The promotion of History thinking skills in selected secondary schools in Gauteng

by

Thero Modisagae

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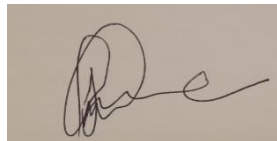
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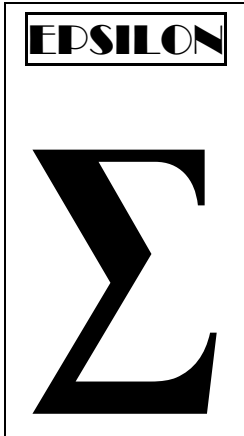
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ABSTRACT

The South African Department of Basic Education has emphasised the promotion of history thinking skills through different policy reforms. The history curriculum has been revised to ensure that it promotes history thinking skills and to inspire teachers to implement these skills. This research paper is a qualitative case study undertaken in public and independent secondary schools in the Northern and Eastern areas of Johannesburg, Gauteng Province. The paper investigates teachers conceptual understanding and implementation of history thinking skills in their teaching pedagogy. The study also aims to understand the challenges that teachers experience when they have to teach history thinking skills. The purpose of the research study was to understand how teachers make sense of their realities and how this informs their perceptions. This was important because human beings have multiple social realities which may be interpreted differently- thus the study followed an interpretative paradigm. The study found that teachers have different views of history thinking skills based on various reasons. Recommendations were made for student teachers to be trained to develop a better understanding of history thinking skills.

Key words: Critical thinking, History thinking skills, historical empathy, multiple perspectives, primary and secondary sources, inquiry-based learning, constructivism, situational learning.

List of abbreviations

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training (Phase)
IEB	Independent Examination Board
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NNSSF	National Norms and Standards for School Funding
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1   OVERVIEW

This study explores the conceptual understanding and the implementation of teaching History thinking skills by teachers in selected public and independent schools in the Northern and Eastern parts of Johannesburg, Gauteng Province.

Furthermore, the study investigates the challenges that teachers experience in the teaching of History thinking skills, and how they make sense of their own lived experiences and understanding of history thinking skills. This chapter begins with the background to the study, which is then followed by the problem statement, the research questions, the statement of purpose, research methodology and the rationale.

1.2   BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Since the transition to democracy in South Africa in 1994, new curriculum policies were implemented to standardise the curriculum offered in South African schools. Curriculum 2005 introduced outcomes-based education (OBE) to the South African education landscape (DBE, 1998). Curriculum 2005 was replaced with the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2005 (DBE, 2005). Subsequently, in 2012, the RNCS was replaced with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011). The NCS-CAPS document regulates the current curriculum and its implementation. The new History curriculum (CAPS Grades 10-12: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement: HISTORY) aims to replace the rote learning associated with education during the apartheid years and promote critical History thinking skills that allow learners to proactively engage with and interrogate historical narratives, this was the intention of Curriculum 2005 and OBE (DBE, 2011).

In particular, the policy, cited above aims to promote the following concepts in History:

- Source analysis skills: History is not the past itself. It is the interpretation and explanation of information from various sources. Evidence is created when sources are used to answer questions about the past.

- Multi-perspectivity: There are many ways of looking at the same thing. These perspectives may be the result of different points of view of people in the past according to their position in society, the different ways in which historians have written about them, and the different ways in which people today see the actions and behaviour of people of the past by investigating the historical figures through a lens of historical empathy.

- Cause and effect: These are the reasons for events and the results thereof. The consequences of something influence future events and help explain human behaviour.

- Change and continuity: Over a period, it is possible to contrast what has changed and what has remained the same. Closely related contrasts that are used to teach History is "similarity and difference", and "related to then and now", which help to make sense of the past and the present.

- Time and chronology: History is studied and written in time sequence. It is important to be able to place events in the order in which they happened, timelines are often used to develop this concept (DBE, 2011: 2.3.2).

1.3 RATIONALE

I have decided to pursue this study because I was a History teacher at the time of the study and I wanted to enrich my understanding and ability to implement History thinking skills. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS-CAPS) aims to produce learners that can identify problems within their communities and come with solutions by using History thinking skills through the process of critical thinking (DBE, 2012). However, I realised that some History teachers rely solely on the textbook as a source, and that they continue to promote rote learning. According to Ahmed, (2017) the teaching approaches implemented by teachers are very critical because they determine how the learner engages with the subject and their learning journey. Furthermore Ahmed, (2017) also argues that there are two approaches to learning by learners, namely a surface learning approach and a deep learning approach. Surface learning focuses largely on memorising and regurgitating facts and information without using any application skills. This is also known as rote learning. In the deep learning

the learner becomes immersed in the learning to gain deeper knowledge of the content. This form of learning impacts the learners' quality of learning (Ahmed, 2017).

This demonstrates that many teachers do not engage with their learners at a critical level that stimulates learning. As a result, I am interested in how teachers understand and implement History thinking skills in the History curriculum that has been set out through the NCS-CAPS curriculum. I am also interested in the challenges that teachers experience when they are obliged to teach History thinking skills. In a research study that was conducted by Van Hover and Yeager (2004) they found that teachers face a series of challenges when they make the transition from their initial teacher training to schools. These challenges include heavy teaching loads, multiple preparations, limited instructional resources, extracurricular activities and an over reliance on textbooks to deliver the curriculum. Although Ndlovu and Van Eeden (2013) have shown the importance of critical thinking in education in general, and in History as a subject in particular, there is are challenges in South Africa in terms of how History teachers understand and implement history thinking skills in their History teaching. There are still concerns about the implementation of History thinking skills. This can be attributed to various causes which may include a lack of teaching resources, lack of understanding of History thinking skills, rote teaching and an over reliance on the textbook just to mention a few. As a result, I became intrigued with how History thinking skills are taught and wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon.

1.4   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The NCS-CAPS policy in History requires the implementation of relevant History thinking skills. It is important in every society because education is an ongoing life journey. Teachers in South Africa experience many challenges especially those in public schools, some of the challenges include lack of resources such as technology, classroom materials and overcrowded classes. The NCS-CAPS curriculum therefore does not align with the context of South Africa and its realities. Although South Africa has produced advanced policies in education since it became a democracy, there are gaps in these policies because of the lack of human capacity in teachers, failed teacher continuous training and colleges, poor implementation, and lack of resources to support the NCS-CAPS policy document (Grosser & Nel, 2013).

Kallaway (2012) argues that the NCS-CAPS History curriculum for Grades 10-12 has been too ambitious, and in some sections even inappropriate, because it lacks the depth to critically engage in the content outlined in the History curriculum policy. This means that the curriculum is perceived to be overly content driven, focusing on what needs to be achieved by teachers in the classroom, rather than on developing the competencies required to master the subject. However, the challenge is that the curriculum does not show how teachers can implement the objectives as set out in the curriculum policy statement, especially in terms of promoting critical engagement on the part of learners using History thinking skills.

There is limited studies and literature in South Africa that show how History teachers deal with the curriculum and how they ought to implement history thinking skills that are required by the curriculum policy statement. Motivated by this lacuna, this study explores how History teachers understand and can implement history thinking skills in their History lessons. However, there is South African literature mentioned in the study that emphasises the importance of critical thinking skills and history thinking skills. In particular, the study will emphasise multiple perspectivity and historical empathy as a lens through which to perceive History thinking skills, the reason for focusing on these two skills is because multiple perspectivity introduces a more complex understanding of the past and when the skill is implemented and understood well it can promote a deeper understanding of history and the past especially in showing diverse perspectives that may exist on an event that happened and making a link in understanding the whole picture. Multiple perspectivity is an important skill in History because it helps learners to develop ways in which to analyse and evaluate the information they are being taught (Kallaway, 2012) This is encouraged by considering different perspectives and analysing the intention of an author, whether the historical source is reliable and trustworthy, or if biased views are used to influence people (Kallaway, 2012).

Historical empathy is also important because learners are always taught about historical characters that played a key integral part to various events that happened in the past. It is fundamental for learners to understand what influenced the historical characters in terms of their views, decisions and lived experiences at the time. This puts the past into context allowing learners to internalise what they are taught.

Historical empathy is also important, because it encourages learners to place themselves in an event that happened and to understand how certain leaders behaved by understanding their attitudes, perceptions, and the theories they held to influence others. This encourages learners to develop these skills by developing an understanding of how the past continues to affect the present. In the South African situation, there is a gap, where extant pedagogical literature focuses on the importance of acquiring substantive knowledge, for example student teachers are taught how they can teach History and the focus is largely on the content that needs to be taught but not on understanding History thinking skills and how they can be implemented through their lessons. Furthermore, this literature does not explore how teachers understand and teach multi-perspectivity and empathy, where there is no discussion on how History thinking skills can be effectively applied and taught to merge the objectives of the NCS-CAPS curriculum (Kallaway, 2012).

Historical empathy is a valuable skill which enables learners to understand the actions of historical characters and events through contextualisation and understanding that different contexts influenced how people acted in the past (Ramoroka & Engelbrecht, 2018). Furthermore, historical empathy is a challenging skill to teach and cultivate because some teachers confuse historical empathy for sympathy and in most cases, it is not easy for learners to empathise with historical characters that have committed crimes against humanity. In the past South African history textbooks were based on the Afrikaner nationalist perspective, thus empathy and History thinking skills were not promoted (Ramoroka & Engelbrecht, 2018.

1.5 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The aim of this research is to investigate History teachers' understanding of History thinking skills and how they implement these skills in History in selected secondary schools in the Northern and Eastern areas of Johannesburg, Gauteng Province. Furthermore, the study will also explore the challenges that teachers encounter when they have to teach history thinking skills.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary research question is:

- How do History teachers promote History thinking skills amongst History learners in selected secondary schools in the Northern and Eastern parts of Johannesburg in the Gauteng Province?

The following secondary research questions were formulated to strengthen the primary research question:

- How do History teachers understand History thinking skills?
- What strategies do History teachers use to promote History thinking skills?
- What challenges do History teachers experience when promoting History skills?

1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study used a conceptualisation of History thinking as a theoretical lens to answer the research questions. Two historical thinking skills guided this study, namely multiple perspectivity, and historical empathy.

1.7.1 Multiple perspectives/perspectivity

Learners need to be taught how to apply multiple perspectivity to learn how to interrogate sources and information presented to them. This often requires the ability to analyse what they are taught. Furthermore, multiple perspectivity promotes History thinking skills and higher order thinking. Multiple texts can be used to teach learners about multiple perspectives in learning History, because it helps learners to be able to perceive and examine different perspectives and viewpoints on historical issues and problems at large. Multiple texts on the same subject improve the intellectual capacity of learners and encourage them to think differently, provided that the instructions are clear and effective for learning (Savich, 2008). By using various sources of information, multiple perspectivity enables learners to develop research skills in their learning process. When learners are in pursuit of knowledge, this naturally promotes History thinking skills that are aligned with critical thinking in the process (Savich, 2008).

Savich (2008) argues that there is a need for an in-depth understanding of the topic and content taught for learners to be able to analyse and interpret the information before them. One of the most effective methods that has been emphasised is collaborative learning in the classroom, where learners are given context and background to an event being studied. Once that has been done learners are then

given a reading that shows different views and perspectives to build their knowledge base even further. This consequently means that learners become involved and engaged in their own learning and can make inferences because this allows learners to contrast, compare, analyse and evaluate the different views and perspectives of different authors, thereby encouraging learners to identify how they are convinced or persuaded to take a certain stance on what they have read (Savich, 2008).

Multiple-perspectivity can also be defined as a strategy to develop a better understanding by using a different lens or perspective from the one that we hold. It is very important to understand that people view events from different perspectives which might be influenced by many factors. Some of these factors may include culture, religion and world views which may be biased or prejudiced. However, multiple-perspectivity also holds that people must have a predisposition and the condition to this predisposition is to understand that different world views may exist, and some may be equally valid or partial (Strading, 2003).

If teachers want to achieve multiple-perspectives , teachers need to create lesson plans, class activities and projects that encourage and challenge them to engage different perspectives and viewpoints, and to examine multiple texts when they study an event in History. Learners need to be able to analyse primary sources, History textbooks from different countries, documents, and biased views and opinions, by consistently developing critical analysis skills when they engage with every source. Certain past events such as the USA dropping two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are widely known. However, analysis does not merely focus on conveying the facts, but requires learners to identify the author of the source and to analyse the credibility of the source that has been presented (Massey, 2015). By investigating the different perspectives that led to the dropping of the atomic bomb as well as those that guide the re-telling of the event, learners discover more about the event and more about History as an interpretive process. Multiple perspective as a skill allows learners to look at the intentions of a given author to understand why they published the source and to question the reliability of the source by asking questions. For example, learners need to ask: why was the source published; what was the main audience for the source; what purpose does it serve; who wrote it and if the author is an expert in the field or if they are just giving their own

opinion; does the source use emotive language, and is it trying to persuade people's views and attitudes regarding a specific event or topic? (Cowgill & Waring, 2017).

When learners apply multiple perspectivity it helps them to be able to differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations, thus showing that multiple perspectives of the past are possible. When learners can understand that multiple perspectives are possible, they will have a better understanding when analysing different causes and effects in History, and they will think of how the past has shaped the present (Massey, 2015). When learners are taught to look at multiple perspectives in the History class, they develop their historical thinking skills. This implies that they need to do some research before they can come to a decision. This process is important, as it helps them to adopt different approaches when they study a source or an event that happened in History (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). Learners need to know how to identify and analyse a primary source from other sources, and in doing so, examine the time period and context in which the source was created. An example of this can be a letter written by Anne Frank during the Holocaust. The letter is a primary source, because it is based on a first-person experience; it is useful as it provides insight and knowledge about the events of the Second World War as they unfolded in the Netherlands. The source has been used as historical evidence in providing information to a larger audience of the quotidian details of this event from the perspective of a young Jewish girl. How this does not mean that the source cannot be questioned in terms of its intended message and reliability. To achieve this, teachers need to guide learners to read sources effectively, that is with understanding, and know the terms of how to construct meaning from primary sources. Primary sources can, however, also be unreliable if based on hearsay.

As interpretation is very important in History as a subject, for learners to be able to make conclusions, they need to look at different views and multiple sources. This can be done by studying secondary sources. When learners use multiple perspectives and investigate events that have occurred in History, they are able to compare, evaluate and synthesise conflicting historical perspectives, to determine and to show how certain arguments may have been constructed from the historical evidence provided. However, History thinking encourages learners to deconstruct and evaluate the past from diverse sources. This allows learners to analyse and develop a rigorous approach

to their learning by identifying multiple existing perspectives. Thus, learners can provide compelling findings and arguments on their judgement because they would have looked at different causes for the historical event. This skill requires learners to be able to analyse and identify historical patterns of continuity and change over time by investigating multiple historical developments that may show multiple perspectives within a society or an event that has happened (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009).

1.7.2 Historical empathy

Historical empathy is another skill that can be used to promote History thinking amongst learners. Historical empathy can be define as perspective-taking. This is the ability to understand historical leaders without trying to sympathise with their feelings, but rather, to investigate the past through the lens and experiences of those who were there when the event took place (Yilmaz, 2007). Historical empathy requires certain composite skills, and when learners engage in this process, they need to be more knowledgeable about the facts pertaining to the specific events being studied. Therefore, as they engage with the past, they need to identify who was involved in the event, what happened, where it happened, the action that led to that specific event, and the consequences that came from that event (Yilmaz, 2007). This means that learners need to consider multiple historical sources of information and examine the sources by investigating the views shared (Yilmaz, 2007).

As noted, historical empathy requires the interpretation of and understanding the diversity of different views of the past. To achieve this skill, teachers need to facilitate it by promoting critical inquiry. This means that learners need to become immersed in a debate and dialogue about past historical events. In this process, learners are introduced to different views and perspectives on an event, and they must investigate and come to their own conclusion, interpretation and understanding thereof (Klein & Stephan, 2010). This is important because it is in this way that they become responsible democratic citizens through historical consciousness. This aligns with the CAPS curriculum policy to the development of well-rounded democratic citizens, who can look for problems and find solutions by considering both sides of an argument. Historical empathy encourages learners to identify key role figures in History and look at their story by placing themselves in the shoes of the various people involved in a specific event, and thereby viewing an event from the perspectives of those figures.

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This allows learners to imagine the historical figures and the events they were involved in by using their imagination and composing narratives about these historical figures (De Leur, Van Boxtel & Wilschut, 2017). The narrative stories about historical figures help learners to understand historical events and developments of the past. There is a link between historical empathy and historical perspectivity, which promote History thinking through imagination as a form of creativity.

1.7.3 Contextualisation

Another skill that can be developed is contextualisation. This largely focuses on perspective taking and moral judgement. Barton (2018) describes historical empathy as empathy , an appreciation of walking in the shoes of historical figures, by investigating the views they held, and how they were able to influence others around them. Furthermore, learners can understand the past and recognise the effects of the historical context at the time, and the complexity of historical perspectives that may exist about the historical persons involved (De Leur, Van Boxtel & Wilschut, 2017).

1.8 RESEARCH SCOPE

In this study, the research focused primarily on teachers' understanding of History thinking, and how teachers implement History thinking skills through their teaching practice. Teachers from secondary public and independent schools were interviewed for the purposes of this study and the data will provide an explanation as to how teachers interpret History thinking skills. This study relied on the views and experiences of eleven teachers from both public and independent schools that were sampled. All the participating schools are urban schools with between 500 and 800 enrolled learners. Eleven schools were involved in the research study and the schools are all located in the Northern and Eastern parts of the Gauteng Province.

1.9 RESEARCH APPROACH

Reality is constructed through people's lived experiences and multiple realities that exist, therefore this research is aimed at understanding and interpreting the teachers' subjective views that may have been influenced by their own experiences. A thematic analysis is appropriate as this form of data analysis is deeply rooted in investigating the interpretations held by the participants (Ibrahim, 2012). During the process of data analysis, I will identify and describe both implied and clear ideas expressed by the

participants. An interactive qualitative investigation will be used for the purpose of collecting the data, that will include face-to-face interviews at the participant's school.

1.9.1 Research methodology

A qualitative research approach/methodology was used in this study because qualitative research is subjective, and it is more suitable for the research questions. This study aims to explore social phenomena with greater insight, by investigating the participants' experiences and their understanding of the promotion of History thinking skills. This is best achieved through qualitative research because qualitative research provides more information about the participant's perspectives and their own understanding, unlike quantitative research which provides statistical data (Maxwell, 2012).

The study allowed for multiple perspectives from different participants, which provided in-depth data to gain an understanding of the participants' social phenomenon, dynamics, and perceptions based on their own experiences as to how they understand and promote History thinking skills.

1.9.2 Research design

In this qualitative inquiry a qualitative case study will be used. This approach is suitable for the research because it focuses on inquiry and building on rich data that is based on different methods of data collection (Starman, 2013). The ontology of this study is based on the meaning of social interactions between subjects and their understanding of their social world (Tekin & Kotaman,2013). This study aims to explore how people make sense of the world they live in and what influences their reality.

The epistemology deals with the process of gaining knowledge (Tekin & Kotaman,2013). This happens when I engage with the participants. The knowledge can only be gained through interaction, and it opens different dimensions as to how this knowledge is gained and investigated in the research. The bedrock of this epistemology is the fact that there are no objective and extrinsic facts to social life (Tekin & Kotaman, 2013).

1.9.3 Sampling

The sample for the research study is grade 10-12 History teachers at eleven schools in the Gauteng Province. These schools include public schools and independent

schools. There are six teachers from independent schools and five teachers from public schools. It was assumed that each school has two or three History teachers. However, most schools had one senior History teacher and a junior teacher in grade 9 teaching Social Sciences. All the teachers are senior History teachers in grade 10, 11 or 12. One teacher from each school is interviewed. The sample involves both novice and experienced teachers as well as different demographics such as age, gender, and race. Purposeful sampling was used in this study because it is widely used in qualitative research and it provided the potential for rich data.

1.9.4 Data collection and data analysis strategies

The data collection method involves interviews, where the purpose of the interviews was to collect information by asking teachers about their understanding of History thinking skills, and how they promote these skills through their implementation. Interviews are more reliable in this study as teachers can then share their experiences and their teaching methodology. The interviews are semi-structured and used to investigate how teachers understand historical thinking skills, as well as whether they are implementing what has been set out in the curriculum. I built a relationship with the participants to ensure rapport, honesty, and transparency. I made the participants aware of the intentions of the study. I communicated to the participants that their names would be protected. The participants also had to read and sign the letter of consent which was used to build this relationship of trust. Each of the interviews was recorded and transcribed. This was followed by an inductive process of reducing and coding the data. The data was organised, and a few themes emerged from the data reducing process. This guided the further process of data analysis and assisted with the drawing of conclusions.

1.10 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The structure of the dissertation is briefly outlined as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This first chapter consists of the background of the study, problem statement, rationale, aims and objectives, purpose of the study, research questions and sub questions, theoretical framework, research scope/approach/design and method of data collection.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter Two discusses literature relating to critical thinking skills as a general skill that must be taught across all subjects, the promotion of History thinking skills, and the understanding of these skills by teachers in their practice of pedagogy. Furthermore, the chapter presents the challenges that teachers experience when required to teach these skills.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter Three elaborates on the research methodology and research design that will be followed in the study.

Chapter 4: Presentation of data

Chapter Four presents the discussion of the findings of the data collected. This includes a discussion of the findings regarding the participants' understanding of History thinking skills, the understanding of certain key skills, the challenges that teachers experience.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and recommendations

Chapter Five contains the overall conclusion and recommendations of the study, as well as suggestions for practice and further research.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an outline of the research study and focused on the background , context , rationale, and research questions that will be aimed at investigating teachers understanding of history thinking skills and how they promote these skills through their own teaching. Furthermore, the outline has highlighted the importance of teachers challenges when they teach history thinking skills. In conclusion a blueprint has been provided to show how the research study will be conducted.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is firstly the conceptualisation of critical thinking as a generic skill that is meant to happen across all subject disciplines. The concept is unpacked, and various views held by teachers of their understanding of critical thinking are provided. This section discusses the importance of critical thinking as a skill and shows the link between critical thinking skills and history thinking skills because there is a golden thread that connects these skills.   The chapter highlights the requirements in the CAPS policy document and challenges are identified that History teachers experience when they teach History thinking skills. An argument is made for the importance of History thinking skills, how they can be conceptualised, and the different strategies that can be used by teachers to teach them.

2.2   CONCEPTUALISING CRITICAL THINKING

In South Africa, during the period immediately following formal apartheid, the country adopted the Outcomes Based Education Curriculum (Curriculum 2005) framework for teaching. In 1998, this was replaced with the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). The RNCS was substituted with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (NCS-CAPS) in 2012. The *fil rouge* of the three curriculum policies is the great emphasis they place on teaching a high degree of content and producing independent thinking. However, the biggest challenge has been ensuring that all South African learners obtain the necessary skills, knowledge, and values associated with being independent and critical thinkers (Warnich & Meyer, 2013). Critical thinking is a skill that can be taught to learners on how to become vigorous and responsible citizens in a country by identifying a problem and finding effective strategies to solve the problem (Back, Banks, DeMichele, Jeffers, Lafond, McSweeney, Pores, Rothfuss, Strachan, Strom, Rivera, Band & Williams, 2015).

