

**EXPLORING QUALITY AND ASSESSMENT MODELS
FOR
ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
IN GRADE 10**

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed at exploring the quality assurance and assessment models used for English first Additional language (EFAL) in the Further Education and Training (FET) band especially in Grade 10. It examined various quality assurance models used by grade 10 educators in designing the assessment tasks, with specific reference to EFAL. This study adopted the industry based SABS ISO 9004-2 conceptual framework. This conceptual framework ensures that the task to be performed and the objectives to be achieved are clearly spelt out, including how they affect quality. A qualitative research approach was used, specifically a case study. Convenient sampling was used to select the three participant of this study, namely; two EFAL educators and one Head of Department (HoD). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, document analysis and research journal, and triangulated to support the conclusion and to make the findings more reliable.

The main research question of the study was: To what extent do English First Additional Language (EFAL) educators employ quality assurance measures in their assessment. In order to fully explore the quality assurance measures employed in EFAL assessment tasks, four sub-research questions were envisaged in this study.

The following themes emerged from the data collected: assessment of EFAL, quality of the assessment tasks, assessment challenges as well as internal moderation. With regard to assessment of EFAL the results of the study indicated that educators have minimal level of skill to construct high quality assessment tasks due to poor understanding of OBA and the terminology associated with OBA. As a result, they resorted to prescribed portfolio assessment tasks as dominant form of assessment. The study also found that the quality of such assessment tasks is below the expected standard as Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards are the major quality assurance measures utilized. Furthermore the study revealed that challenges such as overcrowding and shortage of learner support material are the inhibiting factors towards development and implementation of quality assessment tasks. The study further revealed that

moderation of those Grade 10 portfolio assessment tasks which occur at school level by the HoD, focused mainly on the accuracy of mark transfer from the learner's script to the mark sheets rather than on the quality of the assessment task. The study further revealed a corroboration of concepts used in the conceptual framework based on the SABS ISO 9004-2, as educators do not have acceptable level of establishing quality structure or measures for effective control, evaluation and improvement of service quality throughout all stages of learning and assessment. The difficulty was attributed to educator's lack of knowledge with regard quality assurance mechanisms, assessment and the terminology associated with Outcomes Based Assessment.

Key words: Outcomes-Based Assessment, assessment task, validity, reliability, Learning Outcomes, Assessment Standard, internal moderation, English First Additional Language, quality assurance, case study.

QUOTE

For our students and our mentors,

past, present, and future

Learning is not attained by chance,

It must be sought for with ardour

and

attended to with diligence.

-Abigail Adams

DECLARATION

I, Tshililo Sedney Neluheni hereby declare that this dissertation submitted for the Magister Educationis in Assessment and Quality Assurance at University of Pretoria is my own original work and has not been previously submitted in any institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.

Tshililo Sedney Neluheni

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my late parents (Sarah and Johannes) for teaching me to persevere even when times are hard.

I thank my brother, Khathu and his family for his continuous, encouragement, inspiration and moral support, and must not forget the support and love given by my special children, Zwivhuya and Khuthadzo.

Many thanks must go to my fiancée, Shirley for her support during my studies. I appreciate your contribution towards the success of my studies, Shirley. May God bless you in abundance.

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Your contribution and efforts have not gone unnoticed; my gratitude to you goes beyond lexical boundaries.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION USED IN THIS DISSERTATION

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ASAL	Afrikaans Second Additional Language
BA	Bachelor of Arts
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
B.Tech	Bachelor of Technology
CASS	Continuous Assessment
CAPS	Curriculum and Policy Statement
DoE	Department of Education
EFAL	English First Additional Language
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
EU	European Union
FET	Further Education and Training band
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GET	General Education and Training band
GEN-FETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
HoD	Head of Department
IMHE	Institutional Management in Higher Education

LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LAAP	Learning Area Assessment Programme
NSC	National Curriculum Statement
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBA	Outcomes- Based Assessment
OBE	Outcomes -Based Education
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
REQV	Relative Educational Qualification Value
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SABS ISO	South Africa Bureau of Standards International Standard Organization
SAP	School Assessment Policy
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority
STD	Secondary Teacher's Diploma
TQM	Total Quality Management

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to explore the quality assurance mechanisms employed by English First Additional language (EFAL) educators when designing and implementing assessment tasks for Grade 10 at the Further Education and Training (FET) band. EFAL in the context of this research refers to language taken as a learning area by learners whose home language in this part of Mpumalanga; South Africa is either isiZulu, IsiNdebele or Sepedi. The first additional language assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school (DoE, 2005). Therefore, the starting point of curriculum should be to develop the learners' ability to understand and speak the language, then transfer the language literacy skills they have learnt in their home language to the first additional language. In so doing, the curriculum creates a platform for learners to efficiently use the first additional language as a language of teaching and learning as well as for a variety of purposes in their general communicative purposes.

Central to the learning and assessment of EFAL is quality. The concept of quality assurance refers to a process that ensures that agreed standards are met, and that steps are taken to improve quality where problems are identified (Pahad, 2000). Therefore, quality is defined as the achievement of a specified degree of excellence. However, it is worth noting that quality is not a condition, but an on-going event, a process of assuring that the degree of excellence specified is actually achieved (Hattingh, 2003). The notion of assurance refers to emphatic declarations, guarantee or certainty and it is therefore crucial that educators as assessors ensure that educational assessments which are defined as a formal attempt to determine learners' status with respect to educational variables of interest, are of high quality (Popham, 2005).

This research specifically focuses on exploring the dynamics of quality assurance measures that are employed to ensure quality of EFAL assessment in Grade 10 at a secondary school in Mpumalanga province, South Africa. Issues pertaining to validity and reliability of inferences related to educator assessments are investigated in an effort to examine quality assurance measures put in place. Content-related validity is explored to ascertain if educators consider validity of assessment as a means of assuring quality. Therefore, validity refers to the accuracy of inferences (or interpretations) that are made based on learner performance and assessment. In a classroom environment, Brandy and Kennedy (2001) conclude that when assessment tasks measure what the educator wants them to measure, they are said to be a valid task. On this basis, validity is concerned with the quality of the assessment task in terms of its congruence with the intended learning outcomes. It should, however, be noted that validity should not only be confined to the assessment task, but should also focus on what the results obtained from a particular assessment task tell educators about the learner. As described by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) (2005), validity is concerned with the appropriateness, usefulness and meaningfulness of inferences made from the assessment results. Therefore, when viewed from a learner-centred perspective, such an argument makes a perfect sense.

Without valid and reliable classroom assessment procedures, educators will not know whether the learners have achieved the learning outcomes or not. Reliability in educational assessment is a desired attribute and a cherished commodity (Popham, 2005). From a classroom assessment perspective, reliability is an evaluative criterion by which the quality of standardised formal assessment task is judged. Popham (2005) further added that reliability in any assessment context is equated to consistency. Therefore, reliability refers to the consistency with which the assessment measures whatever it is measuring. In this research stability, alternate forms as internal consistency validity will also be explored in order to fully understand the quality measures in place within the EFAL assessment.

Vandeyer and Killen (2003) noted that some of the problems in South African education have resulted from this change; the prime challenge in assessment is to find approaches that will be fair to all learners and that will provide reliable evidence from which valid inferences can be

made about the learning of each learner. Therefore, it is essential that educators do not think of assessment as something to be conducted at the end of the lesson or unit but rather view it as an integral part of all planning and preparation because assessment of learning is an essential element of Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

1.2 POSITION OF THE RESEARCHER

As a researcher and an educator who is currently teaching EFAL at the FET band and who has practised in both adult education and at secondary level, I became curious to learn about how EFAL educators address the element of quality assurance in their assessment practices. My interest in this study was also informed by the output analysis of the learner performance in EFAL at the FET band, motivating the need for an investigation into factors that contributed to this poor performance and examining whether quality assurance measures employed in EFAL assessment have any effect.

Since educators design assessment tasks in order to make inferences about learner's performance, I hoped that this study would shed light on the quality assurance measures put in place and used by EFAL educators in the FET band in their assessments due to change in their teaching and assessment practices.

1.3 STATEMENT OF RESEARCHPROBLEM

The dramatic shift from traditional content based education to a modern Outcomes Based Education (OBE) approach, which was guided by the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), then the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), has resulted in an enormous challenge to teaching and assessment practice in South Africa, such as designing valid and reliable assessments (Van der Horst, 2009). This means that educators are faced with an enormous challenge of aligning their teaching and assessment practices to the requirements of Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) which includes more than just pen and paper tests as well as half and year-end examinations. Therefore, educators are also faced with a challenge to improve their skills for designing both formative and summative assessment in line with the requirements of

the new assessment policy. OBA encourages careful reflection on education strategies and provision of learning opportunities, which ensures that learners are enabled to attain a set of learning outcomes and to demonstrate them in assessment (Killen, 2000). With this being the prime purpose of assessment, it is therefore crucial that educators maintain a strong link between the curriculum and the outcomes that learners have to achieve as well as the assessment.

The introduction of OBE and the new curriculum in South African schools redefined the educator's identity and roles in the classroom. Jansen (1999) noted that in the OBE classroom, teachers disappeared into a facilitative, background role while the learners emerged as the initiators and creators of learning. However, as Fullan (1991) indicates, changes in any education system, such as the system change experienced in South Africa, does not follow automatically from change in policies or implementation of latest policies. Real change is brought about by change in teaching and learning strategies as well as assessment practices, which can only be effected by educators. This means that as educators come to terms with new assessment strategies and methods, they tend to struggle to design assessments that are valid and reliable, which may result in EFAL assessment being adversely affected.

The implementation of OBE in South African schools presented a number of problems to educators. Over and above the variety of outcomes to be assessed, OBA by its nature is complex, requiring qualified teachers, sophisticated infrastructure and a well-equipped professional environment in order to be implemented effectively (Meyer, Lombard, Warnich & Wolhuter, 2010). However, in the South African context, these requirements are not always present. Therefore, South African educators are presented with a challenge to implement OBA efficiently. Consequently, most educators are puzzled as to which quality assurance measures to put in place in their assessments to ensure that valid and reliable inferences can be made (Van der Horst, 2009).

Meyer et al. (2010) argued that some educators consider themselves to be inadequately trained to work with outcomes based aims in mind because they are used to their own ways of teaching, based on the traditional procedures of the content-based education model in which they were educated. The fundamental changes for assessment proposed by OBE have also contributed to

the educators' negative reaction and resistance (Meyer et al., 2010). Consequently; educators have experienced difficulties in comprehending the complex nature and the full extent of assessment practices envisaged by OBA.

With the adoption of OBE and OBA approaches in South African schools, it becomes critically important to measure whether the current assessment used contributes to the learning process of achieving specific learning objectives (Edward, 2000). Therefore, in order to promote learning, assessments must incorporate genuine feedback for quality assurance purposes because it speaks directly to the conclusions drawn from the assessment. Using the feedback from such measures can contribute to the improvement of quality assessment. Educators serving in township secondary schools in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa are faced with the enormous challenge of designing an EFAL assessment task, which caters for the needs of the learners whose first language is isiZulu, Sepedi or isiNdebele.

Edwards (2000) argues that the development of a reliable and valid instrument for assessing high quality teaching, learning and assessment is crucial. However, Killen (2000) maintains that the dominant form of EFAL assessment in South African schools is heavily dependent on memorisation of factual information and grammar rules; therefore, this raises a number of questions with regard to the reliability and validity of assessment tools used such as pen and paper assessment. Herman, Absbacher and Winters (1992) argue that such assessments do not go well with a thematic content-based curriculum which emphasises performance tasks, autonomy of learning, and integration of linguistic skills and promotion of thinking skills. Perhaps this fragmented treatment of language skills (reading, speaking, writing and listening) affects the all-round development of the learner. One wonders if the assessment tasks really measure learners' learning or if they only measure how much the learners can regurgitate what the educator has taught. Therefore, the reliability of assessment methods used in EFAL as well as inferences drawn from those assessments is questionable.

1.4 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The paradigm shift in education practice in South Africa from a traditional education to OBE posed a challenge to educators with regard to teaching and assessment strategies and methods. Therefore, designing a fair and valid assessment within the teaching and learning cycle is still a major challenge among educators teaching EFAL across the country. One question of critical importance is how teachers, who received inferior education under apartheid, can fast-track change in their classrooms and offer high quality assessment that is envisaged in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Mbelani, 2008). However, Shaban (2000) believes that well designed assessment tools are essential to evaluate learners' progress, teaching effectiveness, and programme and material suitability to address the needs of learners.

The curricular objectives set for education in South Africa in general and for EFAL education in particular, decide, largely, the type of assessment tools to be used with learners. Moreover, the NCS places more emphasis on assessment, which educators can use as a vehicle to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. It is, therefore, evident that EFAL teaching in South African schools has a predominance of the objective mode of assessment, because it seems that most schools are preoccupied with preparing students for university admission and other institutions of higher learning (Vandeyser & Killen, 2003). This alone places an additional challenge to educators for designing assessment tasks which are in line with the requirements of OBA and meet the national assessment benchmarking standards. Thus, the credibility of assessment results lies on the educator's ability to interpret the outcomes of the assessment.

The primary principles of assessment such as reliability, validity, fairness, discrimination and meaningfulness, were recognised long before South Africa embarked on its post 1994 curriculum reform policy (Vandeyser & Killen, 2003). In the South African context, OBE, Curriculum 2005, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) as well as the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) emphasise these fundamental principles of high quality assessment holistically. The emphasis is on integrating the principles of high quality assessment into both the curriculum and teaching practices (SAQA, 2005). Vandeyser and Killen (2003) also argue that validity, reliability and fairness are not clearly defined in the curriculum and assessment glossary in the NCS

document. Consequently, educators are likely to be at a predicament of not having a clear meaning of those terminologies and how they can be used in their assessment practices.

It is worth noting that assessment tasks themselves can never be valid or invalid, however it is only the assessment-based inference educators make, which are valid or invalid. According to Wiliam (2000), validity is not a property of an assessment at all, but a property of the conclusions that we draw on the basis of the assessment results. Therefore, this is a crucial issue among educators as it addresses one of the fundamental challenges of the OBE, the challenge of developing assessment instruments that allow educators to draw valid inferences about whether learners have achieved the curriculum outcomes or not. It is, therefore, important that educators are able to draw valid inferences about learning so that they can determine whether learners are achieving the deep understanding that they want them to achieve as prescribed by the RNCS.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

Taking into consideration the role played by quality assurance measures in assessment and making valid inferences about the learning of each learner, this study is guided by the following primary research question:

To what extent do English First Additional Language (EFAL) educators employ quality assurance measures in their assessments?

In order to fully explore the above primary research question, the following sub-questions were addressed:

- What quality assurance models exist for educators to use?

This research sub-question aims at exploring various quality assurance models available in education for educator to use in ensuring the quality of their assessment tasks. According to Lombard (2010), every educator is accountable for ascertaining the quality of all assessment tasks within their individual classrooms. Quality has become a buzzword in the design, implementation as well making inferences of learning in OBA. Therefore, educators need to

explore and adopt certain quality models in education in order to render their inferences about learning less disputable.

- How do educators ensure the validity of their practices within the teaching and learning cycle?

According to Hogan (2007), the common conception or conventional interpretation of validity is that assessment is valid to the extent that it measures what it purports to measure. Therefore, this research question aims at exploring various validity measures which EFAL educators put in place in their assessment tasks since validity is concerned with the quality of an assessment task in terms of its congruence with the intended learning outcomes. In the classroom context, Brady and Kennedy (2001) conclude that if assessment tasks measure what the educator wants to measure, they are regarded as valid tasks.

- How do educators ensure the reliability of the assessments?

Reliability refers to the degree to which learners' results remain consistent over replications of assessment procedures (Nitko, 2004). Therefore, it can be concluded that reliability also refers to the degree to which learner assessment results are the same when they complete the same task on two or more occasions or when two or more educators mark their performance on the same task. Thus, this research question aims to explore the reliability measures which educators put in place in their assessments.

- To what extent is internal moderation employed as a quality assurance strategy in English First Additional Language assessment tasks?

Internal moderation refers to a process of monitoring and verifying assessment practices to ensure that assessment decisions are consistently accurate (Coetzee, 2002). This includes sampling candidate evidence to verify assessment decisions as well as monitoring the conduct of assessment. This research question explores whether internal moderation is employed in the schools (research site) as a quality assurance mechanism?

In order to fully explore the quality assurance practices in EFAL assessment, I correlated each sub-research question with the research aim it addresses. The table below illustrates the correlation between the aims of the research with the research questions:

Table 1.1. Aims and research questions for the study

Aim	Research question
1. To explore the existing quality assurance models in OBA.	1. What quality assurance models exist for educators to use?
2. To explore the validity of assessments designed by educators.	2. How valid are the assessment tasks designed by educators?
3. To explore how educators ascertain the reliability of classroom assessment.	3. How reliable are the assessment task designed by educators?
4. To explore how educators ensure internal moderation of assessment tasks	4. To what extent is internal moderation employed as quality assurance strategy?

The next section provides a broad overview of what will be discussed in the rest of the chapters comprising this dissertation

1.6 OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

Chapter 2 (Section 2.1 – 2.8) reviews the relevant literature on EFAL as well quality assurance models used. I explore the quality assurance mechanisms which EFAL educators at secondary school put in place to ensure that assessments are valid and reliable. The curriculum directives for assessment of EFAL are also highlighted and finally, I conclude this chapter by highlighting the conceptual framework of the study.

Chapter 3 (Section 3.1 – 3.10) describes the research design and methodology I employed for the research. I also highlight the sampling and data collection methods used and discuss methodological norms as well as the ethical guidelines I adhered to in the research to ensure the credibility and dependability of the study.

In **Chapter 4** (Section 4.1 – 4.4) I present the results of the study together with further consideration of the literature and conceptual framework of the study that I discussed in chapter two. In this chapter, I focus on interpretation and analysis of the results which emerged from the research.

In **Chapter 5** (Section 5.1 -5.8), I draw conclusions of my research findings in relation to my primary and secondary research questions. I conclude this chapter by making recommendations and discussing the limitations of the study.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 served as an introduction to the study. I discussed the purpose of the study and provided an overview of the rationale of my research. The statement of research problem (Section 1.3) shed the light on the impact of the paradigm shift in education in terms of teaching, learning and assessment practices after the introduction of OBE and OBA in South African schools. The rationale for the research (Section 1.4) explores issues that underpin EFAL assessment and quality assurance mechanisms employed. The paradigm shift in education practices in South Africa which led to change in teaching, learning and assessment practices were further highlighted. Thereafter I briefly discussed the aims of the study and also outlined the research question addressed by each aim of the research question. (See table 1.1).The next chapter (Chapter 2 looks at the literature based on the research and quality assurance in EFAL assessment is also explored.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I review the literature on quality assurance measures which educators should put in place in EFAL assessment activities. The review presented is focused on validity, reliability of the assessment tasks and tools, internal moderation of tasks at school level as well as models of quality assurance in EFAL, as related to my research questions. Both South African and international literature on assessment and quality assurance is included in this literature review.

The introduction of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in South Africa posed a significant challenge for the institutions of learning (schools) with regard to learners' assessment especially in EFAL. Botha (2002) argues that OBE, as a model, was chosen as the most likely to address the crisis in South African education; that is, to guarantee success for all; to develop ownership by means of decentralized curriculum development; to empower learners in learner-centred ethos; and to make schools more accountable and responsible in trying to ensure success and effectiveness. In the light of this challenge, it is important to ensure that all education processes contribute directly or indirectly to quality as the clients (learners) experience it. Applying principles of OBE means that learning and assessment processes need to be evaluated to determine quality as defined by the learners (Edwards, 2000). In the new OBA approach of assessment, learners are assessed in relation to the learning outcomes of the unit standard they are to achieve. With the implementation of such an approach in assessment, educators have to deal with the requirements indicated by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) 1995, (Act 58 of 1995). Therefore, quality and service mindedness in education and training means that academics and other stake holders have to ensure that the needs, desires and interests of learners are met (Steyn, 2000).

The implementation of the South African Qualification Framework (SAQA) Act 1995 (Act 58 of 1995) meant that educational institutions (schools) needed to move away from the traditional

examination driven approach to an OBA approach that is seen to have a greater educational value in terms of the kind of education and learning it encourages (Ellery & Sutherland, 2004). Since assessment in an educational event that holds the highest stakes for learners in terms of achievement, Edwards (2000) suggests that assessment procedures and methods do not only influence the learning styles and strategies of learners but also their attitudes, motivation, sense of ownership and their self-esteem. Therefore, it is imperative that measures to ensure the quality of assessment practices are in place. In reality, assessment involves much more than administering, scoring and grading paper and pencil assessments. In its true and richest meaning, it includes the full range of information that educators gather in their classroom (Airasian, 1991). This information helps the educators to understand their learners, monitor instruction and establishing a productive classroom environment. It also includes a variety of ways for educators to gather information. Therefore, it is vital that educators take into consideration the validity and reliability of the assessment tasks they design if valid inferences are to be derived about learners' learning. Any assessment should be designed so that the users of the results, be they the learners, their parents, their educators or the gatekeepers for further stages of education or employment, can have confidence in the results (Black & Wiliam, 2006).

This chapter is structured as follows: Section 2.2 explores the literature on classroom assessment, and Section 2.3 deals with the validity and reliability of assessment task. Section 2.4 explores international and local literature on quality assessment models while Section 2.5 focuses on quality assurance system in South Africa. Section 2.6 addresses quality assurance at classroom level and Section 2.7 outlines the conceptual framework of the study followed by conclusion in Section 2.8.

2.2 CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

According to Harlen, Gipps, Broadfoot and Nuttal (1992), assessment in education is a process of gathering, interpretation, recording, and using information about learners' responses to an educational task. This implies that assessment in education is something done with and for learners, and not to learners (Wiggs, 1993). Therefore, the effectiveness of classroom assessment

on the development of learners as well as the implication of assessment on learner achievement is an area of concern in EFAL assessment.

McMillan (2007) describes assessment as the gathering, interpretation and use of information to aid teacher decision making. Lombard (2010) asserts that assessment consist of six identifiable processes, irrespective of the intended purpose of the assessment. These include the process of gathering, analysing, interpreting, recording, reporting and using the information about learner achievement, and these processes are represented in Figure 2.1 below:

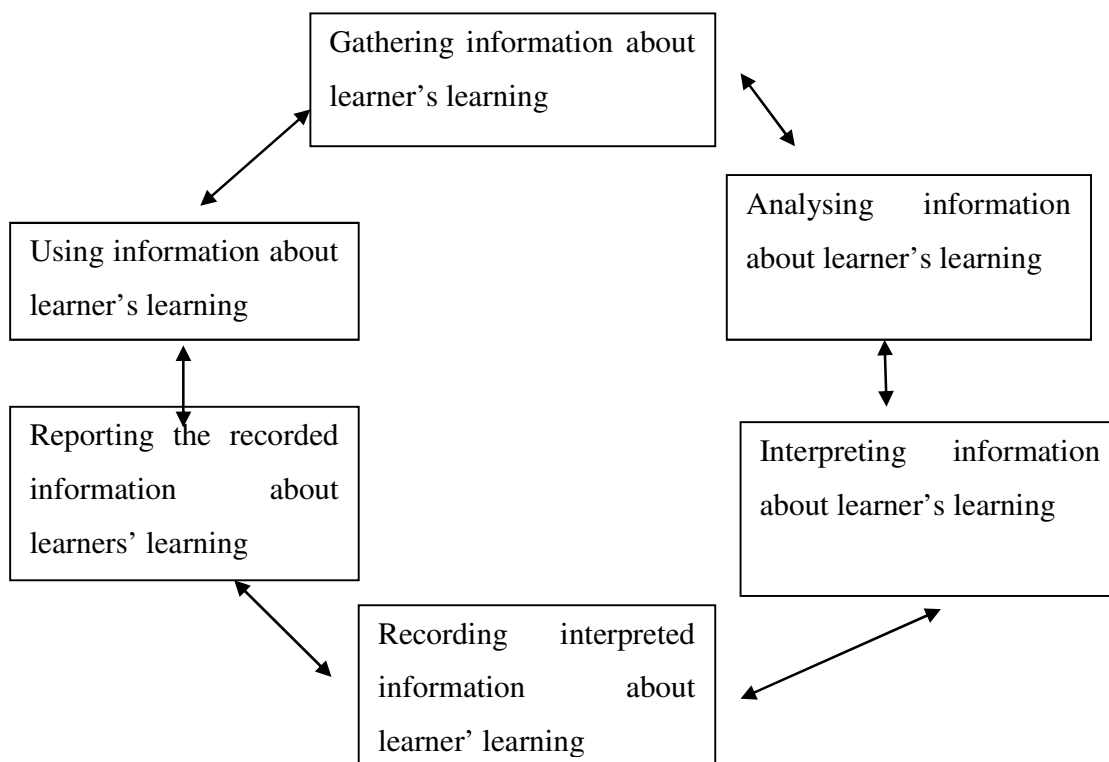


Figure 2.1. The cyclic process of assessment (adapted from Lombard, 2010)

Crooks (2002) identified two main functions of assessment, namely assessment of learning and assessment for learning. He described assessment of learning as summative assessment and assessment for learning as formative assessment but each form of assessment contributes towards developing student learning and achievement. Crooks (2002) argues that summative assessment aims to provide a well-rounded, clear, and up to date picture of current learner capabilities,

progress over time, further growth needs and potential. In contrast, formative assessment focuses on enhancing learner development, and often involves relatively unstructured interaction between learner and learner or educator and learner rather than a planned formal assessment event.

Academics, educators, parents and assessment practitioners are constantly debating on the effectiveness of the two assessment approaches in the development of the learner's potential to the maximum ability (Crooks, 2000). The main argument envisaged in assessment practices for EFAL learners is the extent to which the inferences made by educators are valid about their learning. Advocates of performance assessment maintain that performance assessment provides more valid measures of learners' abilities to respond to real-life language tasks, as well as estimates of their true language abilities than traditional standardised multiple-choice assessment.

With the effectiveness of assessment being a prime challenge toward the development of learners' potential, reliability may be problematic because of rater inconsistencies, limited numbers of observations, and subjectivity in the scoring and validity may be problematic as well because of inadequate content coverage and lack of construct generalisability (Chapelle, 1999). This is likely to create problems because of generalisation of learner performance from a few observations to the whole spectrum of real life performances; moreover, these performance characteristics may have nothing to do with the learner's real abilities. Atkan, Black and Coffey (2001) suggest that effective assessment should assist students in answering three basic questions, namely: *Where am I going?* *Where am I now?* and *How can I close the gap?* The argument raised here is that assessment should involve the learner in self-evaluation, reflection and developing strategies for overcoming the identified weakness. This feedback from learner self-evaluation assists educators in developing reliable assessment tasks.

2.2.1 Determining abilities

Assessment serves an important role to educators in determining learner ability in the particular outcome being assessed. This is normally reflected on the learner's response, therefore strengths

and weaknesses are identified. Research recommends that educators should assess learners on an on-going basis, if they are to identify learner's ability more accurately. On-going assessment is a process of gathering information in the context of everyday class activities to obtain a representative picture of the learners' abilities and progress (Dodge, Herman, Charles & Maiorca, 2004). Therefore, learner assessment should be based on observation of the process a learner uses rather than simple, concrete, disconnected indicators as milestones. The information or data collected by the educator from on-going assessment activities should assist in learning more about the strengths and weaknesses of each learner and assist in developing a plan to track learner progress. When required or necessary, this information could be used summatively in generating learner progress reports.

2.2.2 Communication of expectations

In teaching and learning, learners need to know the learning target and at what level it should be achieved (Chappuis, 2005). Marzano (2005) contends that learners who can identify what they are learning significantly outscore those who cannot. Educators should provide a clear and understandable vision of the target teaching (Chappuis, 2005). It is therefore, imperative that learning targets are shared with learners before instruction or an assessment. Educators can make use of an assessment rubric to guide learners of the expected outcome of learning. Educator may also use examples of strong and weak work to communicate the expectation, and then ask learners to evaluate the work. It is also vital that educators use good or strong exemplars since learners get the opportunity to identify the quality and standard of the work the educator expects them to produce. Such an exercise will help learners to develop skills in accurate self-assessment (Chappuis, 2005). Therefore, it is evident, that not only are the learners involved in assessing other learner's work but have the opportunity to assess their own ability by evaluating a piece of work with understanding and confidence.

2.2.3 Feedback

During assessment, educators should provide descriptive feedback to learners to communicate their strengths and weaknesses. Comments should identify what has been done well and what

still needs improvement and give guidance on how to make improvements (Black et al., 2004). This kind of feedback enables learners to engage in self-evaluation and answer the question: *Where am I now?* It is this kind of feedback that helps the learner reconsiders learning goals thereby determining the achievements. In order to improve formative assessment, educators should reduce evaluative feedback such as “B+, Good work! Or “you did not put enough effort on this” and increase descriptive feedback, such as “you maintained eye contact with your audience throughout your whole presentation” (Black & Wiliam 1998). Educators can also make use of a rubric to provide constructive feedback to learners because rubrics provide a holistic picture of what the learner accomplished and point out areas, which are still lacking.

Grades and scores do not communicate much information to the learners about their performance. Grades and other code marks such as B+ and 92% do not tell the learners what areas they need to improve, instead, such marks signals that work on this is finished (Chappuis, 2004). Numerical scores or grades do not tell students how to improve their work, so an opportunity to enhance their learning is lost, therefore learner achievement in a particular learning area is heavily affected (Black et al., 2004). Furthermore Lissitz and Schafer (2000) argue that feedback and self-assessment are critical factors for development, since assessment is tied to learning; it does not to be treated as separate entity so that the educator can provide detailed feedback in relation to criteria for assessment. This feedback also serves as the diagnostic aspect of assessment, literally feeding into the next level of learning and growth.

2.2.4 Assessment challenges

Black (2000) identified areas of weakness with regard to assessment. He argued that assessment encourages rote learning and superficial learning, moreover educators are not critical on what is being assessed and that grading is over emphasized at the expense of learning function. Perhaps the above shortcoming, identified by Black, can be attributed to the findings by Dodge and colleagues (2004). Dodge et al. (2004) argue that assessment information is of limited value unless educators understand what it means and how to use it to guide the learning. Dodge also found that assessment results are seen as products rather than knowledge that open doors to learning and planning meaningfully (Dodge et al., 2004).

It is important to understand the whole context within which assessment is being used to evaluate effects of reform that assessments are imperfect and significantly overstates or understates true gains in learner achievement (Lissitz & Shafer, 2002). This problem arises if learner performances are measured narrowly. Critics focus on ways in which the results may overstate gains; however, there are also ways in which the results may understate gains. Firstly, through poor measurement of the targeted skill and lack of perfected reliability will lead to understatement of achievement gains when gains are expressed in standard deviation units, paradoxically there is a real damage in giving too much emphasis to reliability to the extent that it leads educators to measure the wrong thing. Secondly, low learner motivation on assessment may also understate gains. If learners do not try their best to show what they know and can do, assessment will understate what they have learnt.

In conclusion, quality assurance in assessment practices plays an important role in ensuring that assessment inferences made about the learners' learning are valid and reliable. Learners' development should be monitored throughout the learning programme by means of descriptive feedback from the educator. It is through these assessment practices where learners are fully involved in their own development that there is improvement of learning. On the other hand, the diagnostic nature of formative assessment enables both students and educators to reach the target by engaging on self-evaluation and reflection.

2.3 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF ASSESSMENT

In this section, reliability as it relates to assessment tasks is discussed (2.2.1) followed by consideration of validity for such purposes (2.2.2). I discussed various forms of reliability, which educators can employ in classroom assessment to improve the quality of the assessment. I also discuss the purpose of validity of assessment and how educators can maintain it in their assessment tasks.

2.3.1 Reliability

Gronlund (1998) views reliability as the consistency of the assessment results. In a classroom environment, reliability is described as the degree to which an items display internal consistency. According to Green and Johnson (2010), internal consistency refers to the degree that all items in the assessment are related to one another and therefore can be assumed to measure the same thing. Therefore, internal consistency of the assessment is likely to be high if all items are strongly related to each other.

When the interrater reliability is high, two raters strongly agree on the score that would be assigned to the same piece of work. Interrater reliability thus refers to the measure of consistency between two raters (Green et al., 2010). Educators can also ensure reliability of assessment by giving the learners an opportunity to complete the same task on two or more occasions. If the assessment results are consistent, then such a task is considered reliable. Green et al. (2010) suggested ways of improving reliability in classroom assessment as illustrated in the table below:

Table 2.1. Suggestion for improving reliability in classroom assessment (adapted from Green and Johnson, 2010)

	Suggestions	Examples
Assessment Occasion	Ensure that the assessment occasion is free from distraction	Avoid scheduling important assessments at the same time as other important events. Provide multiple assessment opportunities.
Assessment Items	Ensure sufficiency of information	Use enough items to get a clear picture of learners' performance.
Scoring Issues	Clarify scoring criteria Ensure interater reliability	Use the most objective possible items and scoring methods. Discuss scoring criteria with learners before assessment Practice scoring assessment with learners. Practice scoring assessment with other educators. Allow learners to assist in designing scoring criteria.

2.3.2 Validity

According to Stobart (2006), validity is a built-in assessment result of the measures to which practical verification and hypothetical explanation bear the competency and correctness of conclusion and procedures found on assessment achievement and other methods of measurement. Validity is also viewed as a process of collecting data aligning itself with the appropriateness of the inferences that are made of learners' answers for precise assessment exercises (Killen, 2003). Validity in assessment serves two major purposes. Firstly, validity ascertains whether the means of measurement is accurate and secondly, whether the assessment is actually measuring what they are intended to measure. Therefore, the scope of the assessment should be appropriate to assess the intended outcome and the type of assessment employed should be suitable for assessing a particular skill or outcome in order for the educator to arrive at a correct decision about learning.

Moreover, the definition of validity affects all language assessment users because accepted practice of assessment validation is critical to reaching a decision about what constitutes a good EFAL assessment. As researchers in education measurement have argued (Linn, Baker & Dunbar, 1991), some validation methods, particularly those relying on correlation among assessments, are stacked against assessments in which learners are asked to display complex, integrated abilities (such as one might see in an oral interview) while favouring assessments of discreet knowledge (such as what is called for in a multiple choice grammar assessment).

However, Popham (2005) is of the opinion that it is the validity of a score-based inference that is at issue when measurement folks deal with validity. Therefore, educators should ensure that inferences they derive from learner's scores are true reflection of the learner's ability. It should, however, be noted that validity is the single most important attribute of assessment. Therefore, nothing can be gained by assessing learners unless the assessment has some validity for the use that the educator wishes to make of it.

Several types of validity need to be addressed in designing a valid and reliable assessment such as face validity, content validity and criterion related validity. The term face validity means that

assessment items look appropriate, whereas content related validity refers to the extent to which an assessment procedure represents the content of the assessment domain being sampled (Popham, 2005). However, the notion of content here refers to much more than factual knowledge. Criterion related validity refers to the degree to which performance on an assessment procedure accurately predicts a learner's performance on an external criterion (Popham, 2005). It is therefore essential that educators consider validity in general when designing assessment tasks by ensuring that assessment criteria are made available to learners beforehand. This means that educators should provide learners with an analytic rubric, which will clearly stipulate the requirement of the assessment task as well as the quality of work expected. In this way, assessment will be transparent to both parties and learners are likely to produce high quality work, as they will be aware of the task requirements.

The validity of an assessment is considered an argument concerning assessment interpretation and use by educators and other education practitioners. The focus is the extent to which assessment interpretations and uses can be justified. Gracia and Pearson (1991) believe that the validity of an assessment is based on a number of types of rationales and evidence, including the consequences of such assessment where reliability is seen as one type of validity evidence. According to Gracia and Pearson (1991) the major questions that focus around the validity and reliability of assessment are:

- Does the assessment measure what it is supposed to measure?
- Is the assessment consistent in measurement?
- Is the assessment unbiased?

2.4 QUALITY ASSESSMENT MODELS

While quality assurance came from industry sector where it had developed as a results of pressure to increase productivity after the Second World War, from 1945, it was adopted by services such as education in the early 1990s (Bradley , 1991). Quality assurance became a buzzword in the education and training sector in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Brennan & Shah, 2000). The emphasis was on designing assessment instruments to yield quality results

about learner performance. According to Edwards (2000), the role of quality assurance is to provide judgement on the education system in order to:

- provide feedback to educators on the effectiveness of their teaching and assessment methods;
- monitor quality of assessment methods used; and
- assess the extent to which the learning outcomes of the modules, course or a programme has been achieved.

There are numerous quality assurance models available from different parts of the world. The following quality assurance models, as described in sub-sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.5, are implemented by different education and training institutions:

- International Standards Organisation (ISO) 9000 system.
- European Foundation for Quality Management 1992 (EFQM).
- Total Quality Management (TQM) system.
- South African Bureau of Standards (SABS ISO 9004-2).
- US system of accreditation.

Below is a brief description of each quality assurance model. The scope covers the definition as well as the main area of focus for each model:

2.4.1 The International Standards Organisation (ISO) 9000

The International Standards Organisation (ISO) 9000 series focuses on stimulating trade by providing assurance of an organisation/institution's ability to meet specifications and perform the negotiated standards. These standards are not intended to certify quality of a product or service or whether one is better than the other, but they relate to an organisation's quality system (Lampercht, 1992). ISO 9000 emphasizes principles, goals and objectives; however the focus on objectives is on meeting the customer's expectations and requirements.

2.4.2 The European Foundation for Quality Management

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM, 1992) focuses on facilitating the achievements of best results by the institutions and that an educational enterprise has to take a more holistic approach, not limited by process, product or service approaches of the industrial model (Harvey, 1995). This model is used mainly as a framework for quality management and as a conceptualization for organisational excellence. The focus is mainly on improving the achievement of quality for the institution, but not product oriented.

2.4.3 The Total Quality Management System

The TQM system, combines quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement and tends to go beyond traditional customer satisfaction by addressing the needs of internal customers such as learners, parents and other stakeholders. The TQM also aims at providing tools for improving the quality of every aspect of our lives. It assumes that true knowledge of any system process can only arise from asking questions to those closest to the work.

2.4.4 The SABS ISO 9004-2

The SABS ISO 9004-2 guidelines (1991) note that all service elements, requirements and provisions incorporated in the quality system should be defined and documented as part of the service organisation's overall agents. The quality system documentation in this model includes quality manual, quality plan, procedures as well as quality records. The quality manual provides quality policy and objectives.

2.4.5 The US System of Accreditation

These quality assurance models often have some divergent and common principles even though their mission and values are at times different. A model, which has been influential in many parts of the world, has been the US system of accreditation, established since the beginning of the eighteenth-century (Brennan & Shah, 2000). Therefore, the US system of accreditation has some claim to be the forerunners of the quality agencies, which have been established in the 1990s. Most of the countries represented in the Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE)

study had been influenced by the ideas contained in the general model of quality assessment, supported and promoted by the European Union (EU) based on a review sponsored by EU at the beginning of the decade. Dutch researchers (Van Vught & Westernrheijden, 1993) who had very little European experience to draw on at that time he carried out this study. Therefore, the proposed model was mainly influenced by this experience and by US accreditation system, because it has been influential in shaping developments in Europe during the rest of the decade.

The general model proposed by the EU and others based on the review undertaken by van Vught and Westerheijden (1993) has four main elements: a national body, self-evaluation, peer evaluation and a published report. A national body is responsible for co-ordinating and setting out procedures and methods to be used by institutions of learning for the assurance of quality, like ensuring that assessments are credible. Such bodies have legal status but independent from the government. For example in South Africa, we have the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Therefore institutions conduct self-evaluation based on the procedures and methods set out by the national coordinating body, moreover reports on self-evaluation should be sent to the coordinating body on regular basis. This institutional self-evaluation would then form the basis of external peer evaluation. A published report setting out the findings of a peer review visit will then be established. The main purpose of the report should be to make recommendations to institutions in order to help them improve the quality of their teaching and assessment.

2.5 THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, the South African Qualifications Authority Act (1995) primarily regulates quality assurance of education and training institutions. For the General and Further Education and Training phase, there is one Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) body called the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GEN-FETQA). Its main purpose is to establish a quality assurance body to ensure that a continuous enhancement of quality is achieved in the delivery and outcomes of the General, Further Education, and Training sector of the national education and training system. GEN-FETQA also encourages and supports the development of a quality assurance system that is based on self-assessment. This is also

linked to improvement plans, as the core quality management system. This means that educational institutions engage themselves in a rigorous internal and external evaluation, which serves as a testimony that an institution has an appropriate educational mission, and that it fulfils that mission at or above predefined standards of performance, measured in terms of educational effectiveness (SAQA, 1995)

2.6 QUALITY ASSURANCE AT CLASSROOM LEVEL

Quality assurance of assessment begins at classroom level in the form of internal moderation of assessment tasks to ensure that educators as assessors in the teaching and learning environment use comparable assessment methods and make similar and consistent judgements about learner performance. SAQA (2000) points out that moderation ensures that people being assessed are assessed in a consistent, accurate and well-designed manner. The importance of a moderating system cannot be emphasized enough, because it ensures that the system is credible and both assessors and learners behave ethically (Coetzee, 2002). Moderation as a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) function is a means for professional interaction and upgrading of skills that will continually improve the quality of assessment. SAQA (2000) suggests that the main functions of moderation are to:

- verify that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable,
- identify the need to redesign assessment if required,
- provide an appeal procedure for the reassessment of learners,
- evaluate performance of assessors,

The flow diagram below (Figure 2.2) outlines the assessment process and the quality assurance measures for EFAL:

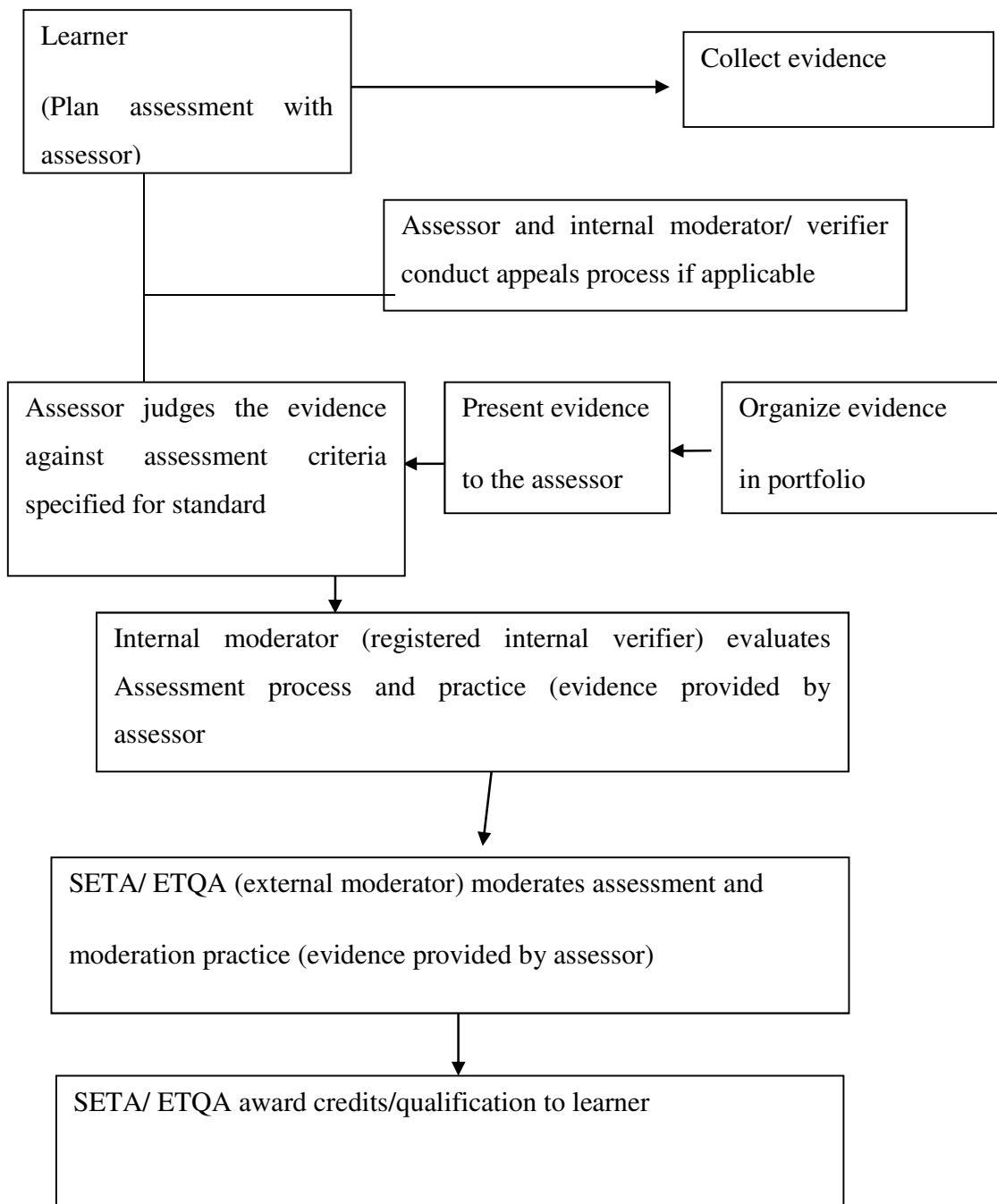


Figure 2.2. Overview of the assessment process adapted from Coetzee (2002)

There are internal systems to moderate the assessment procedures to ensure consistency throughout and over a time. The Head of Department (HoD) in particular learning area at each school moderates the assessment task before learners write it. This is to ensure that assessment tasks are in line with the specifications of the learning area framework set out in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Internal moderation ensures that the assessment is consistent, accurate and well designed, and is a process of monitoring and verifying assessment practices to ensure that assessment decisions are consistently accurate (Coetzee, 2002). Moderation is conducted to ensure that assessment tasks are valid and in line with assessment standards to ensure its reliability. The notion of verification during the internal moderation process involves the following aspects:

- Monitoring the conduct of assessment.
- Sampling candidate evidence to verify assessment decision.
- Assuring the quality of the system and procedures.
- Supporting and advising assessors.
- Keeping verification and assessment records up to date.

Coetzee (2002) suggests three main stages of internal verification, namely: *design*, *implement* and *review*. During the design phase, it is vital to ensure that the choice and the design of the assessment methods and instruments are appropriate to the outcome being assessed. The design phase also serves as a check and balance for assessors when selecting a valid and reliable assessment instrument. The implementation phase ensures that assessment is appropriately conducted and matches the specifications of the outcome to ensure its reliability. Finally, the review phase ensures that any lesson learnt from the other two phases are considered and necessary changes are made. Figure 2.3 below illustrates the three main phases of internal moderation:

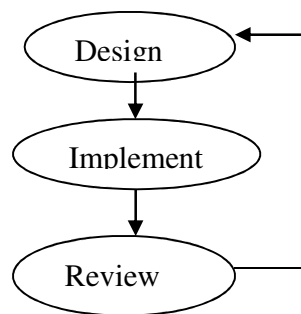


Figure 2.3. Phases of internal moderation

Effective quality assurance allows everyone involved in the programme to have confidence in assessment decisions (Coetzee, 2002). Quality assurance in respect of the NQF refers to the monitoring and auditing of learner achievement in terms of specified registered standards and qualifications. According to SAQA's implementation of a quality system is the understanding that quality assurance, quality management and accreditation are not things or products but quality is more of a process. Therefore, a quality system includes a system of linkages and feedback loops within the framework of products and processes.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Several conceptual frameworks related to the topic of assessment and quality assurance in education exist in the literature and in this chapter, five quality assurance models were presented, namely: the SABS ISO 9004-2, International Standard Organisation (ISO) 9000 system, European Foundation for Quality Management 1992 (EFQM), Total Quality Management (TQM) system as well as the US system of accreditation. These models collectively provide numerous components for the quality assurance models used in upholding quality of assessment in South African education hence some are more industry –based.

In this research, the SABS ISO 9004-2 model was adopted as it proposes the idea that for an institution to achieve quality objectives, management should establish a quality structure for effective control, evaluation and improvement of service quality throughout all the stages of learning and assessment (Coetzee, 2000). The SABS ISO 9004-2 guidelines (1991) note that all service elements, requirements and provisions incorporated in the quality system should be

defined and documented as part of the service organisation's overall documentation. The quality system documentation includes a quality manual, a quality plan, procedures and quality records. The quality manual provides a description of quality objectives and policies. In the EFAL, the quality of the work expected is spelt out in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). This is expressed in terms of specific Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. The quality plan is also indicated in the RNCS as resource to be used to achieve quality as well as assessment activities.

According to the RNCS (2002) assessment standards are knowledge, skills and values that learners need to show to achieve the Learning Outcome in each grade. The quality plan describes the specific quality practice, resources and the sequence of activities relevant to particular service. The RNCS also specifies the quality of work expected by outlining learning outcomes and assessment standards to be achieved in each grade. The complexity of the quality of work increases as the learner progresses through the grades. Schools then generate their Learning Area Assessment Policy (LAAP), which is guided by the RNCS. This document outlines the schools' assessment policy per band and suggests the suitable resources for dealing with a particular assessment task. The procedures define how the activities are to be conducted, controlled and recorded. The quality records provide information on the degree of achievement of quality objectives and they are used for analysis to identify quality trends. The school learning area assessment policy outlines how assessment activities should be conducted, controlled and recorded. The figure below illustrates the conceptual framework used in this study:

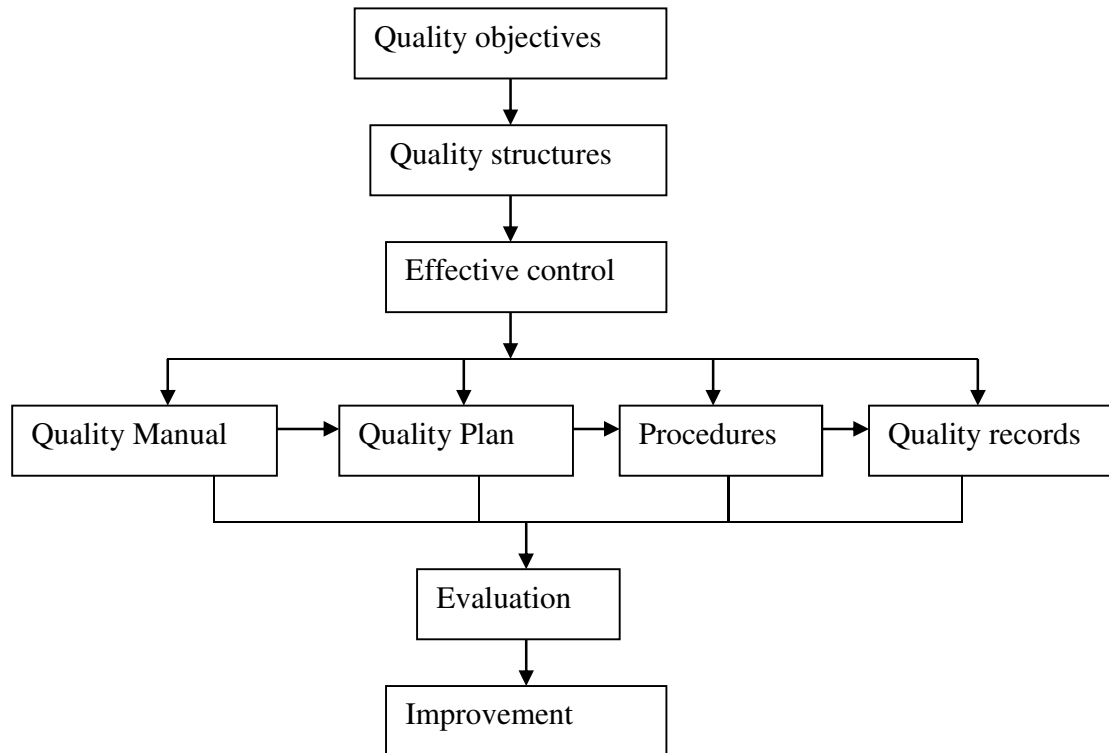


Figure 2.4. Conceptual framework of the study

The implementation of these industrial standards in a South African education is inevitable in the sense that education should be treated as if it were a manufacturing process and students are viewed as products or consumers. Most of the guidelines in quality assurance are based on industrial model such as ISO 9004-2, which focuses on improving quality of education from an industry perspective. This criterion is based on the assumption that when specifying quality standards, one is defining minimum requirements to identify excellence (Tammaro, 2005). These industrial standards used in education usually stress excellent benchmarks and excellence. Benchmarking does not only define what should be done, but also indicates how well it should be done. For benchmarking, the RNCS policy document is used to outline the expected national standard in each learning area.

The ISO 9004-2 model is useful in determining quality in assessment since it is learning outcome oriented. These learning outcomes focus attention on explicit and detailed statements of what

learners learn. The emphasis on outcomes moves the criteria for quality from input (what educators teach) to the outcome (what learners are able to do). The adoption of learner-centred learning as a new approach in education institutions measures learner performance and perceptions as elements of quality assurance (Pors, 2001). This approach represents a paradigm shift from traditional ways of measuring learning, characterised as an input to output focused on methodologies used in measuring learning outcomes and competences. The outcomes assessment process is not only important for quality assurance, it also enables lifelong learner, from learner to full professional status, to trace their progress through the identification and recognition of knowledge and skills acquisition and further training needs (Brine, Feather, 2003).

2.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I explored the literature on assessment and quality assurance models used in EFAL. Five quality assurance models were explored and briefly discussed, however it is worth noting that these models are mainly industry oriented. The primary focus in these models is improving the quality of product or service, though others take a holistic approach of improving the entire institution. I also explored issues pertaining to the validity and reliability of classroom assessment as well as the conceptual framework of the study. Based on the exploration of the literature available on quality assurance and assessment, I propose the ISO 9004-2 model, which I will use for deductive analytical purpose in this study. Although the model is industry oriented, it can be useful in curriculum development, since institutions of learning are more like factories whose primary concern is to produce quantity or service of specified standard.

The key concepts envisaged in this chapter are quality assurance, validity, reliability, quality assurance models as well as internal moderation. In the next chapter, I discuss the research design, epistemological assumptions, research method and the sampling method I used to plan and undertake an empirical study in an attempt to explore the quality assurance models and measures used in EFAL assessment.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore the quality assurance mechanisms put in place by educators in their assessment for the Further Education and Training phase with reference to EFAL. As Grade 10 lays the foundation of the FET exit point, it was crucial to examine the quality assurance mechanisms employed in the assessment to ensure that the assessment tasks are of quality and at a particular standard.

In this chapter, I firstly discuss the aims and objectives of this study and then introduce the research design and its rationale in Section 3.2. In Section 3.3., I explore the methodology used in the study and in Section 3.4; the sampling method for both the research site and participants is discussed. Section 3.5 outlines the data collection instruments used in the study and Section 3.6 focuses on exploring the data analysis method. In Section 3.7, the methods for judging the trustworthiness of this study are explored. Lastly, in Section 3.9, the ethical issues in relation to this study are also elaborated on.

3.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study seeks to explore the quality assurance mechanisms employed by educators teaching EFAL in high school in the Mpumalanga province when they design, develop and implement assessment tasks. Whilst looking at the appropriateness of various quality control mechanisms employed, focus will be on the internal moderation process as well as the procedures followed when moderating Grade 10 assessment tasks. In addition, the study also explores how educators ensure the validity and reliability of their assessment tasks. In addressing the reliability of the assessments, the focus will be on mark allocation and inferences made by educators. With regard to validity, the focus will be on validating the content of EFAL assessment tasks.

To achieve the above aims, the following objectives are envisaged in the study:

- To evaluate the existing quality assurance mechanisms used in assessment against Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) principles.
- To evaluate the extent to which various quality assurance mechanisms are used when assessing English First Additional Language learners.
- To explore the validity of assessment designed by educators.
- To explore how educators ascertain the reliability of classroom assessment.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

In this section, the research design is introduced particularly looking at the research paradigm (Section 3.2.1) and the research approach employed (Section 3.2.2) adopted in this study. This study employed an interpretivist paradigm using a qualitative approach.

3.3.1 The Research Paradigm

A research paradigm refers to a network of coherent ideas about the nature of the world and functions of research, which is adhered to by a group of researchers, conditions the patterns of their thinking and underpins their research actions (Bassegy, 1990). Research paradigms generally describe the models of research that reflect a general agreement on the nature of the world and how to investigate it. According to Gregory (2000), qualitative research may use the constructivist paradigm of theory generation within the context of human inquiry, where we gain understanding of how people construe their world and how they make sense of their experiences. In this study, I used the interpretivist paradigm. Burton and Bartlett (2009) point out that the interpretivist paradigm tries to show how choices are made by participant or ‘actors’ in the social situation within the process of interaction. Therefore, the interpretivist does not see society as having fixed structures, hidden otherwise because the social world is created by the interactions of the individuals.

In qualitative research, the interpretivist paradigm emphasises that the aim of research is to understand and interpret meanings and intentions that underlie every human action (Schurink,

1998). It is therefore worth noting that within the interpretivist paradigm, knowledge is constructed not only by observable phenomenon, but by descriptions of people's intentions, beliefs, values and reasons, meaning making and self-understanding (Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Ontologically, the interpretivist paradigm denies the existence of an objective reality, which is independent of the frame of reference of the observer, but rather that reality is influenced by the process of observation (Henning et al., 2004). In this study, educators were observed in their social milieu, the place where assessment takes place, which gave me an opportunity to understand their options and choice of quality assurance mechanisms that they put in place in their assessment. I explored the experiences of educators in real life situations, which helped to develop a sense of understanding of the meaning conveyed by people during and within their social milieu. Since I was a research object for data collection and analysis, my knowledge and understanding of quality assurance within the EFAL assessment was enhanced. Interpretivism proposes that there are multiple realities of a phenomenon, and that realities differ across time and place (Goldsprink, 2000), therefore, in this study I have engaged the EFAL educators such as the Head of Department (HoD) in order to explore the concept of quality assurance mechanisms in EFAL assessment to gain an understanding from differing perspectives. This, then, illustrates that the study is situated in the interpretivist paradigm and validated by Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004) who explain that interpretivist research is a communal process drawing on the experiences of participating practitioners to understand the phenomenon under study.

3.3.2 The Qualitative Research Approach

I conducted this research using a qualitative approach, which Shank (2002) defines as a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning. Systematic in this context means planned, ordered and public following rules agreed upon by members of the qualitative research community. Qualitative research focuses on a phenomenon that occurs in real world settings (Leedy & Ormond, 2001) in all their complexity. Furthermore, qualitative research is interactive, face-to-face research, which requires a relatively extensive amount of time to systematically observe, interview and record processes as they naturally occur (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006),

involving an interpretive and naturalistic approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Therefore, qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring them.

In the context of this study, the implementation of quality assurance measures in EFAL was analysed in the natural environment of the school, and available evidence such as learners' workbook and any other school records were scrutinised. The advantages of employing qualitative research in this study includes the flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during the research process and to explore the process effectively, bring sensitivity to contextual factors as well as the opportunity to the study symbolic dimensions and social meanings (Conger, 1988; Bryman, Brenson, Beardsworth & Keil, 1988). Another important facet is the opportunity to develop new ideas, which are empirically supported. In the "inside" or qualitative approach, the researcher aims for a holistic picture from a historically unique situation, where idiosyncrasies are important. Therefore, in this study, I used an inductive mode of thinking, letting the data speak unlike the traditional "outside" or quantitative researcher who aims to isolate the phenomenon, to reduce the level of complexity in the analysis and to test hypothesis derived previously (Ospina, 2004).

Three main reasons why qualitative research is suitable for this study include firstly, that I aimed to understand social phenomenon (assessment and quality assurance) from the perspective of the actors (educators) involved, rather than explaining it from outside. Secondly, I aimed to understand a complex phenomenon that is difficult or impossible to approach or to capture quantitatively. Lastly, I strove to understand any phenomenon in its complexity, or one that has been dismissed by the mainstream research because of the difficulties to study, or that has been discarded as irrelevant, or has been studied as if only one point of view about it was real (Ospina, 2004). Therefore, employing qualitative research method in this study allowed me to explore quality assurance mechanisms employed in EFAL assessment and understand them from the educator's perspective.

3.3.3 Research Method

A case study method was used, which is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of inquiry (Stake, 2000). A case study was adopted in this study because it allowed investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context such as the school. A case study allowed me to seek answers to the how and why questions, when there was little control over events being studied, when the object of study was a contemporary phenomenon in real life context, when boundaries between the phenomenon and the context were not clear and when it was desirable to use multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2002).

A case study should aim to discern and pursue understanding of issues intrinsic to the case itself but a case can be chosen and studied because it is thought to be instrumentally useful in furthering understanding of a particular problem, issue, concept. In a case study, extensive data on the individual(s), programme(s) or events are collected on which the investigation is focused (Leedy & Ormond, 2001). The advantage of employing a case study method for this research was that I was able to record details about the context in which the case was found, including information about the physical environment and any historical, economic and social factors that had bearing on the situation. Another added advantage of employing case study was that data analysis in a case study focuses on one phenomenon, which the researchers select to understand in depth regardless of the number of sites or participants for the study. In this research, the focus was on exploring quality assurance measures put in place to ensure the validity and reliability of EFAL assessments. Therefore, I aimed to explore the quality assurance mechanism, which EFAL educators put in place to ensure that assessments are of highest quality, at a particular standard and the inferences made are valid and reliable.

Therefore, the purpose of using a case study was to understand the situation or perhaps an aspect of the phenomenon in depth pertaining to quality assurance measures in EFAL assessment. The foremost concern of case study research was to generate knowledge of the particular case (Stake, 1995) and this research aimed to explore the quality assurance mechanisms employed by educators teaching EFAL in a secondary schools in the Mpumalanga province when they

develop and implement assessment tasks. However, the limitation of employing a case study was that the case represented itself; therefore, generalisation of the research findings is not possible.

3.4 SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANTS

This section focuses on how I selected the research participants and the research site. Section 3.4.1 provides a detailed description of the procedures followed in selecting the research site and Section 3.4.2 outlines how the participants of the study were selected.

3.4.1 Selection of Research Site

Since the study adopted a case study method, I employed a non-probability sampling method in selecting the research site, namely convenience sampling. The sensitivity that is built into a non-probability sample derives from the researcher targeting a particular group, in full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population; it simply represents itself (Cohen, Morrison & Manion, 2000). Convenience sampling of participants was therefore employed as I had access to the site and identified a suitable sample for my study, comprising the EFAL educators teaching at the FET band and the HoD in the English Department. The advantages of employing convenience sampling in this study were that it was less costly and time consuming, administration was eased, usually it assured high participation rate and generalisation was possible to subjects (Cohen et al., 2007).

3.4.2 Selection of Participants

In selecting the participants, purposive sampling was used as it involved hand-picking or intentionally selecting the participants based on exact characteristics that I needed to learn or understand the central phenomenon, in order to develop a sample that is large enough (Black, 1999; Creswell, 2000). Therefore, educators teaching EFAL at the FET band formed the sample as they met requirements and fulfilled the purpose of the study. Merriam (1998) asserts that in order to find the best case study, a researcher should first establish the criteria that will guide case selection and then select a case that meets those criteria. The study-included stratification,

which means that the selected three educators who teach EFAL had to meet the characteristics outlined below:

- Participant must be working at a public school.
- Participant must have taught English First Additional language for at least two years.
- Participant must be a qualified English First Additional Language educator.

For the purpose of this study, three EFAL educators within the FET band from a secondary school in Witbank, Mpumalanga participated in the study. Since each story is unique, it was crucial to interrogate the assessment practices of educators within the FET band only. It was thought that this would help both the practitioners as well as me, as researcher with a comparative analysis across the band and in addition, provide rich data, contrast, and informative themes, which would amplify the understanding of quality assurance in assessment, especially in English First Additional Language.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

To answer the research question of **to what extent do English First Additional Language (EFAL) educators employ quality assurance measures in their assessments?** I conducted interviews with participants, analysed policy documents, as well as learners and educators' portfolios and kept a research journal throughout the research process.

3.5.1 The Interview Schedule

Data was collected by means of face-to-face, individual interviews (see appendices F & G). Interviewing in qualitative studies is a unique form of conversation, which provides the researcher with empirical data about the social world simply by asking participants to speak about their lives (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). Interviews aim to fully understand someone's impression or experiences, and provide useful information when you cannot directly observe participants as well as permitting the interviewer to ask specific questions in order to probe or obtain clarity of what the participant is saying through probing into the interviewee's response

(Creswell, 2002). However, interviews may be time consuming, hard to analyse and compare, costly and the interviewer can bias the participant's response (Cohen et al., 2007).

This study employed face-to-face, semi structured interviews, which enabled me to gain the participant's cooperation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). The interviews generated qualitative data on detailed views and opinions regarding the quality assurance mechanisms put in place in EFAL assessment. A set of predetermined open-ended questions were developed as an interview schedule to guide me during the interviews, which were taped recorded, but I was also able to take note of the respondent's responses (Wilkson, 2000). The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, which helped me to generate rich data from which conclusions and recommendations could be drawn. Participants' responses were also interpreted and mapped on the assessment policy to evaluate their knowledge of the assessment policy in their learning area (EFAL).

3.5.2 Document Analysis

Document analysis takes place when information already exists to obtain comprehensive and historical information, or when the researcher needs to gain an impression of how a programme operates without interrupting the programme. The researcher should be clear about what he/she is looking for, as document analysis may be time consuming, the information may be incomplete, and thus data is restricted to what already exist (Creswell, 2005).

In this research, document analysis was conducted to provide some evidence for triangulation. Official documents such as the School Assessment Policy (SAP) for EFAL were analysed to identify the internal perspective of the school and whether it was in line with the Department of Education's assessment policies. Learner and educator portfolios were also accessed as they might contain records of assessment, anecdotal comments from educators and Curriculum Implementers (CI). I did not only use these portfolios for what they might reveal about the learner performance but rather for what it suggest about the quality of assessment (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Learners' workbooks and assessment activities were also checked in order to establish the assessment methods used. Feedback from learners' activity books (class work,

homework and tests) were also scrutinised to establish whether the feedback provided by the educator was developmental and thus effective in informing further learning.

3.5.3 Research Journal

A research journal was also used for reflexivity, which is defined as an attitude of attending systematically to the context of knowledge construction, which assists the researcher at every step of the research process (Koch & Harrington, 1998).

In this study, I used a research journal to make regular entries during the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), to continuously record methodological decisions and reasons, the logistics of the study as well as the reflection upon what was happening in terms of the value and aspects of interest which cropped up, such as observations made during the interviewing sessions. As the research journal contains assessment of trustworthiness of data set and traces researcher's ideas and personal reactions throughout the field work (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006), this allowed for justification, based on the available information at the time, of the modification of the data collected and strategies used. The table below (Table 3.1) illustrates the research question envisaged in the study, data collection method as well as the data analysis technique for each research question:

Table 3.1. Summary of data collection method and data analysis

RESEARCH QUESTION	DATA COLLECTION METHOD	DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES
1. What quality assurance models exist for educators to use?	Semi-structured interviews Reflexive journal	Thematic content analysis
2. How valid are the assessment tasks designed by educators?	Semi-structured interviews Reflexive journal	Thematic content analysis
3. How reliable are the assessment task designed by educators	Face –to-face interviews Reflexive journal	Thematic content analysis
4. To what extent is internal moderation employed as quality assurance strategy?	Semi-structured interviews Reflexive journal Document analysis	Thematic content analysis

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Alasuutari (1995) maintains that data analysis in qualitative research refers to reasoning and argumentation that is not based simply on statistical relation between variables, by which certain objects or observation units are described. Therefore, qualitative data analysis takes place throughout the data collection process as the researcher constantly reflects on impressions, relationships and connections while collecting the data. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) explain that data analysis in qualitative research is an on-going, emerging and interactive or non-

linear process. However, according to Schwandt (2001), an analysis ought to be rigorous, systematic, disciplined and carefully methodologically documented. Therefore, in qualitative data analysis the researcher elicits meaning from data in a systematic, comprehensive and rigorous manner.

The role of the researcher in the qualitative analysis refers particularly to awareness of biased and preconceived ideas since assumptions may hide the evidence of the data, as Dey (1993) argues that the danger lies in having assumptions but not being aware of them. Therefore, qualitative data analysis, which was used in this research, is a relatively systematic process of coding, categorising and interpreting data to provide an explanation of a single phenomenon of interest. Moreover, Hatch (2002) maintains that qualitative data analysis is a systematic search for meaning and a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others. Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (that is, a relationship) among the categories (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). In this research, I used the content analysis (3.6.1) as well as inductive analysis (3.6.2) to analyse and interpret the data.

3.6.1 Content Analysis

Henning et al. (2004) argue that content analysis is an important tool and the template from which the researcher operates. This involves the researcher chunking the data and synthesising the chunks again to create a new whole, which is a valuable tool for other forms of analysis. However, Palmquist (1993) defines content analysis as a research method, which examines words or phrases within a wide range of texts, including books, book chapters, essays, interviews and speeches as well as informal conversation and headlines. Holliday (2001) explains that a corpus of raw data gets systemised (rationalised) and that it takes messy reality or everyday social life, into the domain of inquiry, moving it one step away from reality as lived. This corpus is then further moved from reality by thematic organisation. This process includes coding and categorising as well as extracting and constructing theme from categories. The thematic extracts are even further removed from reality by being written up as a text in the chapter of the dissertation. This process is presented in Figure 3.1:

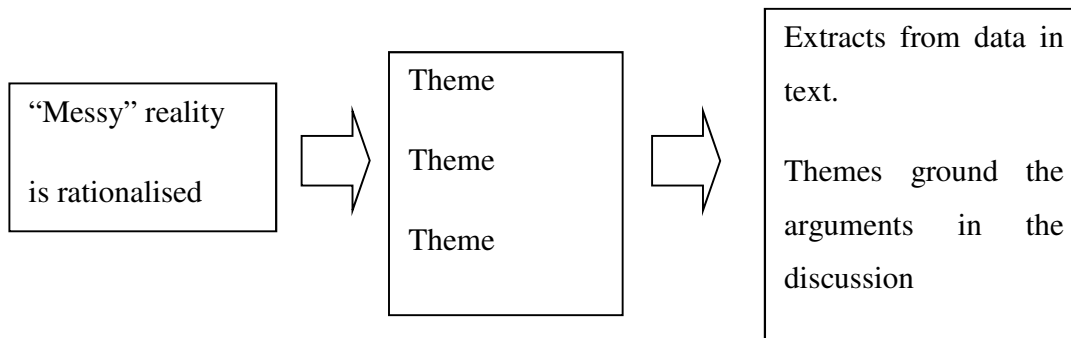


Figure 3.1. From data to text (adapted from Holliday 2001)

Roller, Mathes and Eckert (1995) also explain that most general level content analysis is a technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of message. In this research, content analysis was conducted by means of conceptual analysis, also known as thematic analysis which means that I coded the data and then analysed the results using inductive analysis.

3.6.2 Inductive Analysis

According to Merriam (2002), qualitative data analysis is essentially an inductive strategy where the researcher begins with a unit of data (any meaningful word or phrase) and compares it to another unit of data, while looking for common patterns across the data. Therefore, inductive analysis refers to a process through which a qualitative researcher synthesises and makes meaning from the data, starting with specific data and ending with categories and patterns (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In so doing, the researcher allows the general themes and conclusions to emerge from the data rather than being imposed on prior data collection. Furthermore, Patton (2002) asserts that qualitative data analysis involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what data reveal.

In qualitative data analysis, the researcher moves to a more abstract level of data analysis by constantly double-checking and refining his/her analysis and interpretation. Qualitative data analysis involves the preparation and organising of data, data transcription as well as data

coding. Henning et al. (2004) argue that the process of inductive making of meaning, which is highly interpretive, is then preceded by a more technical process. During the data preparation phase, the researcher organises large amount of data so that coding is facilitated. In this study, I organised the data with the aid of research instrument, such as the interview guide and observation schedule into codes and then categories, which then allowed me to interpret the themes and answer the research question. Once the transcript was ready and codes were awarded to different segments or units of meaning, the related codes were grouped or categorised. It is important that categories are named inductively, using the data as a guide in deciding what category should be called. I also used research questions for this to foreshadow problems and questions.

3.7 METHODOLOGICAL NORMS (TRUSTWORTHINESS)

Trustworthiness refers to the quality of an investigation (and its findings) that makes it noteworthy to its audiences (Shwandt, 2001). In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the data collected, the following measures were taken into consideration: credibility, dependability transferability, confirmability and finally, reflexivity.

3.7.1 Credibility

According to Flick (2009), credibility refers to the accuracy of the documentation, reliability of the procedure of the document and freedom from errors. It can be concluded that credibility in research serves as evidence free from error and distortion. In order to ensure the credibility of this study, I conducted member checks with the participants. This ensured that the data collected is a true reflection of the participant's views. Member checking was also employed where the interview transcripts were taken back to the participants so that they could determine whether their ideas and opinions were presented accurately. The participants' comments were also included in the report. Therefore, the credibility of the study was strengthened because the participants were given an opportunity to react to the data as well as the final report.

3.7.2 Dependability

Dependability is focused on the process of the inquirer and inquirer's responsibility for ensuring that the process was logical, traceable and documented (Shwandt, 2007). Since this research adopted a qualitative approach, dependability of the data will refer to the replicability of the study. The purpose of ensuring dependability of the study within a qualitative research paradigm is to ensure that if another investigator later follows the same case study all over again, he/she should arrive at the same findings and conclusion. According to Yin (2003), the emphasis is on doing same case over again, not on replicating the results of one case by doing another case study. Another significant element of ensuring dependability of the study is to minimise both errors and biases in the study. In this study, I ensured dependability by reading the themes over again to verify that they do make sense, and audited all the data transcripts. Audit trailing provided me the opportunity to engage in self-critical account of the events (Seale, 2000). I also included the extract of the verbatim transcripts of the interview in the Appendix (See appendices I, J and K).

3.7.3 Transferability

Transferability deals with the issue of generalisation in terms of case-to-case transfer (Shwandt, 2007). Therefore, it is concerned with the researcher's responsibility for providing readers with sufficient information on the case studied so that readers are able to establish the degree of similarity between the case studied and the case to which findings might be transferred. Since the study adopted a case study strategy, transferability may not be possible primarily because both the research site as well as the participants were selected using purposive sampling. Thus, the transferability refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population, cases or situation (Cohen & Manion, 2000). Therefore, the decision to apply the lesson, which will be learnt from this study, lies with the individual after reading the report. The findings from this study cannot be generalised because each case is unique.

3.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is a qualitative-oriented criterion for objectivity that indicates the degree to which the findings in qualitative research are the product of the focus of the inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher (Babbie, Mouton, Voster & Prozesky, 2001). Therefore, data sources of this study as well as the data collection methods were clearly described to ensure the confirmability of the study. Furthermore, Schwandt (2007) argues that confirmability is concerned with establishing the fact that the data and interpretations of an inquiry were not merely a fragment of the inquirer's imagination.

3.7.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the practice of researchers being self-aware of their own beliefs, values and attitudes, and their personal effects on the setting they have studied, and self-critical about their research methods and how they have been applied, so that the evaluation and understanding of their research findings, both by themselves and their audience, may be facilitated and enhanced (Payne & Payne, 2004). Moreover Hardy, Phillip and Cleggs (2001) maintain that reflexivity involves reflecting on the way in which research is carried out and understanding how the process of doing research shapes its outcome. Therefore reflexivity, in a methodical sense, signals more than inspection of potential sources of bias and their control, in fact it is a kind of self-inspection that can be salutary for any kind of research.

In this research, I ensured reflexivity by keeping each step of the research under review, setting standards for myself, thinking about how participants are reacting to being studied, and constantly what is being achieved. Potential benefits of reflexivity in relation to qualitative research relate to both a greater understanding of the role and impact of the researcher (Cassell, 2005) and an increased trustworthiness of data, and general integrity in research process (Finlay, 2002). During interviews, I recorded not only the observation, but also my reactions and interpretations of the observations. Another way I used to create written accounts that can monitor changes over time, and also record participants' feelings and reactions was with the use of a research diary. As Burton and Bartlett (2009) have alluded to, logs and diaries can provide

fascinating research data, which, although of a biographical nature, can enlighten educational communities in a broader sense. The shortcoming of a research diary is that it is not possible to generalise from one person's experience however, it is legitimate to use the evidence to establish some aspects for further investigation.

According to Payne and Payne (2004), in order to use experience and reflection as a potential resource, researchers convert their rough observations at the end of each fieldwork into proper records, adding the reflections in a clearly identifiable format. Therefore, it can be concluded that the purpose of reflexivity throughout the research process is more of an intellectual resource, rather than a defensive audit.

3.8 TRIANGULATION

Triangulation of the data collected was employed as a means of checking the integrity of the inferences one draws (Shwandt, 2007). This involved the use of multiple data sources; multiple investigators, multiple theoretical perspectives, and/or multiple methods. For the purpose of this study, three different methods were used to explore the quality assurance mechanism in EFAL assessments. Educators who are teaching EFAL were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Document analysis was also conducted to access information in educator portfolios as well as other administrative documents. During the interview, as well as document analysis, the researcher made use of a personal research journal to note some significant features. The central point of this procedure was to examine a conclusion (assertion, claim and so on) from more than one vantage point.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations are a fundamental cornerstone in any research project, therefore it is essential that throughout the research process that researcher should follow and abide by ethical guidelines. Ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientist and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). In this study, I was guided by the norms, values as well as principles of research in dealing with

conflict of interest in my research. The following ethical principles were adhered to in this study: informed consent and voluntary participation, access and acceptance, protection from harm and confidentiality.

3.9.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

Educators participating in the study were contacted individually in person and letters inviting them to participate in the study were handed out. A briefing session was also held wherein the educators were furnished with details of the study. However, it was clearly stipulated to the participants that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the studies without recrimination. I obtained both verbal and written consent from the participants (see Appendix E). Consent thus protects and respects the right of self-determination and places some of the responsibility on the participant should anything go wrong in the research (Cohen et al., 2000)

3.9.2 Access and Acceptance

In order to gain access to the research site, I obtained the permission to undertake the research from the officials in charge, and these included the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria, the Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Education as well as the principal of the research site. Prior to data collection I sent letters requesting permission stating the significance and benefits of study to participants (educators) and other stakeholders (Circuit Manager and School Principal). (See Appendices B & C).

3.9.3 Protection from Harm

In this study, I ensured that no participant was exposed to any form of danger or harm during the research process although the study did not pose any significant danger to the participants. Throughout the research process, I strove to be honest, respectful and sympathetic to all participants, as the researcher should ensure that participants are not exposed to any undue physical or psychological harm (Leedey & Ormond, 2001).

3.9.4 Confidentiality

Participants were assured that the information (data) collected is collected for research purposes only and only the researcher and the supervisor would have access to the information. Participants were also assured of the confidentiality of the source of information in research data. In this study, confidentiality was ensured by using pseudonyms when transcribing interviews as all subjects should be assured that any data collected from or about them will be held in confidence (Frankel & Wallen, 1993).

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter entailed a critical reflection and justification of my methodological choice and epistemological assumptions. The aim of this study was to explore the quality assurance mechanism used by educators to ensure the quality of EFAL assessment tasks. I outlined qualitative research as an approach and case study design as appropriate method for conducting this research. I also elaborated on how the interpretive paradigm relates to this study. I explained and justified my data collection methods, as well as my selection of research site and participants. Convenience sampling was employed in the selection of both the research site and the participants.

The data collection methods in this study include interviews, document analysis as well as research journal. The triangulation of these data collection methods yielded a rich thick data as one data sources supplemented the other. I also outlined the qualitative data collection techniques as well as the data analysis methods used to analyse the raw data. Content analysis as well as inductive analysis was adopted as qualitative data analysis strategies in this study. The methodological norms envisaged in this study include credibility, dependability, transformability, conformability, as well as reflexivity. The ethical principles observed throughout the study were also highlighted. Based on the analysis of the raw data, I present the research results as well as the findings in the next chapter, Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data. In this research, a qualitative approach was adopted, as outlined in Chapter 3. Data for this research was collected in the form of interviews with educators and the Head of Department (HoD), the researcher's personal research diary as well as content analysis of both educator and learner portfolios and other administrative documents such as policy documents. The interviews conducted were recorded using an audio tape and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The interview transcriptions were analysed by the researcher and the recurring ideas were coded and clustered together to form the themes. Data was also analysed in order to establish the procedure which EFAL educator put in place to ensure the quality of their assessment tasks, in order to answer the following research questions: What quality assurance models exist for Grade 10 English educators to use?; How do Grade 10 English educators ensure valid assessment practices within teaching and learning?; How do Grade 10 English educators ensure the reliability of their assessment tasks?; and To what extent is internal moderation employed as a quality assurance strategy in English First Additional Language especially in Grade 10?

This section is structured as follows: Section 4.2 provides the background of the participants as well as the research site (school in which the participants were working); in Section 4.3 I highlight different themes which transpired from the data sources (interviews, research journal and document analysis) I have used in this research and Section 4.4 provides the conclusion.

4.2 BACKGROUND OF THE SCHOOL AND PARTICIPANTS

In this section, I outline the background of the research site (school) in Section 4.2.1 and in Section 4.2.2, I describe the participants of the research focusing mainly on characteristics I considered when selecting them for the purpose of this study.

4.2.1 Background of the Research Site (School)

For the purpose of this research, I purposefully selected a high school in the Mpumalanga province, South Africa, primarily because the entire population of the school has English as a first additional language and as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). The majority of the learner population is from the surrounding informal settlements and the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses as the area is predominantly a semi-urban environment. This means that the school serves a low income community. Most people in this community are either unemployed or temporarily employed in the coal mining sector. Therefore, it is difficult for most parents to pay for their children's education. As a result, the Department of Education has declared a school as a no fee school since the school falls under quintile 2. In response to the wide disparities in the fiscal capacity of most South African schools, the 2006 National Norms and Standards declared schools in quintile 1 and 2 to be no-fee schools, compensating these schools with higher allocation for non-personnel, non-capital expenditure. I therefore selected this school to explore the mechanisms educators put in place to ensure that learners from this environment are assessed using high quality assessment tasks regardless of their socio-economic background.

The research site is a combined high school which caters for learners at both the GET (Grade 8-9) and FET (Grade 10-12) band. In terms of physical resources, the school is under resourced as it is comprised of twenty three classrooms to accommodate one thousand five hundred learners. There are six classrooms allocated for Grade 10 learners. In these classes, learners are grouped according to their learning area choices (streams); however, English is compulsory in all the streams as it is the medium of instruction and a LoLT in all learning areas except in the vernaculars. Overcrowding has placed a strain on the physical resources of the school because on average there are fifty-five (55) learners per class particularly from Grade 8 to 11. Therefore, effective teaching and learning as well as the planning and implementation of high quality assessments are likely to be affected. The school also has an under resourced science laboratory and a library which contains only either current prescribed text books or previously prescribed

textbooks. Therefore, the school is generally under resourced in terms of learning support material.

4.2.2 Participant Characteristics

I considered various characteristics of the participants which were significant to my understanding of EFAL educators particularly as to how educators ensure the quality of the Grade 10 assessment task. In the section below, I discuss the significant characteristics of the participants, namely participant qualifications and their teaching experience.

I purposefully selected three participants for this study, namely the EFAL Head of Department (HoD) and two EFAL educators who are currently teaching Grade 10. The information about the qualifications and teaching experience of these EFAL educators as well as that of the HoD was also crucial in exploring how educators ensure the quality of their assessment task. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development stipulates that all new educators have to complete a four year B.Ed. degree, worth 480 credits at NQF level 7, including a practical component of 120 credits. (DoE, 2007). Alternatively, the educator may hold a first degree such as Bachelor of Arts (B.A), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Commerce or Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) worth 360 credits, followed by an Advanced Diploma in Education (ACE) worth 120 credits (DoE, 2007). For the purpose of the anonymity of the participant, pseudonyms are used to represent the educators who took part in the study.

Tanya (a pseudonym), a black female living in the community which the school serves was aged 40 and had graduated from a Technikon with a B.Tech in Education Management and an honours degree in Education Law Policy and Management which she obtained through distance learning from the University of Pretoria, which translates into REQV 15. She had 17 years of teaching experience in the same school. She taught EFAL for fourteen years at both FET and GET band and she has also taught Afrikaans Second Additional Language (ASAL) for three years. However, it is worth noting that she did not take English as a measure subject in the two education management qualifications which she holds but her interest to learn and keep abreast with education development has made her a competent educator in EFAL.

Beverly (a pseudonym), a black female aged 50 years, had graduated from a college with Secondary Teacher's Diploma (STD) and an Honours degree in Education Law policy and Management which she obtained through distance learning from Stellenbosch University, which translates to REQV 15. She also resides and teaches in the same community where the school is situated. Though she has a postgraduate qualification and a Secondary teacher's diploma, she did not meet the requirement of a highly qualified educator because in both qualifications she did not take EFAL as a major subject. However, she has been teaching EFAL at both GET and FET phase for the past fifteen years. Her experience and the zeal to adapt to changes in education have made her competent in teaching EFAL.

Doctor (Pseudonym) is a black male aged 42 and is a HoD for EFAL and ASAL. He holds a BA degree from the University of the North and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) specialising in Mathematical Literacy which also translates to REQV 15). He took English as a major subject in his undergraduate degree, moreover he has been teaching EFAL at the same school for the past eighteen years as an educator until he assumed the responsibility as HoD in the English Department in 2001. Apart from his duties as a HoD, he also teaches Mathematical Literacy at FET phase as he holds a formal qualification in Mathematical Literacy. He also teaches EFAL in two of the Grade 10 classes.

4.3 THEMES EMERGING FROM THE DATA

I analysed the data which was collected by means of interviews, a research journal and document analysis using qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data, by its very nature, is more open to ambiguity and requires the identification of emergent key themes for it to be organised and collated and interpreted (Burton, Brundrett & Jones, 2008). The themes which emerged from the data are assessment (4.3.1), quality of the assessment (4.3.2), assessment challenges (4.3.3) as well as internal moderation (4.3.4) and are discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Assessment of EFAL

Evidence from the data, collected by means of interviews, document analysis and the validation from the researcher's diary revealed that all participants have knowledge of assessment practices in EFAL. During the interview sessions, all educators elaborated on various forms of assessment they incorporate when designing and implementing Grade 10 assessment tasks. Assessment in the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R- 9 (Schools) is a continuous, planned process of gathering information about the learner measured against the Assessment Standards of the Learning Outcomes (DoE, 2002). During the interviews it was noted that participants have a theoretical understanding underpinning the implementation of assessment and assessment practices at the FET phase especially in Grade 10. During the interview, Beverly voiced the following opinion with regard to implementation of assessment tasks:

When we give assessment tasks in Grade 10 class, first of all we must consider the type of assessment that is the formal assessment, your daily activities as well as the formal assessment and that is the summative assessment (Beverly, interview, July 8, 2011).

Beverly pointed out that she uses both formal and informal assessment. She described formal assessment as the daily activities that take place in the classroom. All assessment tasks that make up a formal programme of assessment for the year are regarded as formal assessment; examples of formal assessments include tests, examinations, writing tasks, oral presentations, demonstrations, and performances (DoE, 2011). Formal assessment also provides teachers with a systematic way of evaluating how well learners are progressing in a grade and in a particular learning area. However, the National Protocol on Assessment (DoE, 2005) only refers to informal and formal assessment, but terms such as formative and summative assessment are not unfamiliar in South African context. However, during the interviews with the participants the researcher noted that participants are not familiar with the terminologies used in OBA, such as formative and summative assessment. They constantly refer to formal and informal assessment hence the terminologies are at time used interchangeably (Research Diary, July, 8, 2011).

Considering the importance that an OBE approach attaches to learner development in terms of successful learning, independent thinking, the notion of integration of teaching, learning and assessment to enable learners to construct meaning and the contribution of assessment to learning, educators' knowledge or the ability to differentiate between various forms of assessment types and terminologies in assessment cannot be overlooked. Bound and Falchikov (2006) remarked that summative assessment represents the widespread expectation of assessment to signify that it is product-oriented, and as such is primarily used to determine promotion. However, one should be observant to realise that a product may fail to reveal all about the processes that produced it. It is therefore crucial that educators are conversant with the assessment process and its terminology as the end results or the decision they make about a particular learner's learning is of public interest, therefore the credibility of such assessment results should always be safeguarded. York (2003) observes that formative assessment is much more complex than it appears, and Carless (2007) endorses this viewpoint by indicating that there are challenges associated with terminology and the practice of formative assessment.

Tanya also pointed out the importance of baseline assessment at the beginning of the year or before the learners in a particular grade is exposed to teaching and learning. Baseline assessment usually takes place at the beginning of a grade or phase to establish what learners already know (DoE, 2002). Beverly's comment about baseline assessment reinforces this view particularly its importance for teaching and learning:

...and you must also at the beginning of the year consider your baseline assessment to determine knowledge that the learners have so that whatever assessment you are going to prepare you then base them on what they know in order to prepare them for the next assessment task and must also take into account all the forms of assessment... (Beverly, interview, July 8, 2011)

During document analysis, the researcher noted that the school policy on assessment endorses the above findings because it provides a clear distinction of the two types of assessment to which educators constantly referred during the interview phase, namely formal and informal assessment:

Informal continuous assessment should form part of daily classroom routine of teachers as a means to monitor student progress and to provide feedback to students (School Assessment Policy, 2008).

The policy is vocal on what constitutes an informal assessment; however, it does not provide a clear-cut explanation of what constitutes formal assessment. The school policy on assessment does not provide a clear distinction between summative and formative assessment. Perhaps educators' lack of knowledge on various forms of assessment and the terminology used can be attributed to their interpretation of the School Assessment Policy. The school policy seems to have been developed a while ago; moreover, the assessment committee appears to be dysfunctional as it was supposed to have updated the School Assessment Policy to keep it abreast with changes in the education system especially the assessment component. This would have enormous benefits to educators, learners, the school and other stakeholders as educators will be conversant with current assessment practices and its relevant terminology. However, the study revealed that the emphasis on school policy is on the intervals at which formal assessment should take place:

Formal continuous assessment should take place on a regular basis and should be based on prescriptions as laid down by the Department of Education for the learning area and grade (School Assessment Policy, 2008).

This study revealed that the educators make use of various types of assessment for EFAL but they only describe assessment tasks as either formal or informal. This was evident from the data collected by means of document analysis where the evidence of assessment planning was available in the educators' portfolios. The copies of formal assessment tasks and the rubrics or marking memorandums available were in line with the requirements of the School Assessment Policy as well as the National Protocol on Assessment. This was eluded by Tanya as she indicated that:

...we have different forms of assessment that we use. We have the creative writing, the functional and even where learners are assessed orally (Tanya, interview, July, 7, 2011).

The content of both educator and learner portfolios also endorsed the idea that educators seem to be conversant with the formal assessment tasks as this seemed to be the main focus. Perhaps this can be attributed to the type of training they received on assessment as well as the guidelines in the School Assessment Policy.

Doctor also showed that he is familiar with the various assessment practices outlined in the National Protocol for Assessment Grade R -12 and the National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12. During the interview the HoD pointed out that:

All teachers are supposed to assess learners based on two assessments, two kinds of assessment that is formal as well as informal assessment. Formal assessment always entails homework, class work and all the activities that happen in class, for instance the debates....(Doctor, interview, June 15, 2011).

These responses, which were provided by the educators during the interviews, show that some educators are not quite familiar with the current developments in assessment, particularly with regard to the terminologies used to refer to various forms of assessment. This was reflected in their responses to questions pertaining to the designing and implementation of quality assessment during the interview sessions with the educators as well as document analysis evidence. Educators only commented on the use of formal and informal assessment with little or no reference to the distinction between summative and formative assessment as well as the importance of formative and summative assessment in the teaching, learning and assessment cycle.

Judging from the evidence produced by both interviews, document analysis and observations recorded in my research diary, it seemed that this lack of understanding of OBA assessment terminology could be the reason for educators only assessing learners either formally or

informally without paying attention to the vital role of either formative and summative assessment in improving learning or assessing for learning. Black and Wiliam (1998) defined formative assessment as all those activities undertaken by teachers and by their students in assessing themselves, that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning. Such kind of assessment becomes formative assessment because the evidence gathered is used to adapt the teaching to meet the needs of students. Assessment for learning is part of everyday practices by students, teacher and peers that seeks, reflects upon and responds to information from dialogue, demonstration and observation in ways that enhance on-going learning (Klenowski, 2009). Assessment of learning implies that learners' engagement with learning is limited to the product of their learning (Meyer et al., 2010). Therefore, the focus is primarily on the gathering and interpretation of evidence about learners' attainment of learning outcome as a proof of their proficiency in a particular task. This lack of understanding could hinder educators in developing high quality assessments. This confusion supports Jansen's(1999) criticism against an OBE approach and specifically OBA, that teachers would get lost among the complex and inaccessible language and structure issues of OBE and OBA, and that they would fall back on traditional teaching and assessment practices (Jansen, 1999). The study validated this criticism as throughout the interviews educators constantly referred to only informal and formal type of assessment moreover, evidence from educator portfolios also indicated that assessment is largely a pen and paper task (written tasks) and lacks the application and integration of skills which need to be developed in language such as reading, writing, speaking and listening.

4.3.2 Quality of the Assessment

The study has found that educators have a limited knowledge of quality control measures that can be used in assessment tasks. Quality in education, especially OBA can be defined in terms of reliability, competence, responsiveness, accessibility and credibility. Quality, however, is one of those terms not easily defined or measured. In an educational context, quality indicators are used to ascertain the quality of an assessment task. Meyer et al. (2010) stated that to ensure the quality and credibility of assessment task, certain requirements should be met such as reliability, validity

fairness, discrimination, cognitive complexity, feasibility and accountability. These requirements of quality assessment therefore comprise assessment principles that serve as criteria for ensuring quality and credible assessment. It seems that evidence from the interviews with the participants indicate that educators seem to focus only on Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards to maintain the quality of their assessment tasks with little or no evidence of ascertaining the validity, fairness and reliability of the assessment task. Reliable assessment gives consistent results on different occasion with different candidates (Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA), 1997). Although reliability is an important consideration when constructing an assessment task, it is not always easy to attain because of a range of variables that may impact on its feasibility. Educators showed an understanding of the concept of reliability though the focus was mainly on the reliability of the scores given by various assessors on a similar task. Tanya explained

...that reliability means that different people have scored same marks to a learner or even if they are not the same but they have to be close (Tanya, interview, July, 7, 2011)

Miller, Linn and Greenland (2009) indicated that we cannot expect assessment results to be perfectly consistent as there are numerous factors other than the quality being measured that may influence assessment results. Therefore, the methods of determining reliability are essentially a means of determining how much measurement error is present under different conditions. In general, the meaning of reliability as applied to assessment can be clarified by noting the following points: reliability refers to the results obtained with an assessment instrument and not an instrument itself (Miller et al., 2009). It was evident from the educator's attempt to define the concept of reliability of assessment during the interviews that it is more appropriate to speak of reliability of the assessment results rather than the instrument itself (Research Journal, July, 7, 2011).

The responses provided by educators during the interviews showed that educators view the reliability of assessment results surpassing the reliability of the assessment tool. This notion is primarily important because not only the learners and the teacher benefit from the assessment results, even other stakeholders depend on the credibility of assessment results to make valuable

decisions such as admission to institutions of higher learning and employment. However, from the managerial perspective, the concept of reliability seems to focus on the authenticity of the assessment, as it was indicated that:

Real life issues should be on reflected on the assessment. The examples that are given should be that they are based on reality so that they are well vested with what is happening (Doctor, interview, 15, June, 2011).

Educators attached a narrow definition to reliability of the assessment; therefore it casts doubt about the procedures in place for ensuring the credibility of the assessment task designed by educators. Popham (2003) distinguishes between test-and- retest reliability, where the assessment results of two independent assessment tasks are compared to determine the consistency of results. However, the study revealed that in an attempt to ensure the reliability of formal assessment tasks educators often focus on comparing the scores assigned by two independent assessors with little or no regard of other forms of reliability measures to ensure that the assessment tasks are of higher quality.

When exploring the participants' understanding of the concept of valid assessment practices and how it is envisaged in the process of designing and implementing EFAL assessment tasks, the study revealed that participants are familiar with various forms of validity. From the managerial perspective, content validity is of outmost importance in ascertaining the validity of a particular assessment task. Content validity is determined when considering the proportion in which an assessment task is representing the intended scope or field of learning (Meyer et al., 2010). Therefore, content validity is concerned mainly with the relevance of the assessment task, in terms of the extent to which the assessment task is related to and adequately covers the curriculum. From the managerial perspective validity of assessment refers to:

A valid assessment have to do with the grade, for instance at Grade 10 you do not set papers that are fit for a primary school learner, that is not valid (Doctor, interview, June,15, 2011).

It is, therefore, evident that content validity is vital in ensuring the quality of the assessment, as the study revealed that the content of an assessment task should be pitched at the level of the intended group or the target group. This is to ensure that learners do not write an assessment task which is either below or above their mental ability because incorrect conclusions will be drawn about the learners' performance. Therefore, the credibility of the assessment can be at stake. Furthermore the School Assessment Policy requires that:

Formal assessment task must be designed to provide systematic evaluation of student performance and progress, and evidence, which can be used to evaluate student performance relative to the assessment standards for each specific learning programme, learning area or subject (School Assessment Policy, 2008).

The study also found that educators do ensure the content validity of their assessment tasks by ensuring that questions in the assessment task are properly sequenced and well balanced and address the relevant LOs and ASS. Balance is understood to ensure equilibrium between the time allocated to complete the task (duration of the task) and the complexity of the task at hand (Meyer et al., 2010). However, the principle of discrimination in assessment is concerned with how assessment items elicit different responses from different learners, and how the responses indicate the learner's level of understanding (Vandeyer & Killen, 2003). Beverly voiced an opinion that:

...The questions should accommodate different abilities. The question should be structured such that weaker learners will be accommodated as well as your moderate learners and the gifted, so it must be a balanced assessment task... (Beverly, interview, July, 8, 2011).

Evidence from the analysis of exemplar assessment tasks in the educators' portfolios and their responses during the interview sessions indicate that educators are aware that assessment items within an assessment task should reflect variety in terms of cognitive challenges.

This denotes that educators are aware that quality assessment should be able to distinguish or discriminate between the able and less able learners (Research Journal, July, 2011).

Furthermore, the study also revealed that in pursuit of quality in assessment tasks, educators also incorporate both construct and criterion validity when designing their assessment. During the interview Beverly indicated that:

...for an assessment task to be valid, as educators we have to make sure that once you prepare an assessment task you look at the outcomes, your main focus will be on the Learning Outcomes, but because the learning outcome is very broad, you then go down to the Assessment Standard (Beverly, interview , July ,8 , 2011).

According to Meyer et al. (2010), criterion validity represents the extent to which the construction of one assessment task is formed by, or based upon other; more or less similar assessment tasks. Therefore, in this study, the participants used Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standard which served as model (criteria) for compiling assessment task in EFAL guided by the criterion stipulated in the National Curriculum and Policy Statement for Grades R-12 and the National Protocol for Assessment Grades R-12.

Participants also ensured the validity of their assessment tasks by taking into account construct validity when designing EFAL formal assessment tasks. Killen (2003) describes constructs as theoretical frameworks for describing human characteristics, behaviours or group abilities. However Meyer et al. (2010) are of the view that construct validity refers to the extent to which an assessment task measures something which is difficult to observe directly, but which could be inferred from other indirect measurements. Validity of test-based inferences requires teachers to make judgement about the accuracy of those test-based inferences, and that compelling data are needed in order for a teacher to be super sure that test-based judgement about student achievement levels are on target (Popham, 2005). Therefore, the educator is more likely to recognise that their instructional decisions are often based on a fair fragile assessment

foundation. This notion of construct validity is amplified by Tanya in an attempt to define valid assessment:

By valid assessment I understand that what you want to assess is valid, meaning that when you want to assess may be reading, you will make sure that the activity that you give to learners will assess their level of reading (Tanya, interview, July 7, 2011).

Furthermore, the study also revealed that the participants paid attention to certain types of validity in an attempt to improve the quality of their assessment tasks. It was also evident that participants also envisaged the face validity in the designing of their EFAL assessment tasks. According to Meyer et al. (2010), face validity can be regarded as the starting point of validity because assessment should appear to be assessing what it intends to be assessing. However, the participants seem to lack knowledge that face validity also entails the appearance of the assessment task, though it is insufficient to judge the validity of an assessment based on its appearance. It is of paramount importance that the validity of the assessment is also based on whether the assessment task really assesses what it is intended to. Data collected when analysing educators' portfolios and moderation feedback from the HoD in the educators' portfolios also indicated that educators do attempt to design assessment tasks which are suitable for the intended task.

Educators also indicated that they regard assessment tasks which learners perform in the classroom under the supervision of the educator as better quality, compared to activities which learners do at home (home activities). With regard to this quality control measure, Beverly voiced the opinion that:

...task has to be done in class under supervision because then you are sure that whatever marks you are going to allocate, it is a mark suitable for a particular learner. There is no learner who has gained marks because of an added advantage... (Beverly, interview, July, 8, 2011).

The participant believes that assessment tasks done in class are more valid because they reflect the learner's true ability because the learner wrote the activity in the class under the educator's supervision and no one assisted the learner in the completion of the task. In such cases, the learner's performance in a particular task is a true reflection of the learner's ability. According to Killen (2003) the purpose of a valid assessment task is to generate evidence from which valid inferences can be drawn about the learning of all students. However, it is worth noting that validity should not be confined to assessment tasks only, but also on what the results obtained in these assessment tasks reflect about the learner.

4.3.3 Assessment Challenges

The study also indicated that participants are faced with serious challenges which hinders their ability to offer and design high quality assessment. It was evident that contextual factors in the school were a setback for the participants when designing and implementing high quality assessment. During the interview Beverly highlighted that:

...there are some challenges or conditions, for instance you will have overcrowding, like when you want to assess their reading skills, it may not be possible because there are too many learners in a class and it will take you time to make them read because of the number...(Beverly, interview, July,8,2011).

Overcrowding appears to be posing a serious challenge to educators when they want to implement high quality assessment. Evidence from learner class lists filed in the educators' portfolios show that on average there are fifty-five learners in a class. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the educator will be able undertake oral or reading task to such a large number of learners in a day or two. This is a challenge because assessing learners' reading skills, marking essays and other formal assessment tasks tend to take longer than expected resulting in tuition time being affected. This is likely to result to some of the problems encountered by the HoD during the moderation routine.

.... Quite a number of challenges that you might experience during moderation, one which is very basic the work in a work schedule has not been covered especially in

languages where we have a number of learner, lots of learners, seventy per class....
(Doctor, interview, June, 15, 2011)

Overcrowding hinders progress in the teaching and learning environment as educators are trying to ensure that assessment results are credible. Therefore, educators tend to spend valuable time on marking and conducting formal assessment tasks, as a result some of the prescribed work is not covered as per work schedule. As indicated by Jansen (1999), the practice of continuous assessment would result in a time-consuming administrative overload that teachers find difficult to cope with. With overcrowding being a prevalent factor hindering the designing and implementation of high quality assessment, it is worth noting that in this institution the state of assessment is likely to be that:

The credibility of assessment is at stake, as educators are trying to conduct and mark a huge number of formal assessment tasks within a short space of time , so that they can resume with the teaching (Research Journal, 15, June, 2011).

The above findings are also in line with Jansen's criticism on OBA as he indicated that valuable time would be wasted on meaningless assessment and maintaining of assessment records. Evidence from document analysis indicated that educators spend valuable time recording learners' marks and organising both educator and learner portfolios for both internal and external moderation. The above finding was also validated as records of learner marks were accurately recorded in educator portfolios and filed (Educator portfolio analysis 5, July, 2011).

Educators also cited learners' lack of commitment to learning as a stumbling block towards designing and implementing high quality assessments taking into account that English is taken as a first additional language. Seemingly the language barrier is likely to be the root of problem as indicated in Section 1.1 and 1.3 that the learner population is comprise of learners whose mother tongue is isiZulu, Sepedi or isiNdebele. Therefore EFAL is likely to pose a challenge to these learners hence laziness on the side of the learner cannot be ruled out as Tanya cited during the interview that:

...our learners are not prepared to work. So knowing that English is not their mother tongue, they take advantage, eh; sometime you find that you give them a task, they always want to do it at home where they will find someone helping them (Tanya, interview, July, 7, 2011).

Therefore, it was evident from the educators' response to the issues and obstacles that hinders their expertise of implementing high quality assessment, that educators are of the opinion that since the entire school population takes English as a first additional language, the majority of learners do not feel comfortable doing most of the assessment task as a class activity at school. They want to do some of the assessment at home where they can get assistance from their parents or their elder brothers and sisters. Educators feel that it hinders progress in delivering high quality assessment as the work or task will not be the actual reflection of the learner's performance but a combination of learner's effort and that of the person who assisted the learner. As a result, the credibility of such assessment is questionable.

The study also revealed that lack of resources which can assist in the efficient implementation of high quality assessment is also challenge in this school. As indicated in Section 4.2.1, the school is under-resourced in terms of learning support material. During the interview Beverly cited that:

Sometime we would maybe have an assessment activity on computers and then learners individually or pairs do that assessment on a computer, it becomes easy, but lack of resources is a challenge in administering good quality assessment task (Beverly, interview, July, 8, 2011).

The findings of this study support the finding from the survey conducted by Matshidiso (2007) among teachers in the Bojanala West region of the North-West province of South Africa in order to determine how teachers in that area perceive OBA, and what problems they experience with its implementation. The results of the survey indicated that overcrowded classroom and infrastructural deficiency is prevalent at schools in that area and is having a negative impact to educators in terms of the designing and implementation of high quality assessment. In another study conducted by Reyneke (2008) to determine how teachers in public schools in South Africa

experience OBA of EFAL at the FET band, she concluded that there is a lack of physical resources as well as learning and teaching support material at some public schools. Therefore, the findings from the study conducted by Matshidiso and Reyneke validate the finding of this study, though the findings of this study relate to factors which hinder the design and implementation of high quality assessment by educators in public school. This study revealed that educators were faced with a serious challenge in terms of resources they can use to enhance and improve their assessment practices, as a results they only rely on assessment tasks such a term tests and other prescribed forms of assessment (formal assessment) to assess their learners. These obstacles are echoes of the predictions Jansen made a decade ago: overcrowded classrooms, inadequately trained teachers, inadequate departmental support and the absence of teaching and learning resources would directly contribute towards the failure of the new curriculum and its assessment practices (Jansen, 1999).

4.3.4 Internal Moderation

The study showed that the respondents hold a range of ideas with regard to internal moderation, as it differed from what the policy stipulates. Gawe and Heyns (2004) referred to moderation as an important tool to ensure that quality standards for the inputs, the processes and outputs are maintained. However, evidence from document analysis revealed that participants view moderation as associated with outputs because the emphasis on the results of teaching and learning through the assessment of learning. Moderation also refers to the process that ensures that assessment tasks are fair, valid and reliable (DoE, 2011). It was evident that a comprehensive and appropriate moderation practice was not in place as a quality assurance measure for EFAL assessment tasks. Doctor indicated that:

.....before educator goes class the HoD must know what is it that is going to be taught. Also there is a work schedule that should indicate from when at a particular time should you start teaching until when (Doctor, interview, June, 15, 2011).

From the managerial perspective, internal moderation emphasis seems to be placed predominantly on teaching and learning with little or no emphasis on moderation of assessment

tasks prior to their implementation as per policy requirement. Subject advisors must moderate samples of tests and examinations before they are written by the learners to verify standards and guide the teachers on the setting of assessment task (DoE, 2011). It is therefore crucial for educators to note that the purpose of internal moderation should be to provide a quality assurance mechanism of the learning experience and as such, if conducted in accordance with the NQF and the quality regulatory framework, it should promote the attainment of quality in assessment tasks. It is worth noting that:

From the managerial perspective, there is an attempt to maintain the quality of the assessment as there is an indication that teaching and learning should be in line with policy requirements so as to prepare learners adequately for the assessment task (Research Journal, 15, June, 2011).

Furthermore, the study also revealed that educators view moderation as mere comparison of the content of educators' portfolio and that of the learner portfolio with no reference to the process of how the educator develops an assessment task until it is written by the learners. Tanya commented that:

...we have a checklist and we use it to see whether our moderation procedure is correct, like for instance we have to have a learner's portfolio where we use them with the teacher portfolio. What is to be done by the learner should appear in the learner portfolio (Tanya, interview, July, 7, 11).

Beverly also shared Tanya's idea with regard to moderation procedures; however she seemed to have a better understanding of internal moderation and the processes involved as she pointed out that:

As far as assessment is concern, before you administer any assessment task it must be moderated by the HoD (Beverly, interview, July, 8, 2011).

Data from document analysis indicated that the educator seems to focus only on formal assessment. This was evident from the information in both the educators' portfolio and learners'

portfolios. At the time of this study, both educators have completed half the tasks as required by the policy.

The study also revealed a significant role played by the HoD in the moderation process and how the educators are involved throughout the process. Luckett and Sutherland (2002) identified two types of moderation processes namely, quality promotion mechanism which are formative and aim at advancing quality as well as the quality control mechanisms which are summative in nature and aim at making decisions about quality. Beverly attempted to allude to the quality promotion mechanism employed by the HoD during moderation:

....we submit our stuff to be moderated and we also interact with our HoD to say if ever there is something wrong with my assessment, then the HoD will advise me how to do it and I have to go back again for moderation because the whole purpose is to plan a high quality assessment task (Beverley, interview, July, 8,2011).

The HoD preferred to adopt a quality control based mechanism when moderating educators' work because after moderation has occurred, feedback was provided to individual educators. However, it was also evident that the HoD put more emphasis on quality control mechanism rather than quality promotion mechanism as he indicated that:

Educators always bring the work that they have done, the work schedule, the mark sheet to the moderator, the internal moderator which, most of the time is the HoD where we look at the marks and whilst educator is there with the HoD (Doctor, interview, June, 15, 2011).

As a result, the aim of moderation seems to be more of a quality control mechanism as the emphasis is on evaluating whether the work covered is in line with what the work schedule requires. Moreover, the verification of mark sheets as to whether the educator transferred the marks from the learners' scripts and calculated the marks accurately do not add much value to the quality of the assessment. The data gathered from the managerial perspective supported the findings provided by the DoE (2004), Govender (2005) and Brombacher (2004), that the moderation processes tend to focus on the structure and the layout of portfolios instead of the

standard and quality of work. The emphasis should be on evaluating the content of the assessment as well as the accuracy of marking rather than the end product in the form of marks. However, this can be attributed to the kind of training in assessment practices received by the participants.

Furthermore, the study revealed that educators value the role of feedback provided by their HoD during the internal moderation process in order to not only maintain the high quality of EFAL assessment tasks but also to improve educator assessment practice. During the interview Beverley indicated that:

Feedback from HoD should only be seen as a sort of support system from the HoD so that in future I am in a better position to come up with better task to improve results because the main thing about assessment is to improve learner performance. So the feedback will assist me in improving the performance of my learners (Interview, Beverley, July, 8, 2011).

From the educators' perspective feedback from internal moderation seems to play an important role in improving their skills to develop better assessment tasks. Greatorex (2002) argues that feedback given to assessors by assessors on their assessment judgement is conducive to learning. This study found that educators receive feedback both orally and in writing. Evidence of written feedback was filed in the educator portfolios. During the document analysis phase, evidence of moderation feedback in educator portfolios was more developmental than judgemental. Thus educators view moderation feedback positively. During the interview Beverley remarked that:

It (moderation) should not be viewed as a fault finding mission, but it must be viewed as a form of development from the HoD (Interview, Beverley, July, 8, 2011).

Taking into account the type of feedback given to educators and their responses with regard to feedback on moderation, the data source revealed the need for school to clearly state the processes to be followed in conducting internal moderation especially in EFAL assessment tasks so that meaningful feedback can be provided to all stakeholders. This was evident during the interview as both the interview and document analysis data revealed that:

There was a discrepancy on the information provided by educators with regard to the internal moderation, especially the frequency of meetings (Research Journal, 8, July, 2011).

Therefore, the inconsistency of the data pertaining to internal moderation processes and the actual policy requirements leave much to be desired about the internal moderation practices in this institution. Moreover, the credibility of assessment is to a large extent affected by this practice.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The use of qualitative research approach and the case study played a pivotal role in collecting rich descriptive data. The data collection methods used in this study includes semi-structured interviews and content analysis of both learner and educator portfolio yielding a significant data which helped in addressing the research question of the study.

Four themes emerged from the analysis of the data collected, namely: assessment of EFAL, quality of the assessment, assessment challenges as well as internal moderation .With regard to assessment practices in EFAL, the study revealed that participants are not familiar with OBA methods and the terminology thereof, moreover participant demonstrated a theoretical knowledge underpinning the quality mechanisms to be used when designing EFAL assessment tasks; however, data from the document analysis revealed the discrepancy between the theoretical knowledge and the actual implementation of the EFAL assessment tasks.

The main findings of the study indicated that educators are not well vest with different assessment methods and strategies used in OBA. Moreover educators are not familiar with concepts like assessment for learning (formative assessment) and assessment of learning (summative assessment). The study also revealed that contextual factor such as overcrowding, shortage of learner support material as well as lack of commitment of the learners have a negative impact towards the development and implementation of high quality assessment. Lastly, the study revealed that there is also a discrepancy in the moderation practices, because the

emphasis is moderating the mark sheet rather than assessment tasks prior and after implementation.

In the next chapter, Chapter 5, the results, the recommendations and the implications of this study are presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter draws together the research question, the research process as well as the results, conclusion and recommendation emerging from the study. The purpose of this study was to explore quality assurance and assessment models employed by educators, especially for English First Additional Language (EFAL) in Grade10. The main research question was:

- To what extent do English First Additional Language (EFAL) educators employ quality assurance measures in their assessments?

The research question was further subdivided into four sub-questions below:

- What quality assurance models exist for educators to use?
- How do educators ensure the validity of their practices within the teaching and learning cycle?
- How do educators ensure the reliability of the assessments?
- To what extent is internal moderation employed as a quality assurance strategy in English First Additional Language assessment tasks?

A summary of the research methodology is presented in Section 5.2 followed by a summary of results according to research questions in Section 5.3. The chapter also present reflection on literature in Section 5.4 followed by reflection on conceptual framework in Section 5.5 and limitation of the research in Section 5.6. The chapter concludes with recommendation in Section 5.7 followed by the conclusion in Section 5.8.

5.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research paradigm adopted in this study was primarily interpretive because the study was concerned with the individuals in their attempt to understand their “subjective human experience” (Cohen et al., 2000). Furthermore, interpretivist studies tend to be small scale (micro), aiming for detail and understanding rather than statistical representativeness (Burton et al., 2009). This study adopted a qualitative research approach, using a case study design, as highlighted in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3). Merriam (2002) sees a case study as a rigorous narrative and investigation of an event or shared entity, such as individual group, organisation or society. Since there was little research on quality assurance mechanisms used for EFAL assessment tasks at the FET band, an exploratory case study was used. The sample of the study included three respondents: two EFAL educators and one Head of Department (HoD) in the English department who were purposefully selected. Wiersma (1995) describe purposeful sampling as selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study, particularly when the researcher wants to understand something about cases without aiming to generalise to all such cases for the study. The data collection tools used in this study included interviews, policy document analysis, portfolio analysis and my personal research journal. Content analysis of interview transcripts and other administrative documents was undertaken; moreover educator as well as learner portfolios and the research journal were also utilised.

The use of these three data sources was vital in this study as data collected through interviews was triangulated with data from content analysis of the educator portfolios. Burton et al. (2009) suggest that triangulation is likely to appear as almost a natural process to researchers who are used to considering different viewpoints and obtaining data from several sources in order to more fully understand particular incidents or aspects of their focus. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) indicated that what is involved in triangulation is not the combination of different data per-se, but rather an attempt to relate different sorts of data in such a way as to counteract various possible threats to the validity of research analysis. In this study, data from the interview with the HoD was triangulated with data from the interviews with the educators to minimise possible threats to validity of the data and research findings. As the researcher becomes an instrument in

qualitative research, the researcher's personal journal entries also generated data to triangulate with data from the interviews and document analysis.

5.3 SUMMARY OF RESULTS ACCORDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question for this study, as indicated in Section 1.5, is to explore the quality assurance mechanism in EFAL assessment tasks, with the four sub-questions (Section.5.1) elaborating on the main research question. The section below provides the results by addressing each sub-question:

5.3.1 What quality assurance models exist for educators to use?

An assessment system should encourage reflection on the quality of assessment and provide mechanisms by which reflection about assessment methods, materials and results can be translated into real development and improvements in assessment practices (Pitman, O'Brien & McCollow, 1999). Based on the data collected through interviews with the participants and document analysis, this study found that the quality of EFAL assessment tasks is enhanced by taking assessment standards and learning outcomes into account when educators design assessment tasks. The defining features of a standard-referenced assessment are that learners' demonstrations of learning are compared with detailed descriptions of different levels of achievement which are known as the standards (Killen, 2010). With this criterion-referenced assessment as a quality mechanism for ensuring the quality of the assessment tasks, the only comparison that is made among the learners are the number of competencies that the learners demonstrated and the time it took to achieve them.

It is worth noting that though the participants do not seem to be conversant with the concept of quality assurance and its impact on OBA practices, there is evidence of quality mechanisms being implemented in EFAL assessment tasks. According to Gawe and Heyns (2004), quality management refers to the combination of processes used to ensure that the degree of excellence specified is achieved. The study also found out that the quality of the assessment tasks is also

guided by the requirements of the RNCS as well the National Protocol on Assessment. The methods chosen for assessment activities must be appropriate to assessment standards to be assessed, and the purpose of assessment must be clearly understood by all learners and teachers involved (DoE, 2002). With the RNCS policy document being used as the guide to quality, assessment of the learner's work is pegged at different levels of achievement. Therefore, the process of matching learner performances to standards automatically places them on a continuum of achievement.

5.3.2 How do educators ensure the validity of their practices within the teaching and learning cycle?

The RNCS Assessment Guidelines states that the focus of the assessment task should be to examine all the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards, and that decision on the scope of content to be covered should be determined at learning programme planning level (GDE, 2007). This study found that there was little evidence of the assessment plan available; however, it is worth noting that the data collected from educators portfolio analysis provided some evidence that educators do attempt to address the relevant content, as in some cases there were alignments between the Learning Outcomes and the Assessment Standards addressed. In these cases then, validity of the assessment is to some extent considered. Popham (1990) suggests that in quantifying content-related evidence of validity, we could think of outcome-related evidence of validity as having two components: relevance and outcome coverage. Data from the analysis of the content of the educator portfolios indicated that assessment items required learners to demonstrate competency in one or more relevant outcomes but the analysis could not determine the extent to which an assessment task is relevant and achieves the outcome.

Data from the interviews with the participants indicated that educators do consider certain types of validity. However, there were prevalent factors that affected content-related validity of the assessment tasks such as the scope and the quality of assessment tasks. Brookhart (2004) suggests that to draw valid conclusions about what your students have learned, you must develop items that represent the content and the modes of instruction in the classroom. However, this study found that educators were still struggling to develop tasks which are of a high quality and

standard as most of the assessment tasks focused on lower order questioning, which required learners to recall information. Competences in a particular Learning Outcome can be demonstrated in many different ways, thus a variety of assessment methods and opportunities must be provided through which learners can demonstrate their ability.

Data from document analysis, particularly samples of assessment copies provided contrary data to the data from the educators interviews where educators indicated that they design assessment tasks which accommodate learners with different learning abilities. What also emerged from this study is that educators relied greatly on tests, examinations and other forms of prescribed formal assessment as the dominant forms of assessment. This finding can be attributed to what the school policy on assessment advocates that formal continuous assessment should take place on a regular basis and should be based on prescriptions as laid down by the Department of Education for the learning area and grade (School Assessment Policy, 2008).

It seems, therefore, that more time was spent on formal assessment of learning rather than assessing for teaching and learning. This means that formal assessments, although valuable, were done at the expense of teaching and learning, and thus failing to achieve other assessment standards.

5.3.3 How do educators ensure the reliability of the assessments?

Reliability refers to the consistency of assessment results (Miller, Linn & Gronlund, 2009). The implication is that if similar scores can be obtained when the same assessment procedure is used with the same students on two different occasions, then it can be concluded that the results of such assessment task have high degree of reliability. Pole and Lampard (2002) add that the reliability of a measure is the extent to which respondents will consistently respond to it in the same way. Data collected by means of interviews revealed that participants were familiar with measures of ensuring the reliability of assessment. Educators also showed that it is the reliability of the scores allocated to a particular assessment task by different assessors, which is important than reliability of the assessment instrument itself. Therefore, interrater reliability seems to be the most common method of ensuring the reliability employed by educators in this institution. It

is also worth noting that the moderation procedures applied by the HoD should also be endorsing interrater reliability of assessment tasks. However, the study found that the emphasis is on controlling the accuracy of mark transfer from learners' scripts to mark sheets rather than authenticating the score allocated to a particular piece of work.

Data from the interviews also revealed that the difficulty of the items as well as the item discrimination in the assessment task is used as reliability measures. Killen (2009) indicated that if you look at learners' results on any question on a test, you should find that learners who have a high level of understanding are answering the question correctly and learners with a low level of understanding are answering the questions incorrectly. Therefore, items in an assessment task should clearly discriminate between learners who have different levels of understanding in increase assessment reliability. However, as indicated in Section 5.3.2, the reliability of some assessment scores is questionable as the item difficulty level is not well-balanced because sample of assessment copies showed that educators are predominantly still setting low order questions.

5.3.4 To what extent is internal moderation employed as a quality assurance strategy in English First Additional Language assessment tasks?

According to Gawe and Hynes (2004) moderation is an important tool to ensure that quality standards for inputs, the processes and outputs, are maintained. However, the Department of Education (DoE, 2002) stipulates that each school must develop an assessment programme based on the provincial and national assessment guidelines. In order to ensure a professional approach to assessment, schools need to have a School Assessment Plan and a team that will facilitate the implementation of the assessment. Over and above that, the school assessment programme must clearly outline how internal moderation takes place in the school as well the internal verification of assessment. The document analysis revealed that a School Assessment Plan (SAP) as well as a Learning Area Assessment Programme (LAAP) is in place. However, both the SAP and LAAP do not provide a clear indication of internal moderation points. Furthermore moderation focuses on checking the content of teacher's work schedule, compliance of assessment tasks and the RNCS and the National Protocol on Assessment as well as comparing the content of the

educators' portfolio to that of the learners' portfolio, which is usually conducted at the end of the term when the HoD focuses on the moderation of examination scores.

Moderation refers to the process that assessment of outcomes, described in the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General), is fair, valid and reliable (DoE, 2003). The Department of Education further emphasises that comprehensive and appropriate moderation and verification practices must be in place for quality assurance of the FETC. The qualifications and assessment framework further stipulates that every school must have an internal moderation policy aligned to the moderation policy of the Council for General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (Umalusi) and the relevant examining body, and must adhere strictly to policy. However, the study also found that the SAP is available hence the internal moderation process's primary focus was on analysing the mark sheets rather than the actual moderation of assessment tasks.

According to Luckett and Sutherland (2002), the purpose of conducting moderation is to promote quality whereby teachers' involvement is encouraged during the framework of the assessment process, leading to teacher empowerment and the provision of significant qualitative data with regard to moderation. The study revealed that the concept of educator involvement is minimal, as the educator attested that after the HoD had moderated the assessment task, educators are called for feedback which will aid in improving the quality of the assessment. Furthermore, the HoD together with the educator conducts the verification of the marks in the mark sheet as part of the internal moderation. It is worth noting that internal moderation is partially conducted, as the procedures followed do not emphasise the importance of assessment task moderation prior to implementation.

5.4 REFLECTION ON LITERATURE

The literature explored with regard to educator's knowledge of assessment processes and quality assurance mechanism in EFAL indicates that there are number of variables which impacted on the respondents' perception and understanding of quality in assessment. The variