teaching of English in a rural high school in Lesotho*. Teachers of English and learners overuse mother tongue in English classes and this has been reflected by learners' poor mastery of English. This study is aimed at improving the teaching practices of teachers of English in the school by promoting the teaching of English through English. This will help learners to improve not only their proficiency in English but also their confidence in using English for academic purposes and future life. Improved teaching methods to be implemented in English classes will contribute to teachers' professional development and confidence in teaching English.

If you allow your child to participate, she (he) will be interviewed about this topic to determine his or her experiences about this topic. The interview will take place at a venue and time that will suit the ten learners as they will be interviewed as a group of five learners each, but it may not interfere with school activities or teaching time and will not take longer than an hour. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed for analytic purposes. Your child will also respond to a structured questionnaire administered to provide information about their mastery of English during the intervention.

Your child does not have to participate in this research if he or she does not want to, and will not be penalised in any way if he or she decides not to take part. If your child decides to participate, but changes his or her mind later, he or she can withdraw from participating at any time. The learner's identity will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know the learner's real name, as a pseudonym will be used during data collection and analysis. The information provided will be used for academic purposes only. In my research report and in any other academic communication, pseudonyms will be used and no other identifying information will be given. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the University's Science Mathematics and Technology Education Department according to the policy requirements. If you agree that your child may take part in this research, please provide your signature below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisors or me at the numbers given below.

Signature of learner

Date

Signature of parent

Date

Signature of witness

Date

Supervisors' contact details:

Dr Wendy Carvalho-Malekane: Wendy.Malekane@up.ac.za

Prof. Dr Pieter du Toit: pieter.dutoit@up.ac.za

Mamolete Iris Mofolo: paleoqoo@gmail.com

APPENDIX X

LEARNER QUESTIONNAIRE ON THEIR PERSPECTIVES AND OBSERVATIONS OF ENGLISH

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out how you (learners) feel about English as a subject. Your responses will not affect your English academic marks. The statements below represent your perspective on English as a subject. Circle that which best suits you.

	I completely disagree	I disagree	I cannot tell for sure	I agree	Completely agree
My opinions about English as a subject:					
I enjoy learning English	1	2	3	4	5
My English knowledge needs to be seriously improved	1	2	3	4	5
English is important in my future life	1	2	3	4	5
English is a difficult subject	1	2	3	4	5
I can learn English better if I use it daily in class	1	2	3	4	5
My observations of English lessons:					
I enjoy my English lessons	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy singing English songs in my class	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy doing tasks in English in my English class	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy communicating with my friends and classmates in English in English classes	1	2	3	4	5
I like English to be taught only in English during English classes	1	2	3	4	5
My teacher creates opportunities for me and my classmates to find information for ourselves	1	2	3	4	5

I spend more time doing English assignments than assignments of other subjects	1	2	3	4	5
Many assignments and classwork activities help to improve my English proficiency	1	2	3	4	5
My English lessons have helped me to be able to read and write in English	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with my English ability which I have acquired through my English lessons	1	2	3	4	5
I wish to continue learning English even after Form E (Matric)	1	2	3	4	5
My English classes have boosted my confidence in dealing with English tasks	1	2	3	4	5
English lessons have created opportunities for thinking about ways of improving my performance in English	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX XI

SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS' FEEDBACK ON THE 18 QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS DURING THE PRE-INTERVENTION AND POST-INTERVENTION STAGES

	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
Item number	Responses to learners' opinions about English subject.	Responses to learners' opinion on English subject.
1	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner	Agree= 10 learners
2	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner	Agree = 9 I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner
3	Agree = 10 learners	Agree = 10 learners
4	Agree = 6 learners Disagree = 1 learner I cannot tell for sure = 3 learners	Disagree = 10 learners
5	Agree = 7 learners Disagree = 3 learners	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner
	Responses to learners' observation of the English learning opportunity.	Responses to learners' observation of the English learning opportunity.
6	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner	Agree = 10 learners
7	Agree = 1 learner Disagree = 2 learners I cannot tell for sure = 7 learners	Agree = 7 learners Disagree = 1 learner I cannot tell for sure = 2 learners
8	Agree = 9 learners Disagree = 1 learner	Agree = 10 learners
9	Agree = 5 learners disagree = 5 learners	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner
10	Agree = 2 learners Disagree = 6 learners I cannot tell for sure = 2 learners	Agree = 6 learners Disagree = 3 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner
11	Agree = 3 learners Disagree = 2 learners I cannot tell for sure = 5 learners	Agree = 8 learners Disagree = 2 learners
12	Agree = 2 learners Disagree = 3 learners I cannot tell for sure = 5 learners	Agree = 6 learners Disagree = 2 learners I cannot tell for sure = 2 learners
13	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure= 1 learner	Agree = 10 learners

14	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner	Agree = 10 learners
15	Agree = 6 learners Disagree = 2 learners I cannot tell for sure = 2 learners	Agree = 8 learners Disagree = 2 learners
16	Agree = 9 learners Disagree = 1 learner	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner
17	Agree = 7 learners I cannot tell for sure = 3 learners	Agree = 8 learners I cannot tell for sure = 2 learners
18	Agree = 9 learners I cannot tell for sure = 1 learner	Agree = 10 learners