Education is important in the development of any given society, and therefore learners need to be equipped with the relevant critical skills that will help them to thrive in school, in their work environment, and in a globally competitive world. These critical skills are linked to making good judgments and not to necessarily accept everything that one is being taught, but rather to question the authenticity of the information

(Warnich & Meyer, 2013). Critical skills relate to critical thinking, because they allow learners to participate in the world, they live in by adapting to the needs of their society and by solving problems within their world (Warnich & Meyer, 2013). This means that there are certain skills that learners need to develop to thrive in their world. Such skills may include but are not limited to the following: communication skills, which include the ability to read, write, speak; and the ability to communicate effectively by using logic, reason, analysis, and good evaluation skills Elder (2007). According to Lai (2011), critical thinking consists of various skills that are important to ensure that learning is effective in the classroom. Critical thinking includes component skills that encourage learners to be able to analyse, synthesise, and interpret what they are being taught by making inferences through inductive and deductive reasoning, by solving problems through assessment, and by using various forms of analysis. Although these components are important, critical thinking cannot be defined using one generic term because critical thinking is extensive and an ongoing process that cannot be measured (Lai, 2011). Therefore, critical thinking does not focus on knowledge or background knowledge that a learner may have in a subject, but rather focuses on cognitive skills and dispositions which may include habits of the mind. This means that learners and teachers must be consistently engaged in this process.

Lai (2011) identified three pedagogical approaches that are used to define and promote critical thinking in educational settings, namely: philosophical, cognitive psychological and educational. The philosophical approach is motivated by writings of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. This approach focuses on the hypothetical or ideal critical thinker (Lai, 2011). Ideal thinkers are flexible in their thinking by being open minded, demonstrates good reasoning, and are willing to consider various views and interpretations before they make any judgement (Lai, 2011). Lai (2011) cites Elder (2007), who argued that the philosophical approach follows traditional rules of thinking and logic which are meant to be applied in different circumstances. This shows that this approach of critical thinking has some limitations, because it focuses on what an ideal thinker is, and how they should think in certain circumstances, rather than taking into consideration the ways that people think, including flawed thinking.

The cognitive psychological approach is different from the philosophical approach where it focuses more on how learners think, rather than how they ought to think in

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certain circumstances. Instead of focusing on characteristics of an ideal thinker as in the philosophical approach, the focus in the cognitive approach is on the actions, procedures, and a list of skills that a critical thinker can do. This approach to critical thinking has been criticised because it is seen as a narrowed view of critical thinking, as it requires certain steps to be taken to show critical thinking. The cognitive approach draws upon a behaviourist approach to thinking, understanding critical thinking as observable. Lai (2011) referred to scholars like Van Gelder (2005), who argued that this supposition is inconsistent, because critical thinking cannot be observed, and critical thinking can happen without following certain steps or procedures (Lai, 2011).

The last approach is the educational approach. This approach focuses largely on Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of critical thinking and processing skills. This approach aims to promote critical thinking by mastering skills and endorsing higher order thinking by using Bloom's tools (Lai, 2011). Bloom's taxonomy consists of a hierarchy of six categories of skills. These skills include comprehension, knowledge, and understanding, and these can be classified as lower order skills. These skills are used to assess learners on their understanding of topics that they have been taught, which focuses greatly on the ability to recall what learners have been taught. Furthermore, there are higher order thinking skills, which are known as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills.

Mok and Yeun (2016) refer to Moon (2008), who argues that critical thinking is mainly concerned with skills and dispositions that emphasise verbal reasoning skills, argument analysis skills, thinking skills, and decision-making skills by showing good planning (Mok & Yeun, 2016). However, there are alternative views and strong suggestions raised by two academics referred to by Mok and Yuen. Papastephonou and Angeli (2016) argued in the research that Moon's theory of critical thinking only prepares learners to complete tasks but excludes their ability to think and to critique what they are being taught, and to question the desired goals that the tasks are meant to achieve (Mok & Yeun, 2016). Critical thinking focuses greatly on the quality of thinking through various tools that can be used to promote quality thinking. This means that when engaged in critical thinking, learners need to be aware of the key skills they may need to solve a problem (Mok & Yeun, 2016). These skills will aid learners to consider various sources and materials when they engage with their own learning

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before they come to conclusions. Critical thinking encourages learners and teachers to be open-minded and vigorous in their quest for knowledge. This means that critical thinking can be used to expand research skills and thinking by using a range of different sources of information and engaging the various sources by analysing the reliability and credibility of these sources. This process entails actively questioning and deconstructing the information by demonstrating good analysis and evaluation while developing a strong argument on the interrogation of the source by using value judgement after looking at different perspectives (Mok & Yeun, 2016).

2.3   BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

In a research study conducted by Lai (2011), she explored Bloom's Taxonomy and noted the correlation as to how some of the skills are important in promoting higher order thinking. Some of these skills are application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. However, there are certain critiques to Bloom's taxonomy. Soozandehfar and Adeli (2016) have argued that Bloom's taxonomy was widely recommended in 1956, but the application of the higher order skills have changed in the 21st century. They argue that according to Bloom's taxonomy, critical thinking is meant to happen in a chronological order. This is debated because promoting critical thinking from a lower order to a higher order is not strongly supported by research. The hierarchy suggests that each higher skill is above another skill, for example, comprehension requires knowledge, and application requires comprehension and knowledge. The challenge with Bloom's taxonomy is that it requires a problem to fit into one of the hierarchy levels, which is not true, because when we deal with complex problems, it is possible that more than one level can be used collaboratively to solve the problem (Soozandehfar & Adeli, 2016). Furthermore, this may be challenging for teachers to consistently classify learning difficulties into Bloom's taxonomy, because there is no one solution for a problem, hence, we cannot suggest that one stage in Bloom's taxonomy might solve a complex problem. In some cases, three skills or even more can be explored and used to solve a problem from Bloom's taxonomy (Soozandehfar & Adeli, 2016).

Blooms taxonomy has been revised for 21st Century learners. The taxonomy consists of new additions of verbs that are used to describe different cognitive levels. The verbs (levels) are remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and

creating. The revised taxonomy aims to encourage scaffolding of skills and allow learners to apply multiple levels of knowledge and cognitive skills.

Although there are different views of what constitutes critical thinking, there is consensus that critical thinking ought to allow learners to analyse arguments by not just accepting what they are being taught, but by looking at various views and perspectives before they make a judgment. The various arguments that have been raised also agree that critical thinking should allow learners to interrogate what they are being taught, by making inferences through either deductive or inductive reasoning (Lai, 2011). This promotes the ability to argue well from the basis of good evaluation, reasoning, and making a well-informed decision, which ultimately helps to solve extant problems (Lai, 2011).

Critical thinking is important in the promotion of History thinking skills because it can be used to promote and encourage analytical skills, good debating and reasoning skills and analyses and synthesis through research and evaluation. Furthermore, it allows learners to look for different perspectives when information is presented before them, and they can interpret the source from their perspective and show the importance of evaluation and analysis through History (Pattiz, 2004). Critical thinking is further important because it develops learner's skills by promoting in-depth reasoning and thinking, assessing the source, and questioning the message of the author and by testing if the source uses any emotive or persuasive language (Pattiz, 2004). This also allows the learners to evaluate the trustworthiness of the source, while investigating whether the source provides any account of first-hand experience, or whether it may instead be a secondary source.

Talin (2015) emphasises the importance of historical thinking skills for teaching History effectively in the classroom. These skills included historical inquiry, which focuses on teaching learners to research and find out more about events that have transpired in the past by asking the five W-questions, viz.: who, what, when where and why. This allows the learners to assess if the source has been cross-referenced, if it is factual, and if there is an account of balance from various historians to make the source reliable and honest.

Critical thinking is also important in History because it teaches us about the past and shows a link on how past events may impact the world in which we live. This is an

opportunity for learners to look at issues of great concern within their societies and postulate solutions (Pattiz, 2004). History is also important because it allows learners to understand human behaviours and to have empathy, to listen with understanding, and to develop their own independent knowledge through inquiry (Pattiz, 2004). For learners to engage fully in History thinking skills they must look at past events and analyse how these events impact us today. According to the CAPS curriculum, History is useful because it encourages learners to seek for critical knowledge by investigating and evaluating events that happened in the past by asking what happened, when it happened, why it happened, who was involved, and what the impact of the event was.

This is a fundamental skill in the CAPS Policy, especially when it comes to understanding change and development in society over time (DBE, 2011).

2.4 TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF CRITICAL THINKING

There are several studies that explored teachers' understanding of critical thinking skills to gain insight on what teachers understand by critical thinking skills through their personal lived experiences. The research shows us that there are various views and interpretations held by teachers, where it is important to comprehend what shaped the views that teachers hold and to understand how they make sense of this social phenomenon in their everyday lives (Mok & Yeun, 2016). A research study conducted in China and South Korea indicates that teachers understood critical thinking to mean that learners need to be neutral, knowledgeable, objective, and practical in their thinking (Mok & Yuen, 2016). The study also indicated that most teachers did not consider the holistic view of critical thinking and did not know that critical thinking ought to encompass the ability to question and evaluate what learners are being taught, or even to come with solutions to problems.

According to Mok and Yeun (2016), some teachers believe that when learners criticise what they are being taught, it is not progressive, or seen as critical thinking, but rather that it represents challenging the authority of the teacher. This narrow view of what teachers believe to be critical thinking is largely influenced by communist ideas that are dominant in China. In a case study that was conducted by Mok and Yeun (2016) in China, when most teachers were asked about their understanding of critical thinking, they provided definitions of critical thinking, and linked it with the ability to acquire skills that need to be cultivated. There are teachers who also believed that critical thinking

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reflects the ability to argue, evaluate, and to justify your position. The definition shows that most teaches who participated in this study perceive critical thinking to be a generic skill that can be applied consistently throughout. Mok and Yeun (2016) have argued that it is hard to teach critical thinking in a subject like Mathematics or Accounting, because the teacher is merely there to provide the facts and a formula to reach an answer in these subjects. A Life Sciences and Physical Science teacher noted that her subjects only allowed her to develop a traditional teaching style, where they are the sole source of knowledge, and learners are required to accept what they are taught. Although learners ask questions when they do not understand, they do not challenge the content presented before them (Mok & Yeun, 2016). In a research study that was conducted in New Zealand by FitzPatrick and Schulz (2016), the 38 teachers that were interviewed agreed that critical thinking skills are important and should be taught and promoted to ensure that learners become independent thinking citizens. However, most teachers said that as learners progress through the grades, it becomes more challenging to teach critical thinking because teachers have to cover the increased content. When the teachers were asked about their understanding of critical thinking skills they described critical thinking as reasoning, predicting, problem solving, risk taking, thinking outside the box and drawing conclusions. However, the teachers who participated in this study did not give a clear description of what critical thinking meant and how it could be implemented in the classroom (FitzPatrick & Schulz, 2016).

In South Africa, a study by Ndlovu and Van Eeden (2013) showed the various challenges that most teachers in the township schools experience when required to implement critical thinking skills. Most teachers teach History through a method of question and answer, where the teacher remains the centre of the lesson. In some cases, teachers use project tasks to allow learners to conduct research. However, this is only done because it forms part of the National Protocol for Assessment (Ndlovu & Van Eeden, 2013). The challenge experienced by teachers in poverty-stricken schools in rural areas and townships is that they lack the resources such as libraries, computers, and electricity. As a result, learners cannot extensively engage in the research and do not learn much when they do their projects, because they only rely on their textbooks (Ndlovu & Van Eeden, 2013).

The content covered in the NCS-CAPS History curriculum focuses mainly on nation building, national identity, and civic duty amongst South Africans after apartheid (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013). This challenge shows that there is a gap in the NCS-CAPS curriculum because CAPS does not show or generate knowledge on how History can be taught, or how knowledge can be generated to ensure nation building in the country (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013). The NCS-CAPS curriculum does not provide teachers with diverse teaching skills and methodologies that are hands on. As a result, teachers do not know how to reflect on their own teaching. Ndlovu and Van Eden (2013) concluded that learners responded positively to different learning strategies when learners became the centre of learning. However, learners are not exposed to inquiry-based learning. Furthermore, learners are also not taught to deconstruct knowledge or how they can apply it in various assessment learning environments (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013).

2.5 CONCEPTUALISING HISTORY THINKING SKILLS

History thinking skills are skills that cannot be confined to a singular definition. These skills include analysis, evaluation, reliability, usefulness, and assessing multiple perspectives. Furthermore, History thinking skills encourage learners to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, and to interrogate what is before them through research and the pursuit of knowledge (Talin, 2015). Critical thinking is aligned with History thinking skills, where the two cannot be isolated, because they are important in a democratic country. One of the skills that will be highlighted as bedrock to conceptualise History thinking skills is source analysis. Source analysis skills are used as a tool to explore inquiry skills (Talin, 2015). Other skills that will be investigated are historical empathy skills, multiple perspectivity, and lastly cause and effect in relation to historical events, and importantly, how these connect to the present.

History thinking skills consist of a set of skills that are used to analyse and evaluate historical sources and documents on events that happened in the past. These skills are used to construct meaning, understanding, and interpretation. Thinking skills are important in History, where learners can be taught to investigate the credibility of sources by examining the various interpretations that may exist in a source (Pattiz, 2004). Learners can learn investigative skills by examining the intended message of

the source and testing whether there is any form of bias or propaganda used by the source. This helps learners to develop their own reasoning skills by providing substantial evidence when they interrogate the source. This can be done by looking at the purpose of the source and researching the author, for example, who published the work, whether the person is an expert in the field, and if the intention of the source is for educational use or to serve a certain agenda (Pattiz, 2004).

2.5.1 Source analysis

Source analysis is important because it allows learners to study historical sources, and to engage with these sources through interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, and analysis. There are different types of sources, for example objects such as clothes, visual sources like paintings, documents and photographs (Haw, 2015). In addition, there are different types of sources namely primary sources, secondary sources and tertiary sources. Primary sources are sources that provide direct or first-hand evidence about an event, object, person, or work of art (Haw, 2015). An example of a primary source can include an eyewitness account, results from an experiment, legal documents, speeches and recordings. For example, if we are studying the Holocaust and the experiences of Jews in the concentration camps, Anne Frank's diary would be a useful primary source. However, this does not mean that the source would be reliable because it is written from her perspective (Haw, 2015). Secondary sources are often created by historians and journalists who did not have the first-hand experience or participate in the event that happened. An example would be an investigation by students. Secondary sources can be explored by using primary sources to construct a view on a historical event that happened in the past. Tertiary sources are surveys that rely on secondary sources. For the purpose of this research study the key focus will be on primary and secondary sources because they are more applicable promoting History thinking skills. There are different strategies that can be explored by teachers when they assess primary and secondary sources (Haw, 2015). For example, the usefulness of a source is very critical in promoting History thinking skills because it addresses the credibility, validity and relevance of the source, while the reliability of the sources helps learners to interpret the meaning behind the source. Answers to for example the following questions ned to be sought: is the source is biased? Has it been cross referenced? What is the intention of the author? (Haw, 2015).

This process of source analysis requires learners to engage with what they are being taught by distinguishing between facts and opinion and analysing claims that are made in a given source (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). History thinking skills can be promoted through these sources by allowing learners to investigate and explore the validity and credibility of sources by asking who published the source, what interests the source and the author represented, and the author's background and expertise, thereby investigating for any limitations to the scope of the views they present (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). Although source analysis is important in promoting History thinking and higher order thinking, there are some challenges that could arise in undertaking it. When sources are not used effectively by teachers, they could lose their purpose in promoting History thinking (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). Source analysis also promotes inquiry-based learning because learners are encouraged to ask questions when they analyse sources. In inquiry-based learning, the questions are focused on developing an understanding of what happened, when it happened, why it happened, who was involved, and lastly, where it happened. The five W-questions as mentioned above can be used to deepen the learner's knowledge. The crux of the skill is not only to ask questions, but also for learners to investigate what they are learning, so that they can make their own inferences and decisions about an event they are learning about in their History lessons (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009).

Inquiry skills promote History thinking because learners are constantly asking questions and trying to understand what they are being taught. This can for example be achieved through a class activity like *See, Think and Wonder*. In this task, learners can be given a visual source to analyse (Cowgill & Waring, 2017). Learners need to explain what they see, which is basic. Then they must think about what they see. This aspect of enquiry learning deals with interpretation and analysis skills. Lastly, learners must verbalise what they wonder about the visuals, which elicits their creative skills. In this case, most learners may have come to a similar or common conclusion of what they see (Cowgill & Waring, 2017). However, there might be different views and interpretations as to what they think about the visual, which illustrates that learners may look at the same thing and have different views and interpretations about what they see (Cowgill & Waring, 2017). Source analysis skills can also be used when studying various types of sources that exist. For example, primary sources can also

be used as teaching tools, where learners are introduced to various accounts of events that happened in the past. This also helps learners to identify whether the source is biased, if it uses any form of exaggeration or promotes an ideology. This allows learners to build their own knowledge by deconstructing the event and its interpretation. This process is important because it develops the learner's reasoning and thinking skills, especially when they must come to a decision (Cowgill & Waring, 2017).

Evaluation of secondary sources is an extension of source analysis. Secondary sources consist of documents or information that was not experienced first-hand. These sources of information are usually analytical and require learners to investigate the reliability of the information by using various skills (Massey, 2015). Some of the skills that can be investigated when studying secondary sources include but are not limited to the following: Are there any limitations in the source? Has the source has been cross referenced against other sources on the same topic? Who is the author or authors? Is the source factual and is there a balanced account from other sources to the current one under investigation? Furthermore, the overall message of the source must be determined, and how the source is presented must be assessed (Massey, 2015). An example of this can be taken from the Boipatong Massacre. A source by a certain author or authors may describe what led to the massacre, from individuals that were involved to political influences from political leaders. The learners can be taught about the varied views that exist on what led to the massacre. Once the information has been provided to the learners, the learners need to cross-reference the information put before them and explore whether or not the facts provided are authentic. For example, the source may have emphasised that the massacre was due to political actors like for example FW De Klerk and Mangosuthu Bhutelezi. However, when learners read more into this event from a greater variety of sources, they may discover that other political leaders and parties were involved. Learners can then dismiss a source and argue that it is not authentic and does not show a balanced account of the events that transpired.

2.5.2 Historical empathy

Historical empathy is described as the ability to stand back from an event by looking at it from its context without making any judgement, but rather trying to understand

how the people who were involved viewed their circumstances (Yilmaz, 2007). For example, when teaching the Holocaust, some of the learners may want to understand Adolf Hitler's thinking, and what shaped or influenced it. In this case, learners do not put themselves in his shoes and sympathise with his actions, but they look at his perceptions and how this impacted his values, beliefs, and attitudes towards the Jews (Yilmaz, 2007).

2.5.3 Deductive reasoning

For learners to develop the skills mentioned, they rely significantly on deductive reasoning, and they need to look at multiple perspectives. This means that learners need to consider all aspects when they conclude to show good reasoning. If this is neglected, the premise of the argument remains in question. The application of deductive reasoning and multiple perspective skills can bring challenges for teachers when they do not teach their learners how to apply the relevant skills in varied situations (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). For instance, when learners are applying the wrong skills when they analyse or evaluate information before them, they could struggle to make progress in their learning. This means that when learners argue and they neglect to consider exhaustive evidence, they move away from deductive reasoning to inductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning follows logic, and it is more analytical, while inductive reasoning refers to when learners reach a conclusion but have not considered the different views and perspectives before them. This does not promote History thinking skills, because learners make conclusions without gathering sufficient evidence to support the premises of their argument (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009).

2.5.4 Document analysis

Learners can develop History thinking skills as aligned with the NCS-CAPS curriculum if they are able to investigate past events through the process of document analysis, such as is shown in primary and secondary sources (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). When learners are encouraged to analyse what they are taught, they get more involved in research, and develop strong writing and debating skills, by raising different arguments when they interrogate textual or visual sources (Cowgill & Waring, 2017).

2.5.5 Linking causes and effects

For learners to be in a position where they can investigate the authenticity of sources and build their own arguments, learners need to develop their History thinking skills by constantly making a link between multiple historical causes and effects. This means that when learners investigate an event that has occurred in History, they need to understand the reason behind the event, by studying the multiple causes that may have led to the event (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). An example is an event such as the Rwandan genocide or the Holocaust. When these events are studied, learners need to unpack what the contributing causes to such events were. Once they have done this, they are able to analyse and evaluate the interaction of multiple causes and make a link with the effects of such events by interrogating the different perspectives that exist.

This merges the chronological order of events with historical thinking because it allows learners to research events that have happened in the past by critiquing existing interpretations, and by developing strong analytical skills through research, demonstrating deductive reasoning that is supported by historical evidence (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). This skill requires learners to be able to give greater attention to the information in the source and to analyse the aim and purpose of the source, the intended audience, and the authenticity of the source by investigating whether it is useful, and whether the source has varied views and perspectives. If the source consists of too many limitations, one can then conclude that it is not reliable (Cowgill & Waring, 2017).

However, for learners to be able to interpret the past, evaluate and analyse evidence or understand historical interpretations, learners need to be equipped to describe and evaluate diverse historical interpretations over time (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). This also means that they must examine different ways that historians may have interpreted certain events or sources of information to ensure that they avoid adopting distorted views or cultural bias. Multiple perceptivity and History thinking are dependent on each other in developing meaningful and persuasive understandings of past historical events to ensure that there are different experiences of inquiry (Maposa & Wassermann, 2009). Therefore, learners are encouraged to challenge what they are being taught, so that they can think critically and become responsible global citizens.

2.6 WHAT CHALLENGES DO HISTORY TEACHERS EXPERIENCE WHEN PROMOTING HISTORY THINKING SKILLS?

When teachers want to develop the History thinking skills of their learners, they experience challenges in terms of how they teach and implement these skills, because most teachers do not have a good understanding of these skills (Nasson, 2009). Many teachers only have experience of memorised reading, which is linked with an overreliance on the textbook, and to old traditional teaching methods that show a lack of skills (Nasson, 2009).

Massey (2015) argues that during the 1800s, most schools in the United States encouraged learners to memorise what they read. However, during the twentieth century, education has changed a lot, and as a result, this way of teaching has been challenged by various scholars who believe that 21st century skills are more important (Massey, 2015). Most scholars argue that reading should be done in a way that helps learners to understand the text which will subsequently move away from memorised reading and learning (Massey, 2015).

When learners are taught how to read effectively without using memorised reading, they can question and evaluate historical texts they engage with through inquiry and interpretation. However, the challenge with most teachers is that they focus heavily on memorised learning, which often promotes knowing of dates, facts, places, events and historical characters. Massey (2015) also argues that teachers often rely on the textbook when they teach History. This presents challenges because the textbook is often seen as authoritative, due to the way in which many textbooks dictate the relevant facts and information needed to understand a topic as an unassailable narrative.

This creates a barrier when it comes to promoting History thinking skills, because the author does not provide enough evidence as to the sources, how the source(s) were accessed, and the analytical processes that were followed to determine whether the sources can be said to be reliable or valid. Since the textbook is seen as authoritative, Massey (2015) argues that it becomes difficult to assess the textbook for multiple perspectives, or for interpretations that are linked to historical inquiry. As a result, teachers provide information that needs to be studied in the textbook, but there

remains a dearth of enquiry-based learning, where learners get to explore or investigate the information placed before them (Massey, 2015).

Although a textbook may consist of multiple authors, this hardly means that it promises to provide multiple views from the different authors. However, if the textbook consists of primary sources, it can provide multiple perspectives. If the historical texts are not well researched or written, they can present challenges (Talin, 2015). For example, if the teacher does not teach the learners how to analyse sources in the textbook, the learners will accept the sources as authoritative, and not question their credibility (Talin, 2015). If learners do not understand how to deconstruct sources from a textbook, they often take a passive view and approach the information as a set of facts. Consequently, they merely memorise the information *sans* assessment (Massey, 2015). In such cases, teachers who encouraged these skills often teach them at a basic level and not in-depth. This means that teachers do not teach their learners how to compare and analyse sources or teach the learners how to engage with the sources by investigating their reliability, giving consideration to the different perspectives in terms of the arguments raised from various historians, and whether the sources encourage or include propaganda or emotive language (Talin, 2015).

Boadu (2015) contends that History is an abstract subject because it deals with past events that cannot be reproduced. Therefore, the way in which teachers teach History is important because this will have an impact on how learners engage with the subject. According to Baodu (2015), most teachers do not teach History in an engaging way that encourages learners with a desire to learn more. This is because most teachers rely on rote learning which often encourages learners to memorise information and facts based on repetition. This means that learners are expected to repeat the information more than once and eventually they will memorise the facts and simply regurgitate them as a proxy for understanding.

One of the challenges to this problem is that many teachers are not skilled to use innovative methods of teaching. However, the NCS-CAPS curriculum suggests that teachers need to be life-long learners and be able to adapt in their teaching pedagogy. Effective teaching that embraces critical thinking and innovation is difficult for most teachers to accomplish, because the curriculum is goal driven, and focuses largely on

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covering the content, rather than on effective teaching strategies, and making teachers responsible for their own personal development through learning.

In addition, Radulovic and Stancic (2017) indicate that most teachers have challenges in teaching their learners how to analyse History sources. As a result, learners do not know how to interpret or organise historical evidence, such as investigating the author's purpose, examining intention beyond the written work, and considering the context(s) and perspective(s) of the primary source(s).

After conducting a case study in Malaysia, Talin (2015) found that learners are not taught how to use History thinking skills effectively at school. Furthermore, she found that most learners do not perform well with questions that require in-depth thinking and demand more knowledge. This means that many learners perform the worst when required to perform tasks that require them to give a critical analysis or review of that with which they are being presented. This shows that they struggle to integrate various types of knowledge or skills to solve a problem in different circumstances.

According to Talin (2015), the most common challenge that teachers experience is a lack of exposure, knowledge, and training in History thinking skills. As a result, History teachers do not understand how to implement or teach these skills effectively. In South Africa, a study on critical thinking was conducted by Grosser and Lombard (2013).

Their study shows that there is a gap in analysis skills amongst learners, which poses a challenge, as critical thinking requires abstract logical thinking. The literature indicates that there is a misconstrued understanding of critical thinking skills (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013). As a result, most teachers teach the way they were taught when they were learners, where the current education policies in South Africa instead require teachers to be effective leaders of change (Grosser & Nel, 2013).

However, many history teachers in South Africa are under-qualified, and as a result, they need to upgrade their qualifications to improve their expertise in the classroom (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013). The current curriculum (NCS-CAPS) requires teachers to upgrade their knowledge and to be lifelong learners, scholars and researchers. There is a concern that the curricula of many teacher education programmes are not aligned to the realities that are found within our society and country (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013). The (NCS-CAPS) requires learners to be critical thinkers. However, it

encompasses a great deal of content that needs to be covered in a limited timeframe. As a result, history teachers focus on what their learners need to know to perform, instead of teaching their learners how they need to learn to grow (Ndlovu & Van Eden, 2013). Teaching learners what they need to learn often leads to teachers providing their learners with all the facts and knowledge, without leaving space for evaluating and analysing what they are taught. Ultimately this diminishes the potential for a true sense of understanding by the learners of History, and promotes memorisation (Msila, 2014).

2.7 TEACHING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING

For critical thinking to happen in the classroom, teachers need to promote a progressive learning environment that allows the learners to be the centre of the learning (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018). Critical thinking can be promoted by teachers by focusing on cognitive skills through their teaching pedagogy, and by adopting various strategies that can be used through inquiry-based learning, constructive learning, collaborative learning and by promoting a practical hands-on approach to learning, where learners can investigate and interrogate what is taught to them (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018). When learners become the centre of their own learning, they develop important life skills, which encourage them to be innovative and to solve real life problems that exist in the 21st century. For this reason, for teachers to implement critical thinking skills effectively in the classroom, they must be equipped with the relevant skills and training. This means that interventions must be made early during teacher training (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018).

2.7.1 Inquiry-based learning

An inquiry-based learning approach allows learners to take the centre stage of learning without the teacher having to be the sole giver of knowledge (Back et al., 2015). Teachers can promote inquiry-based learning by consistently involving and encouraging learners to become active participants in their own learning, by promoting research that challenges the learners to develop a desire for their subject.

Inquiry-based learning can also be taught for the purpose of highlighting problem-solving skills. This needs to be done in a more a practical way that meets the needs of the community or society in which the learners have been raised. This can be achieved by promoting inquiry-based activities (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018). For example,

learners can be given a research project where they must investigate a social problem in their communities by engaging with other members of their community and trying to look for solutions to the problem (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018). This activity promotes learning as strategy because learners develop direct experiences of their own learning. As a result, learners develop a rigour for research and investigation of issues or problems, making it likely that for them to pursue new discoveries, exploration, experimentation through trial and error- the issue of "doing" history all of which ultimately encourages lifelong learning to take place (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018).

2.7.2 Constructivist learning

Lunenburg (2011) argues that constructivism focuses on how learners learn through social interaction and by constructing their knowledge. This happens when learners discover new knowledge and check it against other information. To promote constructivist learning, teachers need to adopt a strategy where they allow experiential learning by reflecting on their experiences (Lunenburg, 2011). For example, with inquiry-based learning, learners investigate a social phenomenon and try to find solutions. However, when constructivist learning is applied, learners reflect on their experiences, and try to understand their world by building on their prior knowledge using various techniques of learning, such as experiments, research, investigations and problem-solving. As a result, learners can share their prior knowledge and their newly gained knowledge and use it to show how their own understanding has changed. It is important for the teacher to understand the preconceived ideas learners may have and to assist the learners in modifying and assimilating this new knowledge to rethink, to develop new outlooks, and to evaluate what is important (Lunenburg, 2011).

2.7.3 Situational learning

Radulovic and Stancic (2017) emphasised that there is a link between constructivism and situational learning. This happens because in situational learning, learners are hands on, and actively involved through the learning process, by addressing real world problems. The process of learning must be meaningful and realistic to the world in which learners live. Learners must be able to learn, make mistakes, and experience their world through their social construct by actively constructing new knowledge (Radulovic & Stancic (2017).

There are more practical strategies that can be used by teachers to promote constructivism in their teaching environment. This can happen when teachers allow the knowledge to be shared between teachers and learners on a class task given. This means that learners will have an opportunity to investigate and research the task and present the information to the class (Lunenburg, 2011). This will allow everyone in the class to contribute positively to the learning process as questions will be asked and more knowledge will be shared, while it promotes multiple perspectives and various modes of representation (Prayogi & Wasis, 2018). Group discussions can be used as a positive platform to foster critical discussions about a topic in class and learners can construct their own ideas and discuss their views with the class (Lunenburg, 2011).

2.8   CONCLUDING REMARKS

The current CAPS has been revised from former policies and as a result, it has undergone continuous change as the needs of the society are reshaped over time. However, these changes affect the lives, working relationships, and working patterns of teachers, as well as the educational experiences of the learners (Kallaway, 2012). Teachers have not adopted a positive attitude to the NCS-CAPS curriculum because it is very much content-driven and does not provide a voice for teachers where they can reshape and provide their views on how the curriculum is planned (Kallaway, 2012). Instead, the curriculum is designed, planned, and executed by key officials at the Department of Basic Education. This means that teachers as the custodians of the curriculum do not have an opinion, despite them being expected to teach the content that is imposed on them. The attitude of teachers when they must implement the changes in the curriculum has thus become negative, where one of the contributing factors is that teachers do not feel equipped or trained, and thus lack the relevant skills to create and become innovative teachers in the classroom (Kallaway, 2012).

Teachers have differed views and perceptions of the curriculum and the changes to it because most teachers do not see the need to change their pedagogical methods fundamentally. According to Kallaway (2012), teachers generally have more confidence when using the textbook, due to the size of their classrooms. For example, because many teachers do see the need to create innovative lesson plans, they struggle to do so when they are confronted with large classes, where the ratio is one teacher to forty learners.

There are some limitations to the NCS-CAPS curriculum because it does not demonstrate what teaching History at secondary schools ought to entail when taught in a more practical way. Furthermore, it does not indicate how the content was selected and assessed to stimulate History thinking skills. As a result, the content of the curriculum consists of too many obstacles and is extremely ambitious in terms of the factual content that needs to be covered (Kallaway, 2012).

In the next chapter, I will focus on the research methodology and research design I employed in this study. In addition, I discuss the sampling, data collection, and data analysis strategies I have used, and explain how I ensured trustworthiness of the data and the credibility of findings.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework for this study. In addition, the research design and the strategies used to collect, record and analyse the data are described. The relevant ethical guidelines that were applied throughout the study are explained and the trustworthiness and credibility of the study is discussed.

3.2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research paradigms are clear sets of concepts and approaches which are filled with beliefs about the nature of reality and how knowledge can be attained (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016). Research paradigms focus on how people make meaning and understanding of their own lived realities and experiences (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016). The purpose of this research was to understand how the participants made sense of their realities and how it exists in their social reality (ontology). However, the process in which this knowledge is acquired and validated is important because human beings have multiple social realities and thus this study is aimed at understanding the perspectives and perceived realities of the participants (epistemology) (Alharti & Rehman, 2016). The bedrock of this relies on the fact that there are no objective and extrinsic facts to social life (Tekin & Kotaman, 2013).

This study followed an interpretive paradigm. This approach is based on the notion that a single reality does not exist, but rather socially constructed realities occur (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016). This was done to avoid predicting the outcome of the research study, but rather to embrace the realities, experiences, and feelings of the participants through their understanding of History thinking skills and how they promoted these skills through their teaching pedagogy (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016). Because a social phenomenon must be understood through the lens of the participant, the interpretation of all the participants' views was important to gain a greater understanding of their experiences. Thus, not only one interpretation was chosen or preferred, but multiple interpretations to the social phenomenon (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016).

3.3 METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research methodology was used in this study because qualitative research is subjective, and therefore it was more suitable for the research questions. A qualitative methodology would generate greater insight of participants' understanding and perspectives of the promotion of History thinking skills (Maxwell, 2012). Therefore, a qualitative methodology allowed me to capture the various perspectives of the participants and understand their subjective worldviews through the lens of their "real world" (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016). This means that the participants' social construct of their reality was to be taken seriously and not manipulated. Qualitative research is therefore concerned with reality which cannot be quantified because it is embedded in social interactions and various interpretations that human beings hold through their own experiences which may include meanings, motivations, objectives, beliefs, values, and attitudes that cannot be reduced to the operationalisation of variables. A qualitative methodology was used over a quantitative method because a quantitative research methodology would not provide rich data that identifies the human experience of the participants that participated in the research study (Camara & Drummond & Jackson 2007). Furthermore, quantitative research provides a more generalised view of the population and focuses on developing finite questions as a way of collecting data (Camara & Drummond & Jackson 2007). The questions in quantitative research are very restrictive and do not provide opportunities to engage with the participant at a level that will allow rich data to be collected (Camara, Drummond & Jackson 2007). Because qualitative research is interested in the deepened understanding of a problem, it provided more advantages because it allowed the participants to explain their experiences and interpretations through in-depth discussions and they could also share their feelings and emotions which are very relevant in this study, unlike quantitative research that would make it hard to elicit human emotions (Almeida, 2017). The research method that has been adopted rests on the bedrock of the research questions under investigation and is used as a guideline to gain data and knowledge from the research case study (Alharthi & Rehman, 2016).

On the negative side, the burden of always reminding the participant to go back to the interview question can be perceived as being rude or not being polite and transcribing these interviews can be time-intensive (Almeida, 2017). During the process of data collection, it is important to have an experienced researcher who understands how to ask follow-up questions to conduct a good interview. In my case, I am an inexperienced researcher with very limited experience in collecting data; as a result, I had some gaps in conducting the interviews. Qualitative research is authentic because it is aimed at understanding a social problem. The sample size can be a challenge in the process of collecting the data because making decisions on the small sample require in-depth analysis, multiple perspectives and more time is needed to come to this conclusion to avoid making mistakes (Almeida, 2017).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is the strategy that is applied by a researcher to conduct a study and thus it is informed by the different data collection tools that are required for a research study (Maxwell, 2012). The design that was used for this research was a multiple case study design. A multiple case study provides a researcher with the means to be able to identify and explore differences between and within the cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This means that once the data was collected, it was important to find a way to replicate the findings across the cases so that comparisons are made. This process is very important when the data is analysed and presented because the cases may show similarities in the results (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This makes the evidence more reliable and credible (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Multiple case studies promote a wide range of research questions which can lead to rich data being collected because of multiple perspectives that can be derived (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This approach is suitable for this research because it focuses on inquiry and building on rich data that is based on different methods of data collection, for example semi structured interviews were conducted to collect data (Starman, 2013). This approach often looks at different views that the participants may hold as their reality and participants' perceptions, social constructs and experiences, and ideas of diverse views that individuals may hold (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This is built on the bedrock of looking at the case study as a complex story that has been lived and experienced by the participant (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Multiple case studies have some limitations because a researcher can be biased and rely on his or her subjective views which can be misleading and unethical (Starman, 2013). This process can lead to a lack of rigor in the analysis of the data based on the biased views that may be expressed. Furthermore, the interpretation of the data is very time consuming and may be expensive to conduct (Starman, 2013). The data that is generated cannot be generalised as being the views of a bigger population because the case study dealt with a group of participants which makes it hard to generalise (Starman, 2013).

3.5   DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

To answer the research question (s) I needed to select an effective data collection strategy that would achieve the main objective of the study which is to gain insight into the participant's reality. This process cannot be done in isolation because the research questions influence the data collection method and the research design (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2016).

Qualitative data can be described as data that is observed and recorded. The data is aimed at detecting the meaning of participants' experiences and perceptions (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016). Qualitative data is constructed through human interaction and as a result, participants can have multiple realities on a social phenomenon (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016). Interviews are fundamentally important because they allow participants to share their lived experiences and interpretations of the world they live in and how they make sense of their experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2016). Interviews are good for collecting data to gain insight into the research problem and to understand the interactions between the participants, especially in understanding their perceived views and attitudes regarding the research problem (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016). In addition, interviews provide opportunities for a direct encounter between the researcher and the participant.

Different kinds of interviews can be used when data is collected, namely unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews. Unstructured interviews are not planned and are very informal, the response is not pre-determined, and questions are also not planned (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016). Structured interviews, on the other hand, follow a list of questions that are set and asked in a standardised order. However, the questions can be open-ended while leading questions are avoided (Whitehead &

Whitehead, 2016). In this study I used semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are a common tool for data collection in education and provide flexibility in how the interview is structured. The purpose of semi-structured interviews was to collect information by asking the participants about their lessons and how they promote History thinking skills when they teach History (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Once I had conducted my ethics clearance (Addendum A). I approached the participants to be part of my research study. The interview questions are included at the end of the dissertation as (Addendum C). During the interviews I was able to ask more follow-up or probing questions to obtain clarification or to gain a deeper understanding when answers to interview questions were insufficient or unclear (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016). Semi-structured interviews were suitable for this study as participants could share their experiences and their teaching methodology.

3.5.1 Advantages of semi-structured interviews

There are many benefits of using semi-structured interviews which may include, yet not limited to the following:

- Semi-structured interviews provide an opportunity for probing questions. This means that during the interview the researcher can ask a question and ask more follow-up questions to get clarity and understanding of the participant's perspectives (Adams, 2015). This means that this strategy of data collection is very flexible and provides a clear guide to the questions that will be asked and allows for reliable and comparable qualitative data to be collected (Adams, 2015).

- The research questions can be developed in advance. This allows for a higher level of trustworthiness of the data as all the interviewees are asked the same questions. In this way the interviews are more focused and allow the interviewer not to lose track or get side-lined when they conduct the research (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016).

- Semi-structured interviews are aimed at gaining insight and understanding why people think the way they do and why they hold the views they do. Due to the nature of semi-structured interviews, they offer more understanding of the social phenomena under investigation by asking participants for their

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interpretations through their lens of experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000).

3.5.2 Disadvantages of semi-structured interviews

The following are some of the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews:

- The interviews that were conducted were face-to-face, which means that time had to be set aside by the interviewer and the participant. This can be a challenge at times because sometimes the participant or the interviewer needs to reschedule and as such this can lead to too many delays (Creswell, 2014).

- Semi-structured interviews are time-consuming because they allow for open-ended questions to be asked and it is very easy for the participant to lose track of the main question they were asked and go off-topic, discussing other things (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2016: 8). This means that the interviewer must consistently remind or guide the participant to answer the question without being impatient. This can be frustrating for both the researcher and the participant (Creswell, 2014).

- Semi-structured interviews are planned, and it is very easy to ask some questions differently from the previous interviews and the sequence or wording of the questions may differ. This can lead to confusion when interpreting the data during the data analysis process thus impacting the response from the participants and how the data is compared (Creswell, 2014) The participant's emotional state is very important on the day of the interview, if the participant's well-being is not good. This can have an impact on the data that is required.

3.5.3 Sampling of participants

The sampling process that was used for this qualitative research is purposive sampling because the research study is aimed at gathering rich information in a form of data (Green, Hoagwood, Palinkas & Wisdom, 2013). This sampling process was identified as the most suitable because the participants were chosen based on their understanding or knowledge of the research problem that is under investigation. In addition to purposive sampling, snowball sampling was used in this study. I approached four participants through convenient sampling for the study. It was convenient to apply this sampling method because I was aware of other schools that

were nearby, and I could reach the participants much easier. However, the snowball sampling became more convenient because the participants that I interviewed knew other teachers through professional circles, as a result more participants were referred to me through their acquaintances (Naderifar, Goli & Ghaljaei, 2017). The sampling process is also described as the "chain method" because it has a ripple effect of accessing participants and it is very cost effective (Naderifar, Goli & Ghaljaei, 2017).

The sampling process was followed to increase the credibility of the results by selecting a sample size to provide the relevant information that is needed. However, this sampling process does not always mean that the information obtained from the sample size will be rich (Green et al., 2013). Eleven participants, from five public schools and six independent schools were selected to participate in this study. The first participant is a white female. She has a Ph.D. degree in Education, and she is between 60-63 years old. The school fees at her school are between R5000-R8000 per month. Participant 2 is a white male. He has a Ph.D. degree in History, and he is between 35-37 years old. The school fees range between R8000-R14000 per month. The third participant is a white female who is between 27-29 years old. She holds an honours degree in History. The school fees at her school are between R4500-R5000 per month. Participant four is a white female and she has a master's degree in History. This participant is between 52-55 years old and is currently registered for her Ph.D. degree but has put it on hold due to work pressure. The school fees at her school range between R7500-R10000 per month. The fifth participant is a white female who is between 58-60 years and who holds a master's degree in History. She has also registered for a Ph.D. in History. The school fees at her school range between R9000-R13000 per month. The sixth participant is an Indian teacher. She holds an honours degree in Education. She has partially completed her master's degree in Education but has put it on hold. This participant is 49 years old and the school fees at her school range between R5500-R7000 per month. Although her school has been bought by a corporate company known as ADvTECH, the school prescribes the CAPS curriculum. Participant 7 is a white female between 45-48 years old. She was studying towards completing an honours degree in Education Management at the time of the interview. The school fees range between R6000-R7000pm. The eighth participant is a black male. He is 26-29 years old has a B.A. degree in History and a Postgraduate Certificate

in Education (PGCE).The school fees at this participant's school range from R700-R1500 per month. The ninth participant is a white female. She is between 60-63 years old, and she holds a master's degree in Historical Heritage. The fees of this participant's school range between R8000-R15000 per month, being the most expensive school fees out of all the participating schools. Participant 10 is a coloured male between 33-36 years old and has an honours degree in Anthropology. The school fees at his school range from R700-1200 per month. The last participant is a black male. He is between 38-40 years old, and he holds an honour's degree in Education. The school fees of his school range between R700-1500 pm.

Each school employs two History teachers. However, during the sampling process it was discovered that most schools employ a teacher to teach Social Sciences in the Senior Phase (Grades 8 and 9) which include both History and Geography, while another teacher is employed in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase to teach History to Grades 10, 11 and 12. However, in some circumstances schools employ more than one History teacher in the FET Phase. The participants that were chosen had to have a minimum of five years or more experience in teaching History in the FET Phase and they are therefore in a good position to provide rich data and information about their experiences of teaching History thinking skills. When the participants were approached there were considerations taken in terms of where their schools are located to conduct the interviews, the time and distance to travel, and whether this would have any financial implications on the interviewee. All the interviews were conducted after school hours to avoid taking up academic time from the participants. The sample size deemed sufficient to gain insight into the research prblem because they have experience as History teachers. A purposeful sample was thus chosen assuming that it would provide rich information offering more insight and clarification to the social phenomenon under research in the study. Considering the above criteria, eleven public and independent schools were identified in the Northern and Eastern areas of Johannesburg in the Gauteng Province. All the schools are English medium schools. Six of the schools were co-ed while five were single gender schools. The sampled schools were easily accessible which made it easy to visit them more than once should the need arise.

3.5.4 Gaining access to participants

After obtaining ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. I approached four of the participants that I wanted to interview to gain data. However, some of the participants were referred to me by the participants that I interviewed because they knew each other professionally. After the participants were referred to me, I contacted them personally via email and WhatsApp messenger and invited them to be part of my research study. The participants were given a consent form which they had to agree to and sign before I could interview them. The participants permitted me to interview them once they understood the aim and purpose of the research study which was a letter of consent that they had to sign before I could interview them (Addendum B). The ethical considerations were followed when each participant gave consent to be part of the research study and thereafter, they were interviewed. I originally invited twelve participants to be part of the research study. However, one participant decided not to go ahead with the interview and the participant's wishes were respected. Ultimately, I was permitted by the rest of the invited participants to interview them. During the interview process I asked the participants the questions that were needed to gain data for the purpose of the research (Addendum C).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION

This study was aimed at understanding and interpreting the participants' subjective views. Subjective views are often based on opinion and not facts, as a result reasonable people can argue or disagree on these views. A thematic analysis was appropriate as this form of data analysis is deeply rooted in investigating the interpretations held by the participants (Ibrahim, 2012). A thematic analysis can be described as a qualitative data analysis method that involves reading through data, an example of this can be transcripts from interviews for the purpose of getting in-depth rich data (Ibrahim, 2012). Once the interviews were conducted, patterns and trends were identified across the data. The data was interpreted by analysing the content and an inductive interpretation was applied to develop an overall understanding of the whole; meaning the research. For example, we get to understand meaning by conducting interviews and asking probing questions to get clarity if there is confusion.

The data was coded and categorised into different themes. Six main themes were identified during the data analysis. In addition, sub-themes were also identified and highlighted to show any patterns and similarities to answer the research questions. The themes emerged after the interviews were conducted during the process of data analysis. The sub themes that were identified are aligned to the main themes and support the main research question and sub-questions. The main themes and sub themes were derived from common themes, topics, ideas and patterns that came through repeatedly. The data was then explained and analysed in detail according to the themes and patterns that I identified (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The interviews were firstly recorded during the data collection stage, the data (raw audio) from the interviews was transcribed verbatim to text. During the process of data analysis, I identified and described both implicit and explicit ideas expressed by the participants. The implicit ideas were things that the participants suggested during the interview but were not expressed. I was able to illicit information from the participant by asking probing questions for clarity on what they were saying to ensure that I understood them. The explicit ideas were very clear and did not require me to ask the participant what they meant because there was no confusion or doubt about what they were saying.

3.7   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To ensure that the research is conducted ethically, I applied for ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. This process included submitting a completed application form and examples of the letters that I was to submit to potential participants. After my ethics application was approved, I sought permission from the participants, the participants gave their consent and the participants also consented to be interviewed at their school or outside their school after school hours. The participants were made aware of the study and the purpose of the study. The participants were not coerced to be part of the study and they were made aware that they may withdraw from the study during the data collection process.

To ensure that the study was authentic and valid, I considered the views and interpretations of the participants by allowing the participants to make their own decisions about their reality without trying to persuade the participants to take a certain view to suit the study (Samaranayake, 2012). I explained to the participants that

although the findings were going to be shared publicly, the information that they provided would be kept confidential and that it was going to be used for research and academic purposes only. I committed to protect their identity and the identity of their schools, thus their views remained confidential. Pseudonyms were used to protect the individual participants' identities, as well as the identity of the participating schools. The parties involved were *ad idem* - this means that there was an agreement in their minds (Samaranayake, 2012).

Qualitative research is aimed at gathering and collecting in-depth information, this meant that power dynamics might have come into play. Therefore, it was important for me to foster a relationship of mutual respect between myself and the participants. In this way the well-being and human dignity of the participants were protected and upheld.

3.8   TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

To ensure that the data was trustworthy and the findings reliable, some requirements were met. In qualitative research, validity is conceptualised as trustworthiness and dependability. This meant that in reporting the research, I tried not to add my biased interpretations or perspectives and did my utmost to be as impartial and honest as possible (Golafshani, 2003).

The transcribed interviews were given to the participants to allow them to provide comments on the accuracy of the data transcribed. The participants did not have much information to share as this process started in March 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. My view and interpretation are that although they did not have anything to share, they might have not had the time to go through their interviews in detail.

Triangulation was used as a validity check. This included collecting data by investigating multiple views and interpretations held by multiple participants on a single reality (Golafshani, 2003). This was enabled by using a multiple case study design as I could gain access to experiences and views of different participants in different contexts. During the time of the research study when I was conducting the interviews, I had left my job as a history teacher and joined an educational corporate organisation. I interviewed one senior history teacher that I formerly worked with at an independent school. I had a professional working relationship with this participant, and there was

no positionality because I had left the school at the time of the interview. Furthermore, I did not have a relationship with the other participants I interviewed and did not work directly with them. Therefore , it was easier to understand my position as an independent researcher and their role as participants for the purpose of the research study. A relationship of trust and transparency was established throughout the research study.

3.9   ADVANTAGES OF THE RESEARCH APPROACH USED

The qualitative research design that was used was aimed at understanding the meaning and reality given by participants to a complicated social phenomenon. It therefore enabled me to focus the research on the in-depth understanding of a problem (Almeida, 2017; Queiros, Faria & Almeia, 2017). A multiple case study was a good strategy for achieving a deep understanding of the social problem or phenomenon and there is the greater focus to analyse data from a small group of participants and to delve deeper into a single subject using a replication strategy (Almeida, 2017; Queiros, Faria & Almeia, 2017). In addition, a multiple case study enabled me to analyse the data within each situation and across situations (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Studying multiple cases highlighted the similarities and differences between each case (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Furthermore, the evidence generated is reliable and valuable because I could clarify the findings from the results that were generated from the data which subsequently opened opportunities for flexibility for wider research questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The semi-structured interviews were reliable and authentic because the participants shared their own lived experiences. It offered the opportunity for me to build a relationship with each participant (case) to ensure rapport, honesty, and transparency.

3.10   CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter I provided a detailed description of the research paradigm, the research methodology and the research design. In addition, I explained and motivated the data collection strategies I used in the study to investigate teachers' understanding of History thinking skills. This included describing how the data was analysed to gain insight and knowledge on the participants' views and interpretations. The sampling and the data collection methods were also presented. I also included a discussion of

all the ethical considerations that needed to be met. In Chapter 4 present the data and a detailed discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER 4
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3 the research paradigm, qualitative research, research design and sampling and data collection strategies and data analysis and ethics were presented. In this chapter the data captured in the study is presented. A brief biographical overview of each participant is given, as well as a thorough discussion of the themes and sub-themes identified during the data analysis. The main themes are listed below:

- Theme 1: **The concept of History thinking skills**.

- Theme 2: **Content matters when teaching History thinking skills.**

- Theme 3: **Teaching multi-perspectivity and historical empathy**.

- Theme 4: **The most important skill to teach.**

- Theme 5: Support to struggling learners.

- Theme 6: **The importance of teaching History thinking skills.**

The responses of each of the participants are presented and discussed according to the themes that emerged from the data.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The schools that the participants teach at are all situated in the north and east of Johannesburg. The participants' History teaching experience ranges from four to thirty years. The schools that are represented prescribe to the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (NCS-CAPS) and the Independent Examination Board (IEB). Although the independent schools write the IEB examination at the end of Grade 12, they rely on the NCS-CAPS curriculum as their springboard. Therefore, the NCS-CAPS curriculum is important because both public and independent schools rely on it for guidance.

The first participant is a white female. She has a Ph.D. degree in Education, and she is between 60-63 years old. Participant 2 is a white male. He has a Ph.D. degree in History, and he is between 35-37 years old. The third participant is a white female who is between 27-29 years old. She holds an honours degree in History. Participant four

is a white female and she has a master's degree in History. This participant is between 52-55 years old and is currently registered for her Ph.D. degree but has put it on hold due to work pressure. The fifth participant is a white female who is between 58-60 years and who holds a master's degree in History. She has also registered for a Ph.D. in History. The sixth participant is an Indian teacher. She holds an honours degree in Education. She has registered for her master's degree in Education This participant is 49 years old. Although her school has been bought by a corporate company known as ADvTECH, the school prescribes the NCS-CAPS curriculum. Participant 7 is a white female between 45-48 years old. She was studying towards completing an honours degree in Education Management at the time of the interview. The eighth participant is a black male. He is 26-29 years old has a B.A. degree in History and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The ninth participant is a white female. She is between 60-63 years old, and she holds a master's degree in Historical Heritage. Participant 10 is a coloured male between 33-36 years old and has an honours degree in Anthropology. The last participant is a black male. He is between 38-40 years old, and he holds an honour's degree in Education. A summary of the participants' profiles is provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Profiles of participants

Participant	Gender	Race	School category	Qualifications	Teaching experience in years
Participant 1	Female	White	Independent	Ph.D.	28 years
Participant 2	Male	White	Independent	Ph.D.	12 years
Participant 3	Female	White	Public	Honours (History)	4 years
Participant 4	Female	White	Independent	Registered Masters	20 years plus
Participant 5	Female	White	Independent	Ph.D. in progress	20 years plus
Participant 6	Female	Indian	Independent	Masters in progress	18 years
Participant 7	Female	White	Independent	B.Ed. Honours	18 years
Participant 8	Male	Black	Public	B.A. and PGCE	4 years
Participant 9	Female	White	Independent	MA (History)	30 years
Participant 10	Male	Coloured	Public	BA Honours (Anthropology)	5 years
Participant 11	Male	Black	Public	B.Ed. Honours	14 years

4.3 PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The data is presented according to the main themes that emerged from the data analysis and were guided by the research and interview questions. During the data analysis process, the themes and sub-themes identified were aligned with the research and interview questions.

4.3.1 Theme 1: The concept of History thinking skills

To understand how History teachers interpret and understand History thinking skills, it was important to learn how the participants conceptualise History thinking skills in conjunction with the NCS-CAPS curriculum in general and historical empathy and multiple perspectives.

4.3.1.1 Conceptualising History thinking skills in the CAPS.

There is general agreement among the participants that History thinking skills are very important and they encourage their learners to grow in their academic journey. Most of the participants expressed similar views about History thinking skills in the NCS-CAPS curriculum and mentioned some of the skills that are important for History thinking which include inquiry, research skills, analysing sources, investigating multiple perspectives, assessing the reliability of sources and critical thinking. Although these skills are all relevant to a general understanding of History thinking skills in the NCS-CAPS curriculum, most of the participants did not unpack these skills further. Furthermore, two participants criticised the NCS-CAPS curriculum saying that it is very content driven while one participant said that the NCS-CAPS curriculum is biased and one-sided. This is demonstrated by the following statements by Participants 3, 4 and 9 respectively.

> "I think one skill that we spoke a lot about as teachers is multiple perspectivity, because like Israel Palestine, if there are real evils in the world then should we be encouraging kids to look at it from that perspective?" – Participant 3

> "So, when you look at it, it's about sources. When you look at a source, you first source it, in other words, who wrote it? Then the next one is context, so you place the source in context. The third one is, you do a close reading of the source. And the fourth one is, you corroborate with other sources. And that really is forcing the students to work in a way that historians work and using those historical thinking skills." – Participant 4

> "So, History thinking skills. I mean, there are quite a few, so one of them would be to get pupils to understand that History has different points of view. Also, to elicit empathy, and for pupils to analyse sources to understand that not all sources are reliable, but that you must cross-reference. So, there are many layers of different skills that we would call critical thinking skills within CAPS." – Participant 9

Most of the participants described History thinking skills as critical thinking skills that are meant to happen in History. They described History as an inquiry and investigation.

Furthermore, according to most of the participants, History thinking skills require a good understanding of concepts and words. These concepts and words may range from concepts like democracy, monarchy, fascism, while historical thinking skills deals with understanding sources by asking who, where, when, what, and why questions and considering the historical context of sources to explore whether a source is reliable or useful by cross referencing a source against other sources. Furthermore, the participants hold the view that History thinking skills have to do with understanding how to compare and analyse sources and being able to look for biased views that may have been expressed in the source. This is demonstrated by the following statement from Participant 8:

> "Okay, for me, what I understand by History thinking skills, I think the first one is critical reading. Critical reading and making sure that when you read a source, you read it analytically and you make sure that you…when you apply, when you extract information from that source, you use that source for the intended question, so you do not misrepresent, or you don't just extract information for the sake of extracting information. Another thing is comparative analysis. When you compare two different societies, for example, in Grade 10 we teach about empires, right? Like the Mughal Empire and the Ming Dynasty. So, you can compare these to European societies and do the comparative analysis by giving the kids two different sources from two different societies after giving them background, just to test their understanding about how…you know, the bias about the past and how it's been represented to say others don't have a certain History."

The NCS-CAPS curriculum is aimed at History thinking skills that promote critical thinking and allow learners to interrogate what they are taught by analysing information, critically using their judgement by applying deductive reasoning through the process of interpretation by exploring multiple perspectives through a deep analysis and evaluation. However, instead of describing and defining historical thinking skills, some participants, for example Participant 2, Participant 4 and Participant 5, focused on issues in the NCS-CAPS curriculum which they have identified. According to these participants the NCS-CAPS curriculum is content driven and does not allow for flexibility. These participants are of the opinion that the curriculum is very

prescriptive, one sided and that there are too many topics and a lot of content that need to be covered. These participants provided no definition that illustrated their understanding of History thinking skills, but instead raised their concerns about the History NCS-CAPS curriculum.

This is illustrated by the following statement of Participant 2:

> "Because the textbooks that are based on CAPS and even when you look at the bulk of what CAPS involves, it's primarily content driven, with a few very vague notions of themes and thinking skills they should get at the very beginning. And then even some exercises that are afterthoughts within the textbooks. So, as a teacher you're the one that has to bring it to bear upon the curriculum. The curriculum doesn't make it clear exactly how the teachers are supposed to link the content they must cover to the thinking skills that they're supposed to teach through that content."

The views that have been expressed by the participants illustrate that most of the participants have a general understanding of History thinking skills as envisaged by the NCS-CAPS curriculum. According to the NCS-CAPS curriculum, History thinking skills are aimed at promoting among learners, inquiry-based learning, multiple perspectives, source analysis skills and understanding the past by interrogating the content they are taught. However, although these skills were mentioned by the participants, there is also a general view that the NCS-CAPS curriculum is too content driven and does not provide practical examples of how the mentioned skills can be taught. There is a golden thread and alignment in the views of the participants in accordance with the literature review in Chapter 2. History thinking skills are conceptualised as important skills for every learner's academic journey and the skills mentioned by the participants are relevant to teaching and promoting History thinking skills. However, one of the skills that was mentioned is critical thinking. Although critical thinking is mentioned in the NCS-CAPS, the literature review in Chapter 2 illustrates that critical thinking is a generic skill that focuses on promoting habits of the mind. Thus, it is a skill that should be taught across all subjects of discipline; therefore, it is not a skill that is exclusively reserved for teaching History (Lai, 2011). Participants that believe that critical thinking is an important skill in their conceptualisation of History

thinking skills may have interpreted critical thinking based on their own lived experiences.

4.3.1.2 Understanding of historical empathy

Historical empathy is when historians study events that happened in the past and explore the historical figures that were involved by investigating their world views and understanding their actions in the context of the time. According to Participants 2, 3, 4 and 9, historical empathy is the ability to look back to historical events that happened in the past and understanding why the historical figures acted the way they did.

> "Well, you can set up a scenario, so that they kids can kind of engage with the scenario and say this is what they might do if they were in that person's position, and then you say this is what happened, would you agree or disagree with what the person did? And why? etc. etc. You can get them to empathise by doing dramatisations, you can do a flipped classroom in terms of getting them to empathise with people, to be able, as I say, to engage in terms of looking at what the options were available to that person at the time." – Participant 1

> "Okay, so empathy is a very controversial term in History. It's very different to sympathy, and I think it's very specific in terms of how we see it in History. Empathy, very simply, is trying to get young people to have some awareness of other people in the world, other than their own teenage world and their own selves. And if I can tell you, in this school, I've found that the problem of being a very Jewish school is that it's very narrow and they know a lot about what happened in the Holocaust, or they think they know a lot about the Holocaust, but they don't know, for example, very much about Rwanda, or they don't even know the story of the South Africa war and Boer women and children and black women and children and men in the camps. I try to open their world so that maybe they just think for one moment before they write something that's hurtful and harmful in a Tweet, or a message to somebody." – Participant 6

According to Participants 2, 3, 4 and 9 historical empathy allows learners to understand why historical figures did what they did through their actions and that historical

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empathy has to do with understanding the choices that were made by them. The participants view historical empathy as not necessarily being empathic to historical figures, but that it is rather about understanding the circumstances at the time and asking the learners which choices they would have made if they were in the same position. For example:

"I prefer using the term world view rather than empathy. Because we don't want to empathise with Verwoerd, but we want to understand how he viewed the world to understand the actions that he undertook. Right? So, I prefer the idea of recreating world view rather than empathising because I think it gets very dangerous. But you also don't want to present just the one-sided victim empathy, because then you're not getting the complete picture. I prefer reconstructing world views, and analysing people's choices in different situations, and how their beliefs at any given moment would impact upon the decisions that they took." – Participant 2

"I think that we often think of empathy as feeling sorry for somebody, but the important thing for me is empathy is understanding a person within the context of their time and within the context of their situation. If you take Hitler, for instance…and this is the most contentious example, so I think let's look at him. Western scholars would definitely want a complete denunciation of Hitler and his polices. And his policies need denunciation. But there's change in historiography and interpretation of Hitler in terms of looking at him within his context. And I think it's very important that pupils know that there was a context of broader anti-Semitism in Europe. That he certainly wasn't the first anti-Semitic German. And that because there was anti-Semitism right back to Kaiser Wilhelm and before, and not only in Germany but in Europe, and that England expelled their Jews in the 1100s, that people can understand that Hitler didn't just suddenly pop up hating the Jews, but that there was a broader context. We judge Hitler within his time, for it was easy for him to denounce Jews because they'd been denounced by many people before him." – Participant 9

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According to the conceptualisation of historical empathy provided in Chapter 2, the concept refers to studying historical figures from the past and exploring their behaviours, actions, and the world views they held based on the time (Cowgill & Waring, 2017). A few of the participants had a similar understanding of historical empathy and described historical empathy as: choices that were made by historical figures and understanding the circumstances at the time which relates to the world views, perspectives and influences that may have been expressed by them. According to Endacott and Brooks (2018) historical empathy is the process of cognitive and affective engagement with historical figures to better understand and contextualise their experiences, decisions, or actions. According to Endacott and Brooks (2018) it means that learners must understand the actions of historical characters and events that happened in the past through contextualisation and understanding that different perspectives influenced how people acted in the past.

Furthermore, it is developing an understanding of the historical figures by studying them within their context and interpreting their role in History. However, most of the participants perceived historical empathy differently and described it as walking in someone's shoes, feeling sorry or showing sympathy about historical events that happened or teaching learners not to be judgemental and to show empathy when they study History. This shows that most of the participants did not have a good conceptual understanding of historical empathy as a History thinking skill.

4.3.1.3   Understanding of multiple perspectivity

Multiple perspectivity refers to the notion that History is interpretational and subjective with multiple narratives. According to most of the participants, multiple perspectivity is mainly concerned with asking questions, exploring different sources, moving away from one story or narrative and understanding that there are many facets to the truth. It further means studying the different perspectives that may exist in History and using some research skills to compare and analyse sources and the use of historiography. However, some participants had a different view of multiple perspectives and understood it differently. This is illustrated by the following:

> "Obviously we use the textbook, that is our base. We look at other resources like from Google, from the internet obviously, YouTube videos…current issues, you know the learners learn a lot from their social

media: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter. In fact, they bring those issues to me often. 'Ah, ma'am, did you hear what's going on?' You know, often we can miss those things, but they know about these things through social media. So, the positive side is that they are learning these things from social media. There are multiple perspectives that are presented to them even before they come to the class." – Participant 6

"I think it's that building, that empathy, put yourself in that person's shoes. And I think as a teacher, you must paint the picture for them. If you don't have a video, you must tell them a story. You must ask them questions that make them think. You know like: 'Did you read about any women here? No? But don't you think that this one had a girlfriend or a wife or someone? No? Oh? Where were they? Oh. Okay.' Try to deal with those big questions. I think a thing like Crash Course is good, although it's very fast. It touches on that." – Participant 10

Participants also conceptualised multiple perspectivity in terms of questioning things that you have believed. This can entail investigating the past by understanding sources and how they can be diverse and dissimilar and be interpreted differently by people (Cowgill & Waring, 2017). The participants are of the opinion that this can be done by providing the learners with sources which originated from different people and by exploring primary sources to elicit meaning and interpretation. Furthermore, multiple perspectivity allows learners to see an issue from different angles and different perspectives by exploring historiography and how historians have written about events that have happened in the past. The participants claimed that this is done by analysing sources to gain an understanding of the message and point of view of the sources and determining who the authors are and their perspectives on an event. This is illustrated by the following statements:

"That's the easiest. Because all you do is to provide sources from different people. Just finishing *Apartheid* with the grade 9s, you know, I gave them a cartoon from *Die Burger*, where the sun is shining over South Africa - 1948 and the sun is DF Malan's face. And then you give the Freedom Charter of the ANC five years, seven years later, talking about how awful the apartheid

laws are. Then I have witness testimony from District Six, so that's quite easy. If you give them primary sources of different people from History. And you explore it with them, they will be able to disentangle that in fact one thing happens but not everyone sees it in the same way. And that's not that difficult to explain from their own experience either." – Participant 2

"As I've said before, a lot of it is about historiography, to look at how different historians have written about particular events. And how does that influence our understanding of a source. So, I often start my History classes the first time I see them, with E.H. Carr, who said: 'In order to understand the History you must first understand the historian'. And what does that mean to my students? Why must they understand the historian? So that when we look at the historian's point of view, we must first look at who he is or she is in order to determine what perspective that person is coming from. And then just through a lot of source work." - Participant 4

"Multiple perspective skills are that History is not just a single narrative as it was during apartheid; we were only given a single narrative. But that History is obviously multiple narratives, and many different people have different points of view within one time. So that helps pupils grapple with their own narratives. The difficulty that pupils face is understanding reliability and usefulness. Pupils will often say, but a primary source is reliable because the person was there. It takes time to draw pupils into a mature understanding that because the person was there at the time, they will have taken sides in a situation. And so, at the time, there would have been people in the situation having multiple perspectives, whether it was the police in Sharpeville, or the crowd in Sharpeville or the journalists in Sharpeville, that only by cross-referencing those perspectives with hindsight can we have a fully balanced and i.e., reliable perspective. And pupils sometimes battle with that, that someone who wasn't there, i.e., a historian, can be more reliable than somebody that was there." – Participant 9

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According to the literature in Chapter 2, multiple perspectivity focuses on analysing and exploring different perspectives that may exist in History. This entails investigating information by analysing, evaluating, synthesising, and using deductive reasoning. Based on their descriptions and the literature review, most of the participants had a good conceptual understanding of multiple perspectivity. However, Participants 6, 10 and 11 described it as using different resources to find information which included Google, YouTube and social media, while Participant 10 understood it as building empathy and Participant 11 described it as using different research skills. This demonstrates that some of the participants had their own understanding of multiple perspectives.

4.3.1.4   When do learners apply History thinking skills?

According to Maposa and Wassermann (2009) learners are using History thinking skills when they think chronologically by distinguishing between the past, present and future and show a link on how events have occurred over time by engaging in historical analysis and interpretation. This process entails being able to explore and identify different sources of information and assessing the reliability and credibility of the source by asking questions and developing a deep understanding of historical facts and interpreting these facts (Kallaway, 2012).

Most of the participants said that they know whether their learners are using History thinking skills from the written work that is produced by learners in assessment tasks. This includes assessments such as class tests, essays, and projects. Generally, some participants believe that the marks that the learners achieve are an indication that they are using History thinking skills, while others attributed the use of History thinking skills to when learners think like historians, use their learned skills in other subjects and through their participation in debates. Participant 5 explained as follows:

> "You see it in the exam and the test results, in the formal assessment. But I also see it in the questions that they ask. And it says here it is an extract. Maybe they said something else earlier on. So, I am starting to think that with this whole world of fake news, that what we are doing in History is we are teaching them not to be fooled by fake news. Because they are going to say like, okay, so who says this, when did they say it, why did they say it, etc."

According to nine of the participants, they know that their learners are using History thinking skills from the quality of their responses in essay writing and the test results.

> "I know that my learners use historical thinking skills because of the quality of their written responses. When it comes to essays, when it comes to source-based tasks, they can show me that, okay, my learners are understanding the material that I'm giving." – Participant 8

> "I've taught my learners that the moment you walk in my class, you become a historian - the way you think, the way you answer, and the way you analyse things. We always analyse things as historians." – Participant 11

Participant 11 explains that when learners are thinking like and embrace being historians, that is when they know that they are using History thinking skills. This happens when learners are allowed to ask questions and explain myths or stories by providing learners with in-depth information so that they can develop a better understanding of the content. This makes them question what they are taught.

According to Participant 10 they know that their learners are using History thinking skills when they hear from other teachers in other lessons that the learners "come with those things, those historical, critical thinking skills in their subjects". This is confirmed by Participant 6 who said: "The learners bring some of the History thinking skills in subjects like Afrikaans and English when they do their essay writing." This view is supported by Participant 7 who indicated they know that their learners are using History thinking skills particularly in Life Orientation and English. This happens especially in public speaking and debating competitions learners participate in. The participant claims that when the learners are asked questions by the adjudicators, they use History thinking skills in their responses.

> "It comes out in other subjects. Particularly in LO and English. It comes out in their impromptu speeches. We're a very big public speaking school, we win the regional trophies for that. The number of times I've gone to matric speech competitions and suddenly History is coming out of their mouths in response to not just their impromptu speech but in response to a question posed by the adjudicator. I also know that the thinking skills are working in terms of the careers that they're going into." – Participant 7

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According to Participant 9 they know that their learners are using History thinking skills when they can back their statements or answers with evidence and explained as follows:

> "If learners can back up their argument with good evidence, then they are using History thinking skills. But when they are substantiating their evidence wrongly by misinterpreting the evidence, then this indicates that there are gaps in their understanding and their use of History thinking skills." – Participant 9

In summary, Theme 1 shows that there is a general alignment by most of the participants in conceptualising the importance of History thinking skills to the CAPS curriculum. Most of the participants believe that History thinking skills are important and they could describe these skills by using words such as inquiry, research, analysis, investigating and multiple perspectives just to mention a few. Although, the participants do not define these terms or unpack them in detail, they are evident in terms of what is expressed in the NCS-CAPS curriculum. However, there is a misconception that critical thinking is a skill that should be taught in History because it should be happening across all subject disciplines and cannot exclusively be applied to History, but instead these are thinking skills that should be taught across the board to ensure that leaners become critical thinkers. The data suggests that most of the participants have a limited conceptual understanding of historical empathy as a History thinking skill. Most of them believe that it has to do with walking in someone's shoes, showing empathy, being sympathetic or feeling sorry for the historical figures or trying to move away from being too judgemental. The minority of the participants understood historical empathy and defined it as investigating the world views that may have influenced the historical figures at the time. This is different from empathising with the historical figure, but rather trying to understand and investigate History in terms of how and why people acted at the time. Finally, most of the participants had a sound understanding of multiple perspectives and how sources of information can be explored through historiography while three participants had different views of multiple perspectives that was not aligned with the conceptual definition of multiple perspectives according to the literature review in Chapter 2.

4.3.2. Theme 2: Content that matters when teaching History thinking skills

According to the participants there is content that is hard to teach because of the lack of resources. This content includes the following: Ancient History, South African History, the Cold War, Foreign History like China, and the Grade 11 content on the Great Depression. However, Participants 2, 4 and 9 indicated that History thinking skills can be taught with any content covered in the curriculum and they do not have any challenges in this regard. History thinking skills can be taught in any content and any subject if the teacher makes the appropriate sources available to the learners. The participants argued that any content should be analysed and not taught as a story that is being told. The statements below illustrate the support and views that were expressed by Participants 4 and 9.

> "That's quite a hard question for me because as I say, I think it can be done in any subject, in any content. It just requires the teacher to find sources, and to work with them, which for me is one of the most fascinating parts of being a teacher." - Participant 4

> "I don't think it matters. I think any content those skills can be applied to. Because any content in History should be analysed and not just taught as a story. And any matter, any content in History needs multiple perspectives. I can't think of a section in History where there would be a single perspective needed. I think it is very important in any section to have multiple perspectives." - Participant 9

According to Participant 8 it is difficult to teach History thinking skills when it comes to modern and ancient content. The participant indicated that the content in both these cases does not show reliability in the ancient content and the modern content is too recent. This participant argues that it is because historians analyse change over time which is difficult for the learners to comprehend. The participant also believes that ancient History is far removed from the learners and as a result, they struggle to relate or understand it.

> "I would say the most modern and the most ancient. Most ancient because they have no relatability, and the most modern because it is too close. And they struggle to disaggregate their own experience from what they are studying. It would be very difficult to teach 21st century History until we are

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well into the future because you do want them to have that sense of difference. There are similarities across historical periods, but at the end of the day historians analyse change over time. So, you want kids to be able to see that change. And within their historical present it is very difficult for them, especially if they are very young and they have only lived for fifteen years, it is very difficult for them to see big changes within their own lifetime. Whereas the ancient world is so far removed that they really struggle to recreate the world in a way that makes them understand the stakes involved." – Participant 8

According to Participant 3, South African History is the hardest content to teach History thinking skills because there are limited resources. Furthermore, the participant believes that it is much easier to get resources for other topics except for South African History.

"South African History because there's just less resources. So like for example, if I do that silent conversations with the kiddies on American civil rights, the internet has an abundance of interesting stories and photographs. South African History is there, but you just must spend much more time on the internet, you have to go to extra lengths to find as interesting material. In the stress of it all, because it is harder to find, you might then not prepare properly for that lesson, or you might not get the sources you need to make South African History interesting and bring out the skill level of it." – Participant 3

According to Participant 5, the Grade 12 curriculum content is the least conducive to the teaching of History thinking skills because of time constraints as the content needs to be covered to prepare the learners for the final examination. However, the participant did not indicate specific content or any topics.

"I would say matric, purely because of time constraints. But I hope that the basics are there. So, as we are going through the matric work we are saying, but you know, these are this, these are these historians that are saying that, don't forget there are other historians who are saying something different. But you don't have the luxury of like a whole lesson just spent looking at a photograph, you know. You've got to see these things, kind of move through. It is just time constraints; I think that's it." – Participant 5

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According to Participant 6 they find it hard to teach History thinking skills to Grade 8 learners. The participant prefers to teach learners in the FET phase (Grades 10, 11 and 12). The participant is comfortable with this phase because the learners are older and have started to form their own opinions.

> "I think for me it is the grade 8 syllabus. Funny enough, although they seem to be the younger group, for me, maybe it's a personal thing because I prefer teaching the FET phase; I find that I am easier going with them and perhaps because they are at that age where they in some instances have already formulated their opinion about something and they are not finding out what they think about it. So, for me it is the juniors and there is too little in the syllabus. They are barely touching on things." – Participant 6

According to Participant 7, it is particularly difficult to develop History thinking skills when teaching the Cold War. She struggles to teach this content because it is foreign and abstract and therefore it is harder to teach History thinking skills.

> "The Cold War and the end of Cold War because it's foreign. It's foreign, and yes, we all know the struggle between capitalism and communism and then you've got your third party, which is China. They have never covered China, ever. So, the China section is completely foreign content. And I find that where the content is foreign, the thinking skills become harder to teach."

According to Participant 8 it is challenging to teach History thinking skills in topics that the learners struggle to relate with. The participant uses the words "meaningful relationship with us". The participant claims that when they teach foreign topics such as the Ming Empire in China, the learners struggle a lot when they must learn about the Ming Empire in China because they have a different lived experience.

> "It is harder to teach thinking skills in topics that are more likely to be about countries that do not have a meaningful relationship with us. For example, when I teach Ming China, I really struggle, because we are in a community where we do not have access to Chinese people and Chinese culture. Through research we can have that, but it is a struggle, because now you must think about content plus the skills as well." – Participant 8

Participant 11 regards the Grade 11 content focusing on the Great Depression in America as the least conducive to the development of History thinking skills. After I

probed for further clarification, the participant explained that when teaching about the economic crisis in America, one needs to have a general understanding of basic economics. The challenge comes in when a teacher is not knowledgeable about a country's economy, in this case the USA, it becomes challenging especially when learners need to understand what led to the collapse of the economy in 1929. However, the participant argues that if an economist had to explain this process, it would be far easier for the learners to understand. This shows that History has a link to other subjects of discipline and is more than facts, but rather highlights that teacher need to be equipped with wider knowledge outside History and develop an understanding of other subjects that connect to History. The participant explained as follows:

> "Most of the teachers that teach History, economically we are not that wise. We do not know about economies of the countries and everything or what happened. If a learner asks me: 'Sir, what happened, what led to the collapse of the stock exchange?' I will say: '"You know what, one guy said that the price of shares is abnormal, let's stop buying. The idea starts spreading all over the country then people stop buying the shares. That is why it collapsed.' But if you're going to get a guy who is in Economics, he can tell you a lot of things, which means I cannot. The CAPS document maybe…they must have this kind of specialist who can come and explain those type of things…I can tell as a History teacher, politically was very good. But the other part it is difficult." – Participant 11

According to most of the participants there are various reasons that make it hard to teaching History thinking skills. Most of the participants gave different reasons. Two participants said that teaching Grade 12 is their biggest challenge in terms of teaching History thinking skills because they must cover a lot of content in a short period and prepare the learners for their final examination, while some of the participants attributed their challenge to some of the topics that are not relatable to the South African context or due to lack of resources. Three participants said that History thinking skills should be taught across any content and that it should not matter because the skills are important and should be reflected through teaching. According to the literature review in Chapter 2, clearly History thinking skills are important and should be taught in all content, regardless of the topics/themes. Talin (2015) argues that

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History thinking skills must be taught in every content/theme because all content focuses on historical facts; these facts need to be analysed and evaluated. For example, when a teacher teaches an event that happened in the past, they need to do research which requires historical inquiry and focuses on activities including finding answers to the what? when? where? why? who and the how? questions. Historical explanation is very important when learners are learning any content because the learners can analyse the historical facts and are able to make a connection with facts from the past and understand the future. Furthermore, History thinking skills are important because they promote historical reasoning and historical interpretation which is important in discovering historical evidence (Talin, 2015).

4.3.2.1 Curriculum content conducive to teaching History thinking skills

Most of the participants regarded all the content covered by the curriculum as important for teaching History thinking skills. This view is illustrated by Participant 9 as follows:

> "I think any content. If you take the South African example, obviously looking at apartheid, that definitely, but I would say and that is what I find so incredible about History, is you can take any content and you can start to build these skills in." – Participant 9

This was supported by Participant 4 who said:

> "I think they're all relevant. I think you can do it with any particular content that you want to do."

Participant 7 regard the content as irrelevant because History thinking skills are relevant to all content where she described content as a "vessel" through which thinking skills are taught.

> "I think that content is a vessel to teaching skills…to teaching those thinking skills. So quite frankly to me, content is irrelevant. And I think it needs to be varied; there needs to be South African content, there needs to be African content, there needs to be content in terms of the world History. So, I think it must be varied, but the content is the vessel to the skills. It is not about the content actually."

Participant 9 concurred and said:

> "It could be anything. You know the content in History in many ways is the least important. The thinking skills should be the cannon, and the content should be whatever you want. And you can teach the thinking skills with whatever content you'd like.

However, Participant 6 argues that content that deals with social issues such as injustice, slavery or racism is well suited for teaching History thinking skills, whilst Participant 10 regarded content about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as the most conducive, because it is aligned with restorative justice.

> "Social issues, like slavery, okay…racism. We learn South African History all the time. 'I don't want to study it, ma'am.' So, you've got to take what they feel about it and make them understand that there is a relevancy to studying the past." – Participant 6

According to the evidence in the data, most of the participants understand the importance of History thinking skills and are aware that these skills should be taught in any content because these skills are lifetime skills that are applicable regardless of the content being covered. These skills can be used outside History and be applied anywhere. The data suggests that multiple perspectivity and historical empathy are important skills and can and should be taught in any content so that learners are able to make a connection with events that happened in the past, analyse historical sources and evidence that focus on the context, and reading the source to illicit meaning and interpretation from it.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Teaching multiple perspectivity and historical empathy

Most of the participants teach multiple perspectivity by asking questions, exploring different sources, and using multiple narratives of the same event to expose their learners to different perspectives that may exist in respect of historical events. They also develop learners' research skills by expecting them to compare and analyse sources and to use of historiography. However, Participant 10 and Participant 6 understood multiple perspectivity differently. Participant 10 related it to the ability to build the learners' empathy and Participant 6 linked multiple perspectivity to using

different sources to get information which may include, Google, watching documentaries, textbook, current affairs and technology.

According to Participant 1, multiple perspectivity skills are when you can question things that you have believed and provided an example about how many people supported Hitler, including the youth. However, Sophie Scholl and her brother started to form a resistance movement against Hitler and questioned things that were happening in Germany. According to Participant 1 this is an example of how multiple perspectives should be used in History and it is how she would teach her learners to use multiple perspectives.

> "Sophie Scholl and her brother, who had been brought up to support Hitler, had engaged with the Hitler Youth, were firm supporters, and then started to question it, and move from not only questioning to active resistance and losing their lives. So, I think that is how you start to look at the different kind of perspectives and it is important to be able to expose kids to those. So, it is not just one way of thinking but being able to understand that there were a range, a continuum of perspectives and why people adopted them." Furthermore, multiple perspectivity has to do with understanding sources and how they can be different and interpreted differently by different people (Talin, 2015) Participant 9 said they do this by providing the learners with sources which originated from different people and then they explore these primary sources together to elicit meaning and interpretation. Source-based questions are used, and learners are then expected to compare different sources through a discursive essay. Participant 9 believes that discursive essays allow learners to make a stand and to argue their position by providing evidence and reasoning.

According to Participant 4 multiple perspectives explore historiography and how different historians have written about particular events that have happened in the past. Participant 4 explains that this is done by analysing sources to understand the message and the point of view the source is trying to convey and by determining who the author is and what their perspective is or was. Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 teach History thinking skills by using source materials and investigating these source materials, describing it as "sourcing", which means looking at who wrote the source,

the purpose of the source and the main audience the source is targeting. Participant 4 emphasised that close reading is also important in order to develop multiple perspective skills because learners must be able to compare different sources to understand different perspectives that may be expressed or shared about an event or topic and make their own conclusions. The two statements below illustrate most of the views that were expressed by the participants.

> "The way CAPS lays it out, say for example, in the section of nationalism, Grade 11, Middle East, you must try to build the story from the side of the Israelis and Palestinians, and then the kids must be able to see the story, the economic and political and land and that issues, they must be able to see it from different sides, different perspectives. That is what I understand what CAPS wants." – Participant 3

> "Well, I suppose through source material, through looking at sources and well, that's what sourcing is about. You know, sourcing is saying, who wrote the source, why did they write it, who is their audience, and how does that affect our understanding? So, before we even read the source, we source it, who wrote it, and what do we expect that kind of person's perspective to be. And then we do a close reading, and we work out what the perspective is and then we look at something from a different point of view. And then one of the things that I kind of try to get them to do is to say: Does this source B corroborate source A? Or does it contrast with source A? And if so, why? So, we do work around that area." – Participant 4

According to Participant 6, multiple perspectivity is promoted when the textbook is supplemented with resources from Google, YouTube, current affairs, and social media. According to Participant 6, this provides multiple perspectives to learners in their learning, and it allows the teachers to ask the learners about current affair issues that are happening around the world. Participant 6 explained as follows:

> "Obviously we use the textbook, that is our base. We look at other resources like Google, from the internet obviously, YouTube videos about current issues. You know the learners learn a lot from social media: Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. In fact, they often bring those issues to me. We sometimes miss those things, but they know about these things through

social media. The positive side is that they are learning these things from social media: 'What did you learn? What did you hear? What are you guys talking about?' So, for example, when we watched, 'When They See Us', it was an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives."

According to Participant 6 they also teach multiple perspectives by asking the learners questions and exploring various examples and scenarios. She explained as follows:

"Well, let us talk about communism. For example, if you think about what capitalism has done to our country, will communism work in South Africa? Because it will eradicate poverty. So, you must ask the question as a teacher, and you have to be very tolerant of their ideas and perspectives and not have one mind-set and be narrow-minded about it."

Furthermore, the participant said that this also entails exploring a topic in the CAPS curriculum and making it interesting and very current.

"It's taking a topic that is presented to you in the CAPS curriculum but seeing how you can make it interesting and how you can make it current for them. Because I promise you, if you just teach from the textbook, it is going to die."
– Participant 6

Participant 10 describes multiple perspectivity as building on empathy and putting yourself in someone else's shoes and asking questions all the time. Participant 10 provided the following example: "If you don't have a video, you must tell them a story. You must ask questions".

According to the participants they teach historical empathy differently. However, participants 2, 4, 5 and 9 teach historical empathy by using different sources and use multiple perspectives. Participants 2, 6 and 8 teach historical empathy by invoking emotions and focusing on putting themselves in someone's shoes and watching movies. According to Participant 7 they do not teach historical empathy because it is part of their schools' ethos and value system, while participant 1 uses scenarios that involve dramatisation and acting in class. Participants 10 and 11 have a vague idea of historical empathy.

Participants 2, 4, 5 and 9 said that when teaching historical empathy, they use source analysis by providing the learners with different primary sources, for example by

studying speeches and looking at the speech in detail and analysing what the people are saying and recreating their argument through evidence and criticising it by asking learners who would agree with the views and disagree and to show their reasoning in the process.

> "The easiest way to do it is through sources and to give them speeches, or even in the case of the Holocaust there are these wonderful diaries that people in ghettos would hide and bury underground. And to use the words of the people from the time. When I teach the French Revolution, there is always going to be something from Robespierre in his own words, trying to talk about he would justify tyranny, and his use of terror. Even Hitler, there are various things you can use which aren't overtly offensive, but which help to understand his point of view." – Participant 2

> "Okay, one of the things I like to go in depth about, which is not in-depth in the curriculum, is the issue of repression in South Africa. So, I look at two aspects of repression, one is overt or formal repression, which is the laws, and the other is covert repression. And I like to give my students a range of different sources that deal with people in detention, their experiences, so a range of different experiences of people in detention. I use Chris van Wyk's poem *In Detention*. I use graphs that show how many people were in detention. I even give them perpetrators so I could also use a lot of TRC testimony to do that; I've used it also when I teach the TRC. And it's an eye-opening for the kids. Because they come into a Grade 11 or a matric History class saying, oh, we've done apartheid to death. They've never done this. And looking at the experiences of ordinary people as they suffered under apartheid gives them a whole new understanding than when you say, oh, apartheid was a repressive system. So, that's just one example." - Participant 4

Participant 1 explained that when teaching this skill, she normally set up scenarios and allow the learners to engage with the scenario by asking if they agree or disagree with the historical figure's actions. Furthermore, the participant said that they get their learners to role-play some of the events in class which helps to empathise, and they explore the different options at the time. When I asked the participant if it was good to

use role-plays and dramatisation, the response was that there are topics that cannot be dramatised such as the Holocaust. The statement below is from the participant:

> "Well, you can set up a scenario so that the kids can kind of engage with the scenario and say: this is what they might do if they were in that person's position, and then you say this is actually what happened, would you agree or disagree with what the person did? And why? You can get them to empathise by doing dramatisations, you can do a flipped classroom in terms of getting them to empathise with people, to be able to engage in terms of looking at what the options were available to that person at the time." – Participant 1

Participant 5 teaches historical empathy through multiple perspectives by not limiting themselves to the textbook but by introducing other viewpoints and ideas and making learners aware that there are other perspectives by ensuring that there are diverse opinions.

> "As a skill it's about multiple perspectives. And really, it's just about making sure, because it's up to me as the teacher that I move out of the textbook or out of the pack of notes, and I try and introduce other viewpoints and ideas. Another thing that I've noticed, since I've been here of course, is that we have very few children who are not white in this school…or not Jewish, you know, put it that way as well, one or two who are not Jewish as well. It's up to me to bring the other into the classroom. Because there are not going to be other children saying, you know, but that's not my right, do you want to see it from my perspective, etc. I find it's really my responsibility to try and do that. I try to get as much diverse opinions as I can about events." – Participant 5

Participant 6 said that empathy is one of the school's values and as a result they do not teach it.

> "I think that is not necessarily something that I teach, because it comes from our ethos as a school. And I think that we're very lucky in that we have that ethos, because that ethos comes up right from Grade 00. "When I asked the participant about the school's ethos to get more insight into it

the response was: 'Our ethos is about love, caring, kindness, compassion, collaboration. So that's where we're coming from in terms of that."

Participant 9 said they teach this through research and making the learners aware of any biases that they may hold. The participant said that this is done so that learners understand that we have all been perpetrators, this is done by not only looking at apartheid from the perspective of white people being the perpetrators but also looks at black people as perpetrators in acts they had committed. The participant believes that this form of research allows the learners to face History in themselves and to consistently ask questions on how they could have done things better if they were in the same position, the participant said.

> "So, it's also about researching your histories and making yourself vulnerable to the learners by saying to them: 'Guys, I'm also coming from a culture where my great-grandfathers did wrong to others and now I want to expose myself to you so that when we talk about a topic you don't take it personally; we're not saying you the person, we're saying the society did this. But you as an individual have a responsibility to rise and condemn certain things. If you're at the family braai and you hear racism, speak out.' Speak out against it, it's wrong." – Participant 9

According to one of the participants, they teach historical empathy to the learners to understand that historical figures like Hitler are products of their time and they believe that empathy is very important. Furthermore, Participant 10 said they teach the learners to recognise empathy and not to be complicit in it. The participant said:

> "I have no empathy for the white supremacist imperialist capitalist patriarchy. I very much teach them how to recognise that when they're complicit in it. So, speaking about Hitler, I try to make them aware that he's a product of his time. That he was seen as a moderate. That he was Man of the Year in 1938. You know that there's a similarity to Trump. That these are the kind of things nationalists do or whatever, you know, so I think to empathise, it's difficult…I think empathy is a very important skill."

Generally, the participants teach and understand multiple perspectives in a way that promotes History thinking skills. This often entails investigating more than one narrative, historiography that include analysing and evaluating sources, and using

deductive reasoning. Although most of the participants teach multiple perspectivity according to how it is defined in the conceptual framework, the data suggests that in general, the participants do not have an accurate conceptual understanding of historical empathy. While the minority of the participants had a good understanding of historical empathy, most of the participants focus more on invoking emotions in the learners, teaching them not to be too judgemental, teaching learners to place themselves in the shoes of the historical figures and watching movies. This shows that the participants have a different understanding of historical empathy. Historical empathy happens when historians place themselves in the shoes of the historical figures by studying and investigating how they behaved in the past without sympathising with their behaviours or actions. This means that a diversity of sources needs to be studied which may include secondary or primary sources such as speeches, various published books and cartoons about the historical figure and/or event. Such sources can provide insight into the views at the time and provide multiple perspectives of the historical figures, aiding us to understand that different narratives may exist.

The data also shows that some participants may have a different understanding of historical empathy. For example, Participant 7 views empathy as an ethos that is shared by their school and claims that this has to do with "love, care, truth". This refers to empathising with people and understanding their emotions and by being able to see their situation from their perspectives and feeling the same emotions as them.

4.3.3.1 Challenges when teaching History thinking skills

According to Massey (2015) teachers encounter challenges when they must teach History thinking skills. Some of these challenges are related to evaluating History texts and the ability to teach source analysis skills because some teachers do not know how to teach these skills.

The participants encounter different challenges when teaching History thinking skills. Some of the challenges that were highlighted are the following: scaffolding of skills; the mark driven approach of the Department of Basic Education; time constraints; learners who experience barriers to learning; poor reading comprehension; and overcrowded classrooms. Four participants highlighted that their biggest challenge is

teaching learners who hold preconceived ideas and two participants had challenges to teach History thinking skills due to lack of resources at the schools they teach at.

According to four of the participants (Participants 3, 5, 7 and 9) one of the challenges they encounter is to teach History thinking skills to learners who have different perspectives and views which they bring from home. They then need to question the views that the learners hold and must understand their individual narratives. These participants indicated that they challenge this by making the learners aware that people have justifications for their actions even when it is perceived to be irrational, but they need to understand their world view without necessarily accepting their actions. These participants claim that these views are shared by parents at home and as a result, the learners bring them to class. This is explained by Participant 7 as follows:

> "Certainly bias. And that bias does not come from the child, it comes from home. We sometimes encounter a racist attitude which we must unpack and sometimes you have uncomfortable…well, uncomfortable but productive conversations."

According to Participant 11 the biggest challenge that they encounter is the overcrowded classes. Participant 11 explained as follows:

> "I'm teaching a black school, a former Model C-school. Classes [are] overcrowded. [In] 2019 I had 114 learners in one grade."

In addition, the participant further explained that it is very difficult to give the learners individual attention or to have one-on-one sessions because of the large numbers. The participant also argues that the learners' socio-economic backgrounds also play a role in their learning ability. Most learners come from broken families.

According to Participant 10 the biggest challenge when teaching History thinking skills is the lack of reading among the learners. This participant claims that the learners just want to sit and relax and listen to them talk. He explained as follows:

> "Number one, they do not read, and they just want to relax and listen to me talk. And they are happy to do that."

Participant 8 related the challenges they encounter to a lack of teaching resources and materials. This participant's school lacks teaching technology and there are no

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projectors which make it hard to teach. Furthermore, the same participant claimed that the learners steal laptops, so bringing a laptop to school would be a risk as the school will not replace it if it is stolen. The school's resources are very limited, resulting in inadequate and restricted access to printing of additional materials such as worksheets or source-based work. This impedes the teaching of History thinking skills.

> "The challenges I encounter include the lack of technology. We have a serious challenge regarding projectors. We do not have projectors in our school and then the learners steal the laptops. So those things, in terms of technology. I am reluctant to bring my laptop to school because it's a catch-22 situation, if I lose my laptop then it's my fault. I mean, the school can assist in so far as trying to retrieve the laptop, but the school can't buy me a new laptop. It's at my own risk, you see. So, I am very reluctant. So now, that means certain historical thinking skills, the learners lose out on them. Another key challenge is maybe when I print material, I have to be mindful of, okay, I can't just print a 50-page worksheet." – Participant 8

Participant 6 indicated that learners often have some barrier to learning or personal problems which adversely affect their level of participation in class. She explained as follows:

> "Learners who have a block and perhaps challenges that they come with to class, and then they are preoccupied. And then, you know, you are struggling. If they are unwell, you can see they have had a bad day. I think it's more the learners' personal experiences."

Participant 6 also experienced the time pressure to complete the Grade 12 syllabus as an obstacle to teaching History thinking skills. Furthermore, she believes that when teaching topics like African History, they encounter challenges in teaching the topic because there are limited resources and teachers are required to develop their own resources. She explained as follows:

> "Time constraints with matric. I can't say that I struggle with the other grades because I am so embedded in it from my lectures. We started with looking at Ancient Egypt and we did historical thinking. I have spent many years looking for sources and I know all the great websites and my greatest joy probably is designing a paper. Now I am working on Africa, for example,

because Africa is finally being made compulsory for Paper 2. And there are no resources in terms of teaching it as a source-based section. So now I am spending a lot of time developing my own on that."

According to Participant 2 learners' attitudes towards the subject influence their receptiveness to be taught thinking skills. Most of the learners are purely driven to achieve good marks. As a result, they enquire whether the work they are expected to do would count towards their marks. They are only interested in facts and what they must learn because they perceive History as a subject that only requires rote learning. Participant 2 explained:

> "They ask: 'Is it for marks? What is the point?' (*laughs*) Because they buy into History just being facts and what they must learn. Generating buy-in amongst students who see school as a hoop-jumping or box-ticking exercise is difficult. Unless it is for marks, or will be assessed, which immediately puts a brake on how much imagination they will apply to any task. It is quite difficult to buy-in because they buy-in to History as fact rote learning. So, anything that deviates from that, and they get nervous. They reason: 'I should be able to just learn and get good marks but now I have to think and maybe get marks, and maybe the answer could be this or it could be that. Just give me a structure and I will learn the structure'."

This is supported by Participant 1 who explained that it is difficult to teach thinking skills because the learners are very mark-driven at her school, and they do not challenge themselves enough to develop History thinking skills as they only seek to get the right answers from the teacher. Participant 1 claimed that it was easier to teach History skills at her previous schools. She explained as follows:

> "They will accept that there can be two answers, as long as you can attach marks to it and show how they will mark it, or you will mark it. But they don't willingly put themselves out there unless there is some obvious end goal in terms of assessment."

Participant 1 regards scaffolding of skills as the most difficult challenge when teaching History thinking skills (Endacott, 2013). Scaffolding is the process of introducing tasks and questions by starting with easier tasks and slowly moving to harder and challenging questions and tasks. The aim is to first build a learner's confidence with

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easier tasks and questions and to allow them to master the basics before they move to the more challenging tasks. This process allows the learners to develop new skills and knowledge while they are learning. She explained that critical thinking skills are difficult to teach and therefore she encourages learners to engage critically with the content because the learners are used to rote learning. She explained as follows:

"Well, you throw out the challenges. I found that at the school that I'm at presently, where there was a strong tradition of rote learning, that for example with the Grade 9s who had not been exposed to it as much, have thrived in terms of an approach that encourages critical thinking. But I'm dealing with some Grade 11 girls who have found it exceptionally difficult to develop critical thinking because they have got used to the rote learning."

Participant 1 further experienced learners have learning gaps because History skills were not taught to them in lower grades. She regards this as a major challenge. She explained as follows:

"One of my challenges is that teachers in the junior grades have not taught historical thinking skills well. I have expectations that they will come in with knowledge and I must virtually start from the beginning. They have either been taught badly or not at all. I tell you my experience as a History educator at Wits and observing History lessons and so on, is that some History teachers or even student teachers feel far more confident focusing on content than on developing skills. So, some of them avoid it. That is a challenge that I have almost got to start from the beginning."

The participants therefore experience different challenges when they teach History thinking skills. Although the majority attributed this challenge to the perceived ideas that the learners bring to class because of the influence they get from home, the challenges and the experiences vary. Some challenges are commonly shared by the participants.

According to Nasson (2009), most teachers rely a lot on traditional teaching methods where they are the giver of knowledge, and the learners listen and absorb everything. Nasson (2009) further argues that these teachers have challenges when they must teach History thinking skills because they rely a lot on the textbook and memorised learning techniques (Nasson, 2009). Massey (2015) argues that teachers have relied

on memorised learning a lot and they had to challenge how they teach in the 21st century. One of the challenges that Massey (2015) identifies is reading texts for understanding. For example, when most History teachers are going through source materials and analysis, they do not unpack the source for the learners to identify key words, to understand any concepts, to look for symbols in the source, to understand the source for meaning and the message. This process is often rigorous and requires a teacher that understands how to do this, especially for learners who are not English speakers (Massey, 2015). According to Boadu (2015), most teachers rely on rote learning and do not teach History in an engaging way that promotes History thinking skills. As a result, learners are expected to regurgitate what they have learned through repetition. The data shows that the teachers experience various challenges, and they are not trained enough when they are student teachers to overcome these challenges. As a result, the promotion of History thinking skills are not taking place.

4.3.3.2   What History thinking skills are taught to learners?

A wide range of History thinking skills are taught by the participants. The most common skills that were identified are: source analysis, which is also referred to as source work or source skills; interpretation skills; essay writing skills; research skills; and the building of an argument. Only Participant 1, Participant 5 and Participant 6 identified critical thinking as a skill needed in History, while only Participant 3 identified historical empathy. According to most participants, source analysis skills are the most important because learners are introduced to different sources when they study History, and they need to be in a position where they can analyse these sources. These History thinking skills are aligned to multiple perspectivity.

Most of the participants regard essay writing skills as important, because these skills teach learners to debate and are conducive to the development of critical thinking and teach learners to corroborate sources. Essay writing skills are aligned to multiple perspectivity and historical empathy because these skills allow learners to develop rigorous debating skills as they analyse more than one narrative and draw conclusions from using deductive reasoning. Included is the ability to build an argument by looking at different interpretations when different types of information are presented. Most of the participants view this as an important skill, because multiple perspectivity and

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historical empathy are essential for critical analysis, especially when it comes to interpreting information and understanding the historiography of sources. They believe that learners should be able to come to different conclusions and think differently by taking a stand and showing how they can argue or reach a conclusion by analysing sources critically.

Sourcing, contextualising sources, reading sources, and interpreting the usefulness and reliability of sources is the most common History skill taught to learners. Learners are also taught interpretative skills by investigating who wrote the source and the purpose and the intention of the source, to determine whether a source is reliable or not. This means the authenticity of a source should be tested by exploring other sources. The following statement by Participant 2 represents the views of most of the participants:

> "The most obvious one is, you can have the same set of facts and reach two differing conclusions, and therefore make two different arguments. So, the way in which facts can be arranged and interpreted in different ways to make different arguments, that must be a primary skill that you teach in History. Where History really wins as a subject from others is that, unlike English, your arguments matter, or they have some material basis in the world. It's not pure opinion. So, you must master some set of facts in support of an argument, right? But unlike science, there are ranges of arguments that can be made from a set of facts. So, I think that's the most important thing to do."

According to Participants 1, 5 and 6, the most common History thinking skill they teach to their learners is critical thinking. The participants link critical thinking to the ability to debate current affairs during class discussions. Multiple perspectives and historical empathy are relevant to the promotion of critical thinking as a general skill that is meant to happen across all subjects. This is explained by Participant 6 as follows:

> "The History thinking skills that I emphasise is critical thinking. That one is a big skill that is part of my class, and we do this through debates, and we do this by using our local context as an example, or daily life, real life, to show them that while we're talking about the text how it relates to their lives."

Participant 9 explained that they use *Habits of the Mind* as a strategy to stimulate empathy, as well as cause and effect maps, the bridge map, visible thinking skills, and the bubble map. According to Participant 9 these are critical learning skills that should be taught to learners. Participant 9 also believes that these skills can be taught together with source analysis skills. The quote from Participant 9 shows that the participant teaches historical empathy and multiple perspective skills by using various tasks and activities that elicit these skills in one way or another.

> "So, I teach the *Habits of Mind*, and one of the habits is empathy - I'm thinking about your thinking. A lot of those critical thinking skills go with an analysis of sources. But I also teach critical thinking maps and I think those are very useful because they are maps that help pupils to compare and to contrast. There are maps that help pupils see cause and effect, and there are other maps that help pupils to understand the context, so the bridge map would allow the pupils to have an understanding by comparing it to something else. I also use the bubble map, which helps pupils understand a person and what influences created them."

Participant 3 focuses strongly on empathy and describes it as the ability to put yourself in the shoes of different historical characters by looking at events from different angles. This includes multiple perspectivity, critical thinking, and exploring source-based work by examining different perspectives. In this way the reliability and usefulness of sources can be determined, and learners can be asked to present their views on what they have learned.

> "There's a lot of empathy (*laughs*). Empathy is like getting them to put themselves in the shoes of different historical characters, seeing things from different sides. So maybe that is multiple perspectivity, critical thinking in the sense of being able to argue from different points of view. A lot of sourcebased work where you are looking at different perspectives and having to compare and to contrast. Then there's the CAPS skills of reliability and usefulness and that." – Participant 3

The data indicates that the participants teach a variety of History thinking skills. Although there is a range of skills taught, most participants believe in teaching source

analysis skills for various reasons. This is aligned with interpreting sources and exploring the multiple perspectives that may exist when studying an event in History.

According to Nersater (2019), developing learners' ability to evaluate and interpret sources is very important because it develops their reasoning, debating and thinking skills which enhance their perspectives and help them to understand society better. In the 21st century where there is fake news and a lot of information in the media, it is very important for learners to be able to evaluate the reliability of sources and the information they are given. This means that critical reading and reasoning is important. Furthermore, learners need to be able to differentiate between information, evidence, corroborated and unsubstantiated claims and to evaluate the interpretations and perspectives (Nersater, 2019).

When learners evaluate sources, they also need to move away from looking at sources as plain information but rather should interpret the source in relation to their own surroundings. For example, there are sources that focus on current affair issues like conflict in Israel and Palestine. The source might highlight issues of racism and when learners read through the sources, they can make connections with these sources and relate them to South Africa or any country that has experienced racism. Therefore, sourcing, corroboration, and contextualisation (Nersater, 2019).

4.3.3.3 Strategies to engage learners when teaching History thinking skills

Teaching History thinking skills is important in the promotion of 21st century learning where learners move away from rote learning to constructive learning and embark on an inquiry process in their own learning. Thus, teaching and learning History need to be engaging and not passive. Topics and issues must be explored rigorously by using the relevant History thinking skills that will allow learners to upskill themselves.

The participants identified various ways to engage learners when teaching History thinking skills. Some of these views are the following: learn by doing, different types of assessments; active learning; watching documentaries and videos; storytelling; critical analysis of sources; discussions of current affairs; source analysis; and research projects. Source analysis featured prominently in the data and discussions of current affairs also featured prominently.

Three of the participants, namely Participant 6, Participant 5 and Participant 8, indicated that they get learners engaged by discussing current issues and linking the topic of discussion to the curriculum content they are teaching at that moment. For example, Participant 6's view is that when learners watch recent series such as "*This is Us*" which focus on racism, it could be linked to the curriculum in studying topics like apartheid and Pseudo Scientific racism in Australia. The documentary encourages learners to become engaged in class discussions, allowing learners to become more engrossed as they ask questions. When this happens, the teacher steps back as the sole provider of knowledge. According to Participant 6 they introduce controversial statements about what is happening at the school or in society and link it to what is being covered in class at that moment. This sparks debate in class which is then used as an opportunity to connect with the past and show relevance in the subject.

> "I've learnt that current issues are very useful…documentaries, anything that's controversial, and I draw on that to present to the kids, to create discussion; they love discussing in lessons, they love questioning, and I think as a History teacher I've learnt over the years not to stand in front and prescribe. We know what is given to us and what is supposed to be taught in the syllabus but using what is given to us in the syllabus and being able to expand on it. What was very interesting for me this year, which I used to my advantage, is we learnt about racism with the Grade 11s, and with the series that Oprah presented, "*When They See Us*" It was the four-part episode that was shown on Netflix and that got attention worldwide. I watched it with my kids at home and decided that this would add value to my learners, my Grade 11 learners, and I presented that to the class." – Participant 6

Two participants, Participant 2 and Participant 4, provide learners with sources that are contentious to encourage them to ask more questions about the topic they are learning about. The process focuses on source analysis skills and unpacking whether a source is reliable or not. Participant 4 encourages learners to investigate the purpose of sources and to discover the people who share their views on historical events by asking why, when, who and where questions. Participant 4 argues that teachers must

provide learners with such opportunities so that they can develop in their thinking and interrogate what they learn.

"I was teaching my kids about Australian racial policies, and I gave them four sources. One was a speech made by the first aboriginal minister in parliament in Australia. So immediately you think this person is reliable. She's a minister and she's aboriginal. And she talks about the Flora and Fauna Act. Up to 1967 aboriginals were not classified as human beings; they were classified as flora and fauna under this Act. The second source is an article in which a journalist quotes her. It looks as if those two sources are reliable. The journalist is simply quoting an aboriginal minister, a former educator and so forth. The third source was taken from a blog by someone called Royce. Immediately my students say: 'No, we are not going to trust this guy, it's a blog.' I said: 'Just read the source first, but it's okay to be sceptical.' Royce says there was never an Act called the Flora and Fauna Act and he goes on to give very clear evidence saying that there were several discriminatory laws and that they have been treated as part of the fauna, but they were never part of an Act. And the fourth source is written by a university honours student who has researched this, and he verifies what Royce says. The learners were thrown because they thought that they should trust the minister - after all, she was an aboriginal - and did not trust Royce because it is from a blog. But his evidence was much more reliable than her evidence. They were completely fascinated by this. It's a very small point and it's not really in the curriculum, but I wanted them to think deeply about how people's lived experience can influence their understanding of the past." – Participant 4

According to Participant 7, storytelling is one of the most effective ways of engaging learners when teaching History thinking skills during lessons. The participant claims that these stories have a dramatic effect on the learners. Furthermore, 'think-pairshare' and a jigsaw puzzle are activities that ensure that learners are active in their thinking, and they engage with their peers in class.

"The first thing I think is to tell the story - to give the content and tell the story. And girls love the drama, so we look at the dramatic aspects in terms of the

initial story. And then we have a look at various sources. For every little section that we do there's a set of sources; we sit together, and we analyse those sources, using various questioning techniques to draw out the information. We also use thinking strategies like 'think-pair-share', and 'jigsaw', basically so that all the thinking is not coming from me." – Participant 7

Participant 9 indicated that certain activities can be used to engage learners when teaching History thinking skills. Some of these activities are visual in nature. Participant 9 believes that visual stimulation promotes critical thinking and that it can be used when analysing sources such as photographs or cartoons. The participant holds the view that this allows learners to read the sources closely by searching for symbols and meaning. This also entails using an activity known as 'Think, See and Wonder' where the learner is given a visual source and they are asked five things on what they see, think and wonder about the visual source. This stimulates the learner's curiosity and engages them with what they are learning. Furthermore, Participant 9 uses critical thinking maps such as flow maps, cause-and-effect maps, essay writing skills and guiding questions to prompt empathy. Participant 9 argues that these critical thinking skills are aligned with the History NCS-CAPS curriculum and aid learners to contextualise sources, to illicit empathy, to look at different sides of an argument, and to see a cause and effect.

> "For me, visible thinking skills help critical thinking because pupils will often battle to analyse photographs or visual documents like cartoons, which require close reading. And I know they are visual, but close reading gets of a visual gets the pupil to annotate what they see, and not just look at it at face value but look at it in depth. And then also annotate for symbolism in cartoons. What does the symbol mean? Also, to consider the attribution, so that a pupil gets an understanding beyond just that first quick look at a photograph or quick look at a cartoon. I think that helps them understand the creation of people and their choices at the time. And then discussing, getting pupils to think in pairs around sources with guided questions can lead to empathy. So you can also use a visible thinking technique where you ask pupils as they think about a source, if it's a visual source, to take the part of the wall, if it is the Berlin Wall, or take the part of the soldiers on

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one side of the wall and the people on the other side of the wall, and think more in-depth about, for example, what would the soldiers be thinking?"

Participant 10 engages learners by means of videos, class acting through role-play and encouraging learners to "think outside the box". Story telling engages the learners with the content, especially when the stories relate to historical figures that the learners know. Doing "formative stuff" is also important in developing History thinking skills during lessons. The participant does not explain or discuss what is meant by formative stuff, but it seems as if this participant relies on formative activities and assessments (assessments for learning) to develop the History thinking skills of the learners. Furthermore, the participant also believes that everything that is done must be content driven and playing games in class in which concepts from topics they were taught are used, is also regarded as useful.

> "I think one of the best ways, although there are many ways, I think we can't discount the use of videos and getting them to interact or giving them those tasks where they have to embody. Using lots of theatre-type stuff I think works excellently - getting them to go outside the box. And you can't be predictable. You must switch up the flow. But I think also what they love is stories. If you know cool stories about people in History, it makes them want to know more. So, I think a combination of those things. You don't always have time to do the fun stuff, the formative, like in this stuff, I am very anti the kind of structure, what-what, but sometimes that language can help. Some of those formative things are very good and you see a difference in the child, but at the end of the day it is results. And now you will feel like [swear word], I am wasting time doing these things, they're preparing to do this talk show and they enjoy it. 'Sir, it's fine. We will make a rap.' They make a rap, but it must be content driven. So that is what I love doing with them, like this little 30 second game." – Participant 10

Based on the evidence above, the participants use different strategies to engage their learners when they teach History thinking skills. This ranges from source analysis, role plays, drama, historical empathy, and various tasks such as thinking maps, visible thinking, current affairs, research projects and assessments. According to the data that

has been presented, source analysis and historical empathy can be used as strategies to promote History thinking skills.

According to Hakim (2018), activities like thinking maps and visible thinking are important for meaningful learning and reflective thinking. Furthermore, thinking maps are tools that can be used to provide visual support and are often used to stimulate thinking (Hakim, 2018). The thinking maps move away from traditional methods of taking notes. However, thinking maps are used to promote cognitive skills and how learners form their thinking. Therefore, thinking maps are not strategies for promoting History thinking skills but rather focus on visual thinking. Current affairs can be used to stimulate learners and to get them engaged on what is happening around them and in the global society but does not focus on the promotion of History thinking skills, while research projects can be used to promote and engage learners. However, this depends on the research project and the investigation that the learner needs to research.

4.3.3.4   Activities most suited to teaching History thinking skills

Seven participants regard "working through sources" as the best way to develop learners' History thinking skills because learners get to engage with original and authentic History. Participant 4 articulated her view as follows:

> "You're engaging with people who lived in the past, so it should be a mixture of primary and secondary [sources – own insertion]. The activities that are suitable for teaching historical thinking skills include source-based analysis because now you're asking the learners to interpret the source, and to give their own critical perspective on the source."

Participant 5 highlighted the use of newspapers, films, documentaries, cartoons and photographs as examples of sources which could be used when teaching History thinking skills.

> "I think you can use everything. I think we can use newspapers, we can use films, documentaries, we can use cartoons and photographs. Photographs are always lovely because what's there, what's just outside the photograph, etc.? This

generation is very visual, so I love to use a lot of visuals with them. But everything, you can use absolutely everything." – Participant 5

According to Participant 6, discussions and group work are important in teaching History thinking skills. The learners find this very interesting and stimulating, especially when the discussions are preceded by videos. Participant 6 argued that using different sources is important because different sources can show different perspectives:

"Discussions and group work, they find that very interesting. Visual sources, like watching a movie that's very relevant, current issues. Exposing them to these things by watching a YouTube video, different opinions about the topic, you know. Using different sources, I think is very important, because it is what History is about, it is different sources presenting different perspectives. Cartoons are also very interesting. The Zapiro cartoons, for example."

According to Participant 2 essay writing skills are very important. However, the participant claimed that source skills should be far more important than writing essays because historians are trained to analyse sources through interpretation and understanding multiple perspectives. The participant said:

"In the context of the exam that we prepare them for, probably discursive essay, which is not really what historians do. Sources should be better. But again, because sources are assessed as the easy go-to marks in South Africa, they're not assessed properly and you can't really go into the depth you want to, lest you confuse them and hurt them down the line. By teaching them properly they will analyse them in ways that will yield lower marks when they're in matric. So, it should be sources. And as I say, marking A level, the hardest paper out of the four by far is the source analysis. And that's what historians do. But unless you are willing to have sources as the hard component of your assessment, because South Africans tend to struggle to write essays, especially since most South Africans writing exams aren't mother tongue speakers of English."

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According to Participant 7 the most important skill is informed debate. The participant describes this as a key, because once the learners have gone through the content and different sources, an informed debate is held in class during which learners respectfully share their different views. The participant said:

> "That's a hard one. For me History would be an informed debate. So, we've gone through the work, we've gone through the sources, now we have an informed debate where we're respectful, where we respect each other's opinions, where we respect the speaker, and don't talk over the speaker."

The data also indicated essay writing as a valuable activity to develop History thinking skills because it allows room for expression of ideas and perspectives and the development of arguments. More specifically, discursive and research essays are good because the learners get to choose their research topic and work with source materials. Discursive essays are viewed as important preparation for the final examination. However, Participant 2 think this is a limitation to teaching History thinking skills because this it only prepares the learner to write the final examination.

Participant 9 identified a list of activities that are suited to teach History thinking skills:

> "Just to reiterate, the thinking with empathy, I love the History thinking maps. I mean, they are not History thinking maps, but they are thinking maps that are used in History. Particularly the 'single bubble', the 'double bubble', and the 'flow maps'. I love visible thinking skills, such as 'See-Think-Wonder' and 'Connect-Extend-Challenge'. The pupils are given a source and they need to say what they connect to because of their prior knowledge."

Participant 10 holds the view that when the learners develop their own content, the development of History thinking skills will be cultivated. The participant believes that when the learners create their content from concepts that have been taught to them, they become creative and produce their own knowledge. Participant 10 explained as follows:

> "I would love, and I have tried to get them to make their content. Because they are very good and they are very skilful, they have more skills than we have in certain things. So, if you give them a few contents, let's say videos, and say: 'Hey man, screengrab some of the useful stuff, put some stuff

together'. When they produce their knowledge basically, I think that is the most useful. When they feel like they own something, they have a sense of ownership, that is the best. Because it is not like you are trying to fill up that empty vessel, it is really dealing that pedagogy of the oppressed, you know, it is a genuine kind of teaching moment."

As shown in the evidence, the participants regard working with sources as the most suited activity for promoting History thinking skills. This shows the importance of historiography and source analysis which entails determining if a source is reliable or not, whether it has been cross referenced against other sources and the background of the author of the source and his or her intention and the audience he or she is aiming at. Primary sources also show learners the importance of History so that they can make a connection with what they are learning to the views, events and experiences of the past by developing analytical skills and interpreting what they read and learn. Working with sources is very important to understand the past in terms of how it can be examined and interpreted and how History can be constructed by investigating sources through analysis (Depaepe, Havere, Wils & Verschaffel, 2018). However, Depaepe et al. (2018) argue that studying History is not only about understanding the past, but also focusing on relevant skills that can be used to help learners to interpret the past and examine it through primary and secondary sources. Learners should be able to apply their reasoning when they examine sources. This process is known as "reasoning with sources" which entails selecting information from a source and using it to support a claim. Reasoning about sources means that learners should be able to critically analyse and evaluate sources by interrogating the reliability of the source by understanding who wrote it, why it was written, the message of the source and the context, just to mention a few (Depaepe et al., 2018).

The research that was conducted by Depaepe et al. (2018) suggested three key strategies which focus on sourcing, contextualising and corroboration. Sourcing is exploring the author of the source and evaluating the content to answer a research question. Contextualisation allows learners to review sources within their broader historical and societal context. Corroboration allows learners to compare and contrast multiple texts on the same event by exploring if there are any similarities or contradictions by investigating if the source is reliable, for example by investigating if

there is an account of balance, i.e., is the source written from one perspective or are there other perspectives that support that claim, if the source has been cross referenced, factual and nor biased and if the source does not use persuasive or emotive language (Depaepe et al., 2018).

4.3.4 Theme 4: The most important skill to teach

The participants were asked which History thinking skill they regard as the most important one and they had to justify why this was the case. There were various answers given by the participants. Some of the skills that were identified to be important are the following: critical thinking, persuasive argumentation, source analysis, multiple perspectives, social skills, empathy, debating skills, and curiosity. However, the two most common skills the participants identified were historical empathy and multiple perspectives, while two participants believed that all History thinking skills are equally relevant when teaching History.

According to three of the participants (Participant 1, Participant 3 and Participant 6) the most important skill is empathy, because it teaches learners to be less judgmental and they learn more about tolerance. For example, Participant 6 said:

> "If you can live in someone else's shoes, you would be less judgemental, you would be less condescending and you would have a good sense of tolerance."

Furthermore, participants argue that this skill is important to build relationships amongst learners. Participant 3 explained:

> "I will say empathy because my personal politics and beliefs are very much that emotions need to be a part of learning. So, an engagement with each other is critical to learning as well. I like what that skill offers a classroom."

According to Participants 4 and 5, multiple perspectivity is the most important skill because there is more than one perspective to an event and people need to understand that if other perspectives are considered there would be less conflict. This skill promotes the use of source analysis. Participant 8 explained as follows:

> "For me, the most important skill is source analysis. Source analysis is important because if learners can get to analyse sources, they can be able

to latch on to the other skills. Because basically History is about dealing with evidence."

Participant 5 said:

"You don't have to agree but just to be conscious of the fact that you are not the only person with this perspective on an event. I think we would have a lot less conflict. I don't know…my thinking."

According to Participant 2 persuasive argumentation is the most important skill because it helps to improve learners writing skills and they can learn how to argue and take a stand and show their argument through evidence and facts. Participant 2 said:

"Probably persuasive argumentation. The essay is a blunt force instrument but at the same time you realise quite quickly, even in a school environment, that teachers of other subjects are not very good at writing or putting forward their argument. So, it is quite a rare commodity in a world of SMS texts and emojis, to be able to put forward a point of view cogently based on available facts. So, I do think that is probably the most useful and probably the easiest to teach as well." Participant 2

The ability to analyse is regarded by Participant 11 as the most important History thinking skill learners need to develop. This participant explains as follows:

"I think it's analysing. It's research, but the top of it is analysing because you can't just research without analysing. When analysing you are going to ask questions; you are going to get answers. So, I think that is the most important one."

According to two of the participants, all History thinking skills are important, and they are all relevant and no skill should be taught at the expense of others. Participant 8 explained:

"I don't think you could take one of those skills out of the equation. Because you can't teach empathy without teaching analysis. You can't teach cause and effect without analysing the causes and the effects. By and large, I would say that it is not one above the other. What worries me is that we do sometimes teach one and neglect another. Whereas for me, History must

be taught holistically and critically and in a historiographical fashion as well."
This view was supported by Participant 4 who said:

I don't think there is a particular one, but I would say that you need always to be able to place a source, an event, in context. If you don't understand that context you are going to struggle to understand what the source is trying to say. So, context for me is very, very important. But I don't know if I would say it is like the most, but I do believe if you don't have context you are going to struggle."

According to the evidence above, there are different skills that are taught by the participants. The three most important skills are empathy, multiple perspectives and source analysis. Empathy in this context is different from historical empathy as it focuses on being less judgemental and putting yourself in someone else's shoes and understanding people's emotions. This shows that different participants hold a different view of empathy as opposed to historical empathy. However, multiple perspectivity and source analysis are also seen as important History skills because they move away from one narrative in History to explore different sides to a story by using different sources to come to conclusions.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Support to struggling learners

The data indicates that various strategies are used to support learners who struggle to develop and understand History thinking skills. Generally, the participants seem willing to go the proverbial extra mile to assist their learners by arranging one-on-one sessions with them. Most of the participants scaffold the content into the source material. For example, five participants indicated that they help their learners develop source analysis skills and simultaneously develop reading comprehension skills by making learners underline words or concepts that they do not understand and then requiring them to write the definition. However, these participants also indicated that the learners do not enjoy this activity and show little interest to understand the difficult concepts that they encounter. Participant 10 explained as follows:

"I think it is the same things that they teach throughout in all the grades. That, you know, comprehension skills, it is those things that you have got to take time to get there. When you realise you read and you didn't understand

a word or you are not sure of that word, stop, underline, look up. Keep doing that. If you keep doing that, and you do the work of writing down the definition, writing your sentence. If you do the work, it gets easier, because you can help yourself. Now if you do not, it is difficult to help yourself, you feel defeated. I can understand why they don't because they don't enjoy the content, so they are not bothered to do it."

Providing a glossary with definitions to explain the meaning of words and concepts learners do not understand is deemed as particularly helpful when the learners read the attribution of a source because the attribution provides the context and scene of the source, which in turn provides background for learners to understand what the source is about. In this way a culture of reading is promoted and developed in the classroom. According to Participant 8, reading is a life skill that is required to interpret the message of a source and to understand how language is used. For example, how to analyse a pun and make sense of any double meaning from visual sources such as cartoons. Participant 4 and Participant 5 indicated that analysis of cartoons is helpful for English second language speakers because they take more time to understand visual sources than English first language speakers.

Participant 4, Participant 5 and Participant 8 provide guiding questions to their learners and these questions are scaffolded according to the different levels of Bloom's taxonomy. The participants explained that level one questions look for understanding, level two is analytical, and learners are expected to analyse the source by investigating its reliability which leads to higher-order thinking. According to Blooms taxonomy there are six categories that are aimed at scaffolding cognitive skills so that learners can develop incrementally from one skill to the next. The categories are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation according to Bloom's original taxonomy. The categories progress from simple to complex questions (Soozandehfar & Adeli, 2016). According to Soozandehfar & Adeli (2016), knowledge and comprehension questions focus largely on recall and understanding, while application to evaluation questions deal more with complex problems that require analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Soozandehfar & Adeli, 2016). This process is aligned to multiple perspectivity, source analysis skills and historical empathy because when studying History, the process of historiography is important in understanding how to analyse a source, interpret sources and different perspectives by evaluating and

coming to a conclusion. The statement below from Participant 4 illustrates the views expressed by the participants. "So, first I would say that if there are difficult words in the source to provide a little glossary. I don't have a problem even in an exam if someone asks me what the meaning of a word is. Why should they not know the meaning of the word? So, I make sure that it's possible for students to understand what they are reading. If they don't understand it in terms of a language deficit, that's easily correctable. Then I think the questions must guide them. I think you need to start off with what I call level one questions which are kind of testing understanding and content and content knowledge in the source. Once they can do that you then move on to a more analytical approach, to the level two questions, mostly why, using analysis. And then move on to higher-level thinking which is making judgments about a source.

So that's where you're asking: Is it reliable? Is it useful?"

According to Participants 3, 7 and 8, one-on-one sessions and engagements are helpful in assisting learners who are struggling to develop source analysis skills. Participant 8 explained as follows:

"I think it is important to isolate the incident or to isolate the struggles and sit with the learners and give them a one-on-one engagement. Giving them that one-on-one engagement will help them to maybe understand. Because some learners, even if another learner speaks in class, when I explain it better, they get it, but when it is just the learner speaking, giving the example, they do not understand it."

This is supported by Participant 7 who said:

"Okay, I think a one-on-one lesson would be essential, and then I think you also need to look at underlying factors. Is this the child's second language? Is she struggling with reading? Is it because she's not comprehending the source that she is not able to access what that source is saying? I think that that's the first thing you would need to look at. And I think that one-on-one attention is really the only way to do it, and we sit down, and we have a look at the source together and we work out, we decode the source and work out what the source is saying. I think that History is a problem, particularly the IEB History is a problem, because

you can tell in marking which are your English home language children, and which are your second language children. Because they perhaps haven't grasped the source as well as the English home language children."

The data suggests that best way to help learners develop source analysis skills is through improving their reading comprehension, whether a learner is a second language speaker or not, because this plays an important role in terms of analysing sources.

Participant 6 does a lot of repetition to help struggling learners. When I asked the participant what they meant by repetition, the participant responded as follows:

"I go back to what we did at the beginning, I make them understand what I first taught them and present more source material for similar examples. I find that helps. Because the more you repeat it, the more it becomes embedded in them." – Participant 6

Participant 2 helps struggling learners by giving the learners practice sessions and modelling the process of describing the source by analysing the information in the source in terms of the message it wants to convey, and by reading close to the source to look for emotive language. Participant 2 explains that she also encourages learners to analyse the type of source to for example determine whether is it a diary entry or a speech. Participant 2 does this by giving the learners a variety of sources to analyse in class so that they can develop analytical rigor and skills to ask questions about the source.

"You do need to model source analysis. So, obviously you give them practice doing [it] on their own. When you start a section, you should have a practice exercise where you basically go through the sources as an English teacher would go through a poem, and you model behaviour for them. Right? You model the process. First you look at the description of the source and you say: 'Okay, let's not read the source first, let's read the description. From what we now know, is this going to be pro X or anti Y? What do you think?' So you go through the process, you look at what people are thinking, what the source is likely to say before you actually read it. Then you go line by line, you pick out the more emotive language and you ask

them: 'What is this trying to convey?' You do close reading. So, you must model. You can't expect them to just get it.

According to Participant 11 teachers need to go the extra mile to develop History thinking skills among learners. Participant 11 explained that this means that time should be made to collect additional sources and that learners must be encouraged to bring additional sources to school as well.

"What I can tell you is that we as teachers, we do extra. We add a lot of things, and we take risks, and we are not recognised for that. I'll give you an example: when you talk about coming to democracy in South Africa in 1994, it is divided into a lot of sections. The examiner can say, what were the challenges that were encountered during the coming to democracy, which is more than the violence and disruption of the CODESA parties not signing, the violence in North-West, in Bophuthatswana, in the Ciskei, in Vereeniging, you know, things like that. How do I teach that? Obviously, I'll teach the learners to use the textbook as a source."

According to the participants, they use various strategies to help their learners understand source skills. The most common strategy applied by the participants is one-on one sessions and teaching learners how to analyse various sources such as primary and secondary sources. The participants said they include a glossary of words which makes it easier for especially the English second language speakers to understand a source much better. This also includes understanding the message behind the source by analysing visual sources to understand the meaning behind them. This process often helps learners to read the source closely by looking at the description and other symbols used for messaging, especially if it is a visual source like a cartoon. Reading sources for interpretation and source skills is very important in understanding the message behind a source (Depaepe et al., 2018).

4.3.6 Theme 6: The importance of teaching History thinking skills

Teaching History thinking skills is important because for learners to be able to think historically, they need to use primary and secondary source materials, analyse cause and effect of events that happened in the past and make a connection and be able to identify continuity and change, and understand that different perspectives and

interpretations exist in History through time (Boxtel, Gestsdorttir & Van Drie, 2018). Teaching History is also important in promoting responsible global citizenship. A global citizenship is a person that personally respects others, stands for justice and equality through their actions and has a deep understanding of the wider world and their role in it. When learners are taught History thinking skills, they can analyse, communicate, and manage complex problems (Depaepe et al., 2018). This will allow learners to be able to identify issues through constructive learning and deepened engagement that foster curiosity in our learners which will produce critical thinkers, problem solvers and responsible global citizens who can contribute positively to the world by engaging in current affairs, issues of injustice, discrimination, and global issues (Depaepe et al., 2018).

According to Massey (2015) History thinking skills are important because they promote national identity and self-knowledge by providing context so that learners can understand themselves and others better. Furthermore, learners get to learn from the decisions of others especially historical figures that made bad decisions that affected society, for example understanding the actions of Adolf Hitler that led to mass killing of the Jews (Massey, 2015).

Participant 10 believes that History thinking skills are important because they will help the learners in life especially when it comes to taking a stand and formulating their argument. Participant 10 said:

> "I think it's going to help them in life. When it comes an argument. The learners would ask: 'What's an argument?' I say: 'You want to go out with your friends, you ask your mom, but your mom says no, you must study. But if you go to her and you say, ma, remember when you asked me to do my chores, I did my chores. Remember when you said pack this, I did it. Remember when I did this and this. Then you say mom, you can see I've shown you I'm responsible, I'm loyal, I'm disciplined, so may I go out and I'll be back at this time. You're giving your mom a strong argument why you need to go; you know.' So that's the kind of the example I like using."

All the participants regard History thinking skills as important and relevant beyond the classroom and applicable to life in one way or another. Therefore, most of the participants indicated that History thinking skills are lifelong skills that are important

and applicable to many facets and aspects of life. History thinking skills are especially important to ask the right questions when attempting to understand the world we live in to develop sound arguments, and to understand fake news. This is illustrated by Participant 4 who argued as follows:

> "Well, because we want to create people in this world who don't accept fake news, who don't walk around the world with blinkers on, and who just blindly follow a political party because they like the colour of their outfits or something."

According to the participants this is very important because there is a lot of propaganda in the world and learners need to be able to question this and make their own choices without being influenced by misleading information. Participant 4 explained:

> "You want people to be thinking people, and History is one of the only subjects that does provide kids with the ability to process that kind of thinking if it is done well. If it's not, it's just a waste of time." – Participant 4

Two participants (Participant 5 and Participant 6) also indicated that History thinking skills are important because they promote the development of empathy and an awareness of multiple perspectives and viewpoints about events and social and political issues. Generally, participants regard History thinking skills as lifelong skills that teach learners to understand the world they live in and how to make sense of it. Participant 5 explained as follows:

> "I think it's a lifelong skill and I think that [it] is one of the most important reasons for doing History because it teaches you this explicitly. You can't not have an opinion in History. If you try and sit on the fence you're going to fall off. It teaches you to identify bias, it teaches you to understand where you fit into the world. And I think those are not only skills but really important things that History offers you."

Another participant (Participant 3) said that History skills are important because "they help learners to have a better understanding of their world and lived experiences."

Participant 11 said: "I think it helps the children because then they understand the things the way they are, even though some of them are wrong."

The following statements support the views of most of the participants:

"I think these are not just History skills, these are life skills. And I don't say that lightly. I really think in this day and age of fake news, and this day and age of so much information being bombarded at these young people all the time, I think they really need to be able to stop and think: 'What am I reading here? Maybe I should check and see if it is really the truth.' I think it's just such a valuable life skill." – Participant 5

"History thinking skills create critical thinking people who will always question, not only sources that are given in History, but modern-day sources, whether they pick up a newspaper or whether they read something on the internet. Hopefully, they will be thinking: 'Origin? Purpose? Is this a primary/secondary source? Has it been cross-referenced? Is it factual or emotive?' They prepare learners for life and they [are] ensuring that there is no single narrative, and they also promote the use of critical thinking because learners can always ask questions and not accept everything they are given by the media. So, they are skills for life." – Participant 9

Participant 6 articulated the importance of History thinking skills as follows:

"History thinking skills are important for the learner's growth and to develop social skills, especially empathy."

According to Participant 3 History skills are important because they help learners to engage with their present lived experiences, and multiple perspectivity and empathy are valuable because it enables learners to understand the world they are living in and they can make the link between the past and present. The participant is of the opinion that when learners can understand the choices people made in the past, whether they agree with them or not, they will be better equipped to confront injustice.

4.4   PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.4.1   Understanding of History thinking skills in the CAPS curriculum.

Based on their teaching experiences the participants had different views and interpretations of thinking skills. Most of the participants mentioned some skills that are aligned to History thinking skills, while two participants said that the CAPS curriculum is primarily content driven. Of the skills that were mentioned by the participants are: critical thinking skills, inquiry skills, multiple perspective, analytical

skills, essay skills, interpretation skills and argumentative skills. Although the participants mentioned these skills as key skills to History thinking in the CAPS curriculum, not all these skills are exclusively linked to the subject History. For example, critical thinking which was mentioned by most participants as a key History skill, is a general skill important in all subjects.

According to Participants 2 and 4, the CAPS curriculum is primarily content driven and does not provide teachers with practical solutions on how they can teach History thinking skills. These participants believe that the CAPS curriculum and the textbooks that are prescribed to teachers limit the teaching of thinking skills. The participants also emphasise that there is a gap in the CAPS curriculum, because it does not provide teachers with guidelines on how History thinking skills should be taught as they are expected to fill in the gaps themselves.

According to Murwaski (2014) critical thinking is a skill set that is used to improve the thinking of learners and teaches them how they should think. Furthermore, it shows learners that they can improve and develop in their own thinking and how thinking can be improved.

Critical thinking is also associated with the ability to make decisions and to solve problems and is defined as searching for answers while reaching for meaning (Murwaski, 2014). Problem solving is very important for critical thinking because people who solve problems can adapt to any problem by applying multiple techniques and approaches in solving a problem (Murwaski, 2014). Critical thinkers also see the problem from many perspectives, and they can analyse the problem and apply different approaches and explore investigations by doing the following: identifying problems and the limitations that may exist, make decisions based on evidence, think before acting. Critical thinking is important in the classroom because learners become in control of their own learning, and they always ask critical questions. However, critical thinking is not exclusively a History thinking skill (Murwaski, 2014).

4.4.2 Understanding of and teaching historical empathy in History

The data shows that most of the participants do not have a limited conceptual understanding of historical empathy. According to many of the participants, historical empathy focuses largely on placing yourself in someone's shoes and understanding

what they are going through. In some ways it is also looking at the past and exploring what the historical figures did and asking yourself some questions such as: How would you have handled the situation and what would you have done at that time? This narrative is shared by most of the participants as they believe that learners need to be aware of what was happening in the past and move away from their own world and try to understand the circumstances of the past and to empathise and sympathise with those that were involved in History, including the historical characters that may have committed crimes against humanity. The participants claim that it is important to understand a point of view and to explore people feelings, emotional response and empathy.

According to Endacott, (2014), historical empathy has to do with understanding History and learning about the historical figures at the time and understand their context, lived experiences and what influenced their world views in their decision making. Therefore, historical empathy has to do with how people in the past thought and how their world views influenced them to make decisions they made in the past and to understand the impact of those decisions and if there were any consequences at that time (Endacott, 2014). For example, when we study Adolf Hitler, we cannot empathise or sympathise with his actions or decisions, but rather we do a deep understanding and investigation about why he acted the way he did and the influences around them which may include the political, social, economic and cultural context at that time and place (Endacott, 2014). Historical empathy is thus different from empathy, sympathy or putting yourself in a person's position or shoes, because historical empathy requires contextualisation which is a deep understanding and investigation of the political situation at the time when the event happened and the views that were shared at the time. So, if we go back to the example of Adolf Hitler, we need to explore anti-Semitism in Europe and Germany and understand the views he held and how these views influenced the political, social and economic climate at the time and investigate other events that were happening during this time period to develop a better understanding of the situation (Endacott, 2014). This enables us to make a connection in understanding historical characters' attitudes, beliefs and perception of the world at the time which may have been their own lived experiences (Endacott, 2014).

4.4.3 Understanding of and teaching multiple perspectivity in History

According to most of the participants, multiple perspectivity has primarily to do with asking questions, exploring different sources, moving away from one story or narrative, understanding that there are many facets to the truth, studying the different perspectives that may exist in History and using some research skills to compare and analyse sources and the use of histography. Except for two participants, the participants generally have a correct and understanding of multiple perspectivity.

According to Wansink, Akkerman, Zuiker and Wubbels (2018) multiple perspectivity in History focuses on the fact that History can be interpreted differently. These different interpretations are influenced by many views and narratives that are subjective and not objective. This means that when learners are being taught about an event that happened in the past, the learners need to move away from one narrative about the event and investigate, evaluate and compare the trustworthiness of the different narratives that exist by considering multiple subjective perspectives on a historical event (Wansink et al., 2018). There are different ways to show how these perspectives may be viewed., One of the ways is by exploring primary sources which may include speeches, or a letter written during the time of the event. This can be used to describe and show what was happening, thus showing learners that historical figures may have had or shared different co-existing perspectives on a certain matter based on their different lived experiences, ideologies and beliefs (Wansink et al., 2018). However, this does not mean that primary sources are reliable as they share the views and opinions of people from one perspective. To develop an in depth understanding of an event and to know more about different perspective about that event, learners need to also engage with secondary sources that are written by different historians. The aim is to understand and reconstruct meaning of the context and to be able to analyse and evaluate how the past was interpreted. This is done by asking questions about the sources that have been used to interpret the past. This may include exploring why the source was written, how factual it is, does it promote a certain ideology or biased views, is it emotive, does it acknowledge other views and is it written from one perspective and what is the message of the source? (Wansink et al., 2018).

4.4.4 When do learners apply History thinking skills?

According to the participants there are various indicators that the learners are using History thinking skills. Learners are using History thinking skills when they take a stand and defend their opinion and when they can argue coherently by showing how they got to their conclusion through deductive reasoning. Some participants indicated that learners' reasoning and debating skills become evident in other subjects. However, many of the participants said that they know that their learners are using History thinking skills from the written work that is produced by learners in the assessments they submit. The description and definition of these written answers include any form of assessment such as class tests, essays and research projects. The participants also believe that the marks that the learners produce are an indication that they are using History thinking skills. However, good scores do not necessarily mean the learners are using History thinking skills. It depends largely on the assessment that has been set and the skills that can be elicited from the assessment.

4.4.5 Content that is conducive to the teaching of History thinking skills

According to most of the participants certain content in the History curriculum is less conducive to the teaching of History thinking skills. This content varies from participant to participant and includes the following: Ancient History, South African History, the Cold War, Foreign History like China, and the Grade 11 content on the Great Depression. The entire Grade 12 curriculum is problematic because of the additional pressure due the restricted time in which teachers must cover the whole syllabus. However, Participants 2, 4 and 9 believed that History thinking skills should be taught in any subject. History thinking skills should be woven into the teaching approach and be taught because they are very important.

4.4.6 Challenges encountered when teaching History thinking skills

The participants encounter different challenges when teaching History thinking skills. The challenges are multi-faceted and differ from participant to participant. Some of the challenges that were highlighted are: scaffolding of skill levels, a mark driven approach by the learners, time constraints, learners with learning barriers, a lack of resources, poor reading abilities of the learners, and learners who hold preconceived ideas.

According to Boadu (2015), most teachers rely on traditional teaching pedagogy and as a result learners do not feel engaged during their lessons. The data shows that many History teachers experience challenges when teaching History thinking skills and they are not equipped enough to overcome them. As a result, many History teachers may be more inclined to use more traditional teaching techniques which promote rote learning rather than the use and development of thinking skills.

4.4.7 History thinking skills taught to learners

The most common skills that were identified are: source analysis (also referred to as source work or source skills), interpretation skills, and critical thinking. According to most of the participants source analysis skills are very important because learners are introduced to different sources when they learn History and they need to be in a position where they can analyse these sources by understanding the purpose and the origin of a source. This is indicative that the participants have some understanding of source analysis skills and their importance when teaching History thinking skills. Although this is an important element of teaching History thinking skills, some participants also aligned source analysis skills and research. The ability to interpret a source is also fundamental because learners can build their own reasoning and arguments by coming to their own conclusions when they analyse sources and interpret them with understanding by applying key skills (Barton, 2018). The participants know that the use of sources is important for effective learning and to elicit meaning based on the source and to the event that happened in the past as the source provides context (Barton, 2018). The importance of source analysis creates an image for the learner and the starting point is making the learners aware of the source and what they are reading so that they can comprehend the text or to look for meaning in the source and asking questions about the source (Barton, 2018). Questions are asked with the intention to come to a conclusion about the past by drawing out meaning and engagement through inductive reasoning as learners must evaluate and analyse different sources and, in the process, construct their own meaning. Therefore, the participants' views that source analysis is a valuable History thinking skill is aligned to the literature.

4.4.8 Strategies to engage learners when teaching History skills in lessons

According to the participants, there are various strategies teachers can use to engage their learners when teaching History thinking skills, including learn by doing; source analysis activities; assessments; active learning; watching documentaries and videos; storytelling; and incorporating current affairs into their lessons.

The participants believe that sources analysis skills are important because they encourage learners to ask more questions about the sources based on the topic they are learning about. The process of source analysis focuses on unpacking whether a source is reliable or not. The participants argue that teachers must provide learners with a variety of sources so that they can develop in their own thinking and interrogate what they learn from both primary and secondary sources.

Current affair issues are regarded as valuable to link concepts to the content that is being covered. The participants believe that this not only helps the learners to know more about each other, but it enables teachers to link the content they need to teach real life situations. Furthermore, the introduction of controversial topics stimulates debate and reasoning which can be linked to past events to show relevance to content being taught. This corresponds with Deveci's (2007) contention that History should convey events that happened in the past, and current events can be beneficial in teaching History by making a link to events that have happened in the past. In addition, the use of current events promotes consciousness among the learners of what is happening around them daily and they are then more able to understand the world they are living in. However, a teacher cannot build entire History lessons on current affairs alone as it is more about creating awareness of what is happening in the world, and this should happen on an *ad hoc* basis. For example, not all events that happen around the world can be linked or have a direct impact on the content covered in a lesson (Deveci, 2007). Current affairs can be used to emphasise a point and to show a link and this is often done in the first few minutes, while there is greater focus on the skill that needs to be taught and the content that needs to be covered (Deveci, 2007).

4.4.9 Activities most suited for teaching History thinking skills

According to the participants there are similarities in some of the activities that are suited to teaching History thinking skills. Five participants indicated that they would prefer to teach source analysis skills or do source-based work while two participants

indicated that they would rather teach essay writing skills because the final examination requires the learners to be competent in writing an essay. Two participants believe that class discussions are best suited because learners get to engage in debates and express their thoughts during lessons, while one participant said that they prefer learners to create their own content using the internet.

4.4.10 The most important skill

A variety of important History skills were identified by the participants including empathy, critical thinking, multiple perspectivity, informed debating, source analysis, curiosity, and research. However, generally critical thinking, multiple perspectivity and source analysis skills were regarded as the most important.

4.4.11 Support for struggling learners

The participants indicated that they help learners who struggle to develop and understand source materials in various ways, with each participant employing his or her own strategy. Some of the strategies that are used by the participants are the following: one-on-one sessions; repetition; and the scaffolding of skills. According to the participants this means understanding whether a learner is a mother-tongue English language speaker or not. The participants claimed that some learners struggle to analyse or comprehend source skills because they do not understand some of the difficult and challenging concepts. Participants suggested that providing a glossary of words often helps a learner to understand a source if they do not understand words contained in a source. Furthermore, scaffolding allows the participant to unpack the source by identifying and underlining challenging words and providing definitions of the words. Learners then read the source to comprehend and analyse the source with the help of the glossary that is being provided.

According to Leckrone and McQuillan (2012) English is a universal language of learning and most learners in South Africa are second language speakers or at least speak more than one language. Most concepts that are introduced to learners are abstract and the vocabulary is not easy to comprehend at first glance or sight (Leckrone & McQuillan, 2014). Academic language and reading are also different from the day-to-day spoken language. Therefore, teachers must teach their learners the language that is required and used when they teach History. This process is known as

mastering the academic language so that learners can develop a deep understanding of historical skills, content, linguistic skills, and analysis (Leckrone & McQuillan, 2014).

According to Leckrone and McQuillan (2014) academic language is aimed at developing a learner's vocabulary and language functions which include vocabulary, syntax, and grammar. To ensure that learners become immersed in their own learning, they need to communicate and interpret what they are learning so they can understand how historians use language to analyse and construct knowledge (Leckrone & McQuillan, 2014). The development of literacy skills is required as it can empower learners to be engaged in their own learning. Furthermore, the teachers' language and the use of content, resources, materials, and activities must intentionally be integrated in every lesson (Leckrone & McQuillan, 2014). Teachers can provide their learners with tools that they can use whenever they explore sources. These approaches may include reading the content in the source for comprehension; understanding the author's intent; identifying the audience for the source; looking for interpretation; and having more focus on language which help learners to elicit meaning from the text (Leckrone & McQuillan, 2014).

4.4.12   The importance of teaching History thinking skills

All the participants regarded History thinking skills as important lifelong skills that are relevant beyond the classroom and applicable to life in one way or another. In addition, History thinking skills help learners to have a balance of thoughts and show them how they can question information that is presented to them, especially fake news, which will make them responsible and good citizens. Some participants shared that these skills are important as they invoke critical thinking and social skills. History thinking skills allow learners to develop a better understanding of their world and to make sense of it through consistent learning and questioning.

4.5   CONCLUDING **REMARKS**

In this chapter I presented the data and my findings. In chapter 5 I answer the research questions, make recommendations, and provide suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter, I answer the research questions, make recommendations, and provide suggestions for further research. This research aimed to explore History teachers' understanding of History thinking skills and how they promote these skills in History in the selected secondary schools in South Africa. To fully understand how History teachers interpret and understand History thinking skills, it was important to determine how the participants conceptualise History thinking skills in the context of the CAPS curriculum.

The primary research question was:

How do History teachers promote History thinking skills among History learners in selected secondary schools in South Africa?

The following secondary research questions were formulated to strengthen the primary research question:

- How do History teachers understand History thinking skills?

- What challenges do History teachers experience when promoting History thinking skills?

- What strategies do History teachers use to promote History thinking skills?

5.2   ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The answers to the research questions are presented in the following sections.

5.2.1   How do History teachers promote History thinking skills amongst History learners in selected secondary schools in South Africa?

According to the data and the findings, the participants promote History thinking skills differently amongst their learners. In most cases, the participants focus on different skills and strategies which include multiple perspectives, source analysis, historical empathy, the incorporation of current affairs, research activities, critical thinking, and essay writing skills to mention just a few. Although these skills are emphasised by most of the participants, the data shows that not all participants understand how to teach

these skills or how to promote them because in some cases the participants have a misconception of these skills. For example, most of the participants have an inaccurate interpretation of historical empathy. While some skills being taught are not exclusively reserved for the teaching of History, for example, critical thinking, these skills are important tools for engaging learners with the content when teaching History.

This is discussed in more detail in my answers to the secondary research questions.

5.2.2 How do History teachers understand History thinking skills?

The data suggests that the participants regard History thinking as important to the academic development of learners and relevant beyond the classroom. Furthermore, most of the participants indicated that History thinking skills are lifelong skills that can be used by learners in their adult lives to understand the world better and to be active global citizens.

The participants provided examples of important History thinking skills, namely source analysis skills, research skills, critical thinking, and the ability to comprehend multiple perspectives. The data showed that the most common skill taught is source analysis, which the participants also described as source skills, interpretation skills, essay writing, and research skills. Although critical thinking is an important skill, the data suggests that it is regarded as a generic skill that is meant to be developed across all subjects and not only in History.

It was found that there is no clear or common understanding of historical empathy. Most participants described it as "walking in someone's shoes" or feeling sorry about something that has happened in the past. In addition, it seems as if the participants do not have a clear understanding of how to teach or develop historical empathy as a History thinking skill in their lessons. Therefore, the participants generally demonstrated a vague understanding of historical empathy and how to promote this thinking skill in their lessons.

The data suggests that most of the participants understood multiple perspectivity as exploring different sources of information, using historiography to investigate different sides of the story, and not looking at one narrative alone to better understand the different perspectives that may exist about the truth. It was found that most of the participants teach multiple perspectivity by exploring different sources of information to understand the authenticity of historical events by looking at primary sources,

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secondary sources, and the various multiple perspectives that exist about the event through historiography. Although the participants generally shared the same views in this regard, there were some misconceptions where participants linked multiple perspectivity to the use of different information resources such as Google and YouTube to search for information and build on empathy.

Most of the participants indicated that their learners neglected History thinking skills by overly focusing on the marks they achieve in the subject. For example, if a learner scored high marks in a class test, essay, or any project, this was deemed to be an indication that the learners were using History thinking skills. However, this view is flawed when the assessments on which the marks are based do not include the assessment of thinking skills. For example, if the questions focus on the first two levels of Bloom's taxonomy, then we cannot say that the marks produced are an indication of a learner being able to apply History thinking skills. According to Maposa and Wassermann (2009) learners are using History thinking skills when they think chronologically by distinguishing between the past, present and future and show a link how events have occurred over time by engaging in historical analysis and interpretation. This process requires higher-order thinking, analysing History by unpacking and assessing the reliability of sources through interpretation. In addition, most of the participants regarded all content covered by the curriculum as important for teaching History thinking skills because these skills are life skills that are applicable regardless of the content being covered.

It was found that the participants regarded multiple perspectivity and empathy as the two most important skills to teach. Empathy in this context is different from historical empathy as empathy focuses on understanding the emotions and the people that were involved in historical events from a perspective of not being too judgemental, but rather understanding people's emotions. The research highlights a conceptual confusion of historical empathy and empathy because both have different meanings. Historical empathy focuses on understanding the world views that historical figures held in the past and how these world views influenced them, while empathy is aimed at understanding or feeling what others are experiencing by walking in their shoes, thus placing yourself in their position.

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Although we want to understand the actions, attitudes, and behaviours of historical figures, we do not want to empathise with them.

The CAPS curriculum emphasises the importance of teaching History thinking skills. However, most teachers do not know how to teach these skills, because they must cover a lot of content and develop these skills simultaneously. Furthermore, the CAPS curriculum requires teachers to be lifelong students because they need to consistently develop and learn how to teach History in the 21st century. Most teachers do not have a good understanding of how they can promote historical thinking skills and as a result, they rely to a large extent on old traditional teaching methods where they feed information to the learners and the learners just absorb what they are taught. This does not promote History thinking skills and learners merely regurgitate what they are taught.

5.2.3 What challenges do History teachers experience when promoting History skills?

The data showed that the participants experienced different challenges when they must teach History thinking skills. Four of the participants indicated that they found it particularly difficult to teach History thinking skills to learners who have developed preconceived ideas at home. However, although this may be a challenge, it should not prevent the teaching of History thinking skills, but rather the learners' preconceived ideas should be challenged through the stimulation of critical thinking and promoting the relevant skills that will help them challenge their biased views.

Generally, the data indicates that the participating History teachers believe that there is content in the History curriculum that is less conducive to the teaching of History thinking skills. A lack of available resources about certain topics seems to be the main reason. However, some participants held that History thinking skills should be taught all the time and the content should not matter at all. This illustrates that the participants have challenges. According to Talin (2015), History thinking skills must be taught in every theme in the curriculum because all content focuses on historical facts; these facts need to be analysed and evaluated. Therefore, regardless of the challenges that the participants may experience, History thinking skills need to be taught to ensure that learners develop incrementally.

5.2.4 What strategies do History teachers use to promote History thinking skills?

The data indicates that source analysis and the incorporation of current affairs were the two main strategies that were used to promote History thinking skills. Source analysis can be viewed as an important strategy, because it allows learners to investigate various sources of information to get a better understanding of an event by interpreting and evaluating sources. However, there is a misconception among the participants that current affairs can be regarded as a thinking skill. Current affairs should rather be a tool to be used to promote discussions and debates and be linked to content that is taught at a specific time.

The data showed that the participants used various strategies when they wanted to support learners who struggled with History thinking skills. The two most common strategies that are used by the participants are one-on-one sessions and scaffolding of content and sources. Although one-on-one sessions may be good in providing extra lessons for learners who are struggling, this does not always mean that the learners will understand the work, especially if the lesson is taught the same way. Also, one on-one extra lessons are usually used as a strategy to improve an individual learner's marks and are not necessarily aimed at developing History thinking skills. It therefore seems that there is a misconception that one-on-one sessions with learners will help individual learners to understand and apply better thinking skills.

However, when the participants change their pedagogy and scaffold the content, it could stimulate learners to apply more thinking skills. It was found that scaffolding of sources is good in assisting learners who are struggling with History thinking skills. According to Hicks and Doolittle (2008), History teachers need to introduce skills systemically through a step by step process by promoting historical inquiry by unpacking concepts to learners so that they understand the definitions and terminologies of the concepts and are then able to link the concepts to what they are learning by providing practical examples, by summarising the contents of the source material, by contextualising the source and evaluating the source by using deductive reasoning. Scaffolding allows learners to develop cognitively and increases learners' knowledge and understanding of what they are studying (Hicks & Doolittle, 2008).

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation is that there should be greater emphasis to train student teachers how to teach History thinking skills at universities and to develop a deep understanding of different teaching methodologies that are required for the teaching of History thinking skills. The importance of these skills should be highlighted, and student teachers should be equipped and trained on how to teach these skills effectively to their students.

Student teachers should be introduced to key concepts that are important to promoting History thinking skills, for example, historical empathy and multi- perspectivity and what it means to evaluate, synthesise and interpret in a historical context. Furthermore, there should be training sessions in a form of professional development for teachers who are already in the profession. This could entail seminars or workshops for those teachers. According to the NCS-CAPS, curriculum education is evolving and as a result, teachers are expected to become life-long learners; thus, their professional development is very important.

The data also shows that some teachers struggle to cover the content in Grade 12. As a result, they have limited time to teach History thinking skills effectively. Perhaps the NCS-CAPS curriculum needs to be less prescriptive and more flexible to allow teachers to explore the curriculum extensively and to teach History thinking skills. However, this might be a challenge because most schools are driven by marks and most parents and schools want to produce good marks at the end of the year. As such, learners also want to achieve good marks so that they can get university entry. This presents a challenge to the teachers because if teachers focus on teaching history thinking skills over content the learners might struggle in their final examinations which is used as a measurement of success.

Furthermore, the data showed that the participants believe that the extent to which learners have applied History thinking skills is reflected in the marks that learners achieve. However, this has often made History teaching more content driven. Teachers can avoid this by promoting assessments that encourage History thinking skills amongst learners by moving away from an emphasis on teaching for marks.

History teachers often struggle with sources, but this can be addressed by identifying relevant professional development programmes for the specific teachers and mentoring of teachers that need help. Source work can be taught by guiding learners as to how to illicit information from a source and how to assess the author(s) who produced a source and to determine understand if they are an expert or not. In addition, teachers can do an exercise on visual and textual sources. Visual and textual sources can be used to elicit History thinking skills that focus on historiography and exploring the different perspectives in a source. Teachers can also ask learners to apply their thinking skills, for example *See, Think and Wonder.* Teachers can introduce concepts such as reliability, usefulness when teaching different sources and scaffold questions from low order to higher order thinking.

5.4 STRENGHTS OF THE STUDY

Based on the literature review it seems that a limited number of studies have been conducted on the promotion of History thinking skills and the challenges that History teachers experience. This study, therefore, contributes to the knowledge base about the promotion and development of thinking skills in History teaching. This study provided comprehensive and valuable data regarding the understanding, promotion, and application of History thinking skills in the sampled schools. The data also highlighted the challenges that are experienced by the participants. The participants offered detailed feedback on their understanding of History thinking skills and their perceptions and lived experiences which strengthen the study.

The study used qualitative research which was aimed at gathering and collecting in-depth information to be able to understand the meaning and reality given by participants to a complicated social phenomenon. It enabled me to focus the research on an in-depth understanding of the problem being investigated (Queiros, Faria & Almeia, 2017).

A multiple case study design was a good strategy for achieving a deep understanding of the phenomenon because there was a greater focus to analyse data from a small group of participants and delving deeper into a single subject using a replication strategy (Daniel, 2016). In addition, a multiple case study design enabled me to analyse the data within each situation and across situations (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Studying multiple cases highlighted the similarities and differences between each case (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This was further enhanced by sampling participants from both public and independent school contexts. The participants from the independent schools that are represented in this study are from wealthy schools that have a wealth of resources and access to the latest technology, while the participants from public schools are at fee-paying urban schools in terms of the National Norms and Standards for Schools Funding (NNSSF) (RSA, 2013), and they have less teaching and technological resources available.

5.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted in affluent areas of Johannesburg at independent schools and fee-paying public schools. Non-fee-paying public schools were excluded from this study which means that there is no data that provides an insight into the challenges that History teachers in these schools experience and their understanding or promotion of History thinking skills. A similar study in other geographical areas and schools in different contexts in South Africa is necessary.

A small sample was studied which limits generalisation of the findings. In addition, the study only focused on secondary schools and therefore only included the views of secondary school teachers in the FET Phase. In addition, only schools that produced good results in the National Senior Certificate Examination (Grade 12) were included. Only interviews were used as the data collection tool which limited the findings being unbiased and objective.

5.6   SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has identified a need for further research because there is a need to understand whether teachers are promoting the relevant skills in their subjects to prepare our learners for the future. The interviews have illustrated that rich data can be obtained from conducting a qualitative study. However, a similar study could also be conducted at different schools, for example, a comparative analysis of rural schools or non-fee schools could provide more insightful contributions.

An in-depth study involving primary schools also merits further investigation. This could include the views of History teachers in primary school contexts to understand how they promote History thinking skills and research in the lower grades of the CAPS

curriculum. Research on the effect of an overloaded curriculum on the teaching and promotion of History thinking skills is also required. Also, a quantitative or mixed methods research project would allow for greater generalisation of the findings.

5.7 CLOSING REMARKS

The research study was aimed at investigating the use of History thinking skills by teachers in selected public and independent schools in the north and east of Johannesburg. The study aimed to understand how History teachers teach and promote these skills. Furthermore, the study was aimed at understanding the challenges experienced by teachers and the strategies they explore to promote History thinking skills and how they make sense of this based on their own lived experiences. Most of the participants know the CAPS curriculum and understand what is required in terms of teaching History. However, most of the participants were not familiar with critical thinking as a general skill that is meant to be taught across all subjects and not as a skill that is meant to happen in History only. The research study underscored the importance of History thinking skills and how these skills can help learners understand the subject better. However, most of the participants did not have a good conceptual understanding of historical empathy. This study uncovered numerous examples of how History thinking skills are applied or not applied and showed the importance of moving away from traditional content-focused teaching to a more inclusive way of teaching. Although the study highlighted challenges that the participants experience, the data offered few solutions to help the participants to overcome these challenges in a meaningful way that will promote History thinking skills.

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ADDENDUMS

Addendum A: Clearance from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, UP

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER:	**EM 19/05/05**
DEGREE AND PROJECT	MEd	
	The promotion of History thinking skills in selected secondary schools in Gauteng	
INVESTIGATOR	Mr Thero Modisagae	
DEPARTMENT	Education Management and Policy Studies	
APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY	23 September 2019	
DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	30 August 2021	

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire

CC Ms Thandi Mngomezulu

Dr Andre du Plessis

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

- Compliance with approved research protocol,

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

Addendum B: Informed consent form

Dear Teacher,

I am currently enrolled for my Masters in the Department of Education at the University of Pretoria. I have completed a research module and one of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a research report about my work. I would like to ask you, whether you will be willing to participate in this research.

The topic of my research is: ***investigating the promotion of historical thinking skills in History in selected secondary schools in South Africa.*** The aim of this research is to investigate how History teachers understand the policy that promotes historical thinking skills and how they teach these skills in their History lessons.

I would like to interview you to hear about your experiences and challenges implementing the policy. The interview will take place at a venue and at a time that will suit you and will not take longer than an hour. With your permission I would like to audio tape the interview for analytical purposes.

This information will only be accessed by myself and my supervisor and will be regarded as confidential and anonymous. Your name or your schools name will not be mentioned. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

If you agree to participate in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me at the numbers given below, or via email

Regards

_____   _____

Student   Supervisor

Thero Modisagae   Dr André du Plessis

revoeducation2014@gmail.com   duplessis.andre@up.ac.za

0822927655   0823756574

I _____

(your name), agree / do not agree to take part in the research project titled: ***investigating the promotion of historical thinking skills in History in selected secondary schools in South Africa.*** I understand that I will be interviewed about this topic for approximately one hour at a venue and time that suit me, but that will not interfere with school activities or teaching time. The interview will be audio taped.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principals of:

- ***Voluntary participation***, in the research, implying that the participants may withdraw from the research at any time.

- ***Informed consent***, meaning that research participants must at all times be informed about the research process and purposes and must give consent to their participation in the research.

- ***Safety in participation,*** put directly, that the human respondents should be placed at risk or harm of any kind.

- ***Privacy,*** meaning that the confidentiality and anonymity of human respondents should be protected at all times.

- ***Trust,*** which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Addendum C: Interview questions

investigating the promotion of historical thinking skills in History in selected secondary schools in South Africa.

Time of interview_____   Duration_____

Date_____

Place_____

Interviewer_____

Interviewee_____

Pseudonym_____

Male/Female_____

Research interview questions.

1. Where did you study?
2. Why did you decide to become a History teacher?
3. Are you familiar with the CAPS document for History?
4. What do you understand by History thinking skills in the CAPS document?
5. What kind of History thinking skills do you teach your learners?
6. How do you get your learners engaged when you teach these History skills in your lessons?
7. What do you understand by historical empathy skills in History?
8. How do you teach historical empathy as a skill in History?
9. What do you understand by multiple-perspective skills in History?
10. How do you teach multiple-perspectives skills in History?
11. In which content it is harder to teach these thinking skills?
12. What challenges do you encounter when you have to teach History thinking skills?
13. In your opinion, which activities are most suited to teaching History thinking skills?
14. Which content in History is more relevant to the teaching of these thinking skills?

15. In your opinion, why is it important to teach these History thinking skills?

16. If a learner is struggling to understand source materials that are important for History thinking. How would you help the learners to understand?

17. How do you know that your learners are using History thinking skills when they analyse sources or information in History?

18. How do your learners come to a conclusion about a certain topic/event in History?

19. Which is the most important – why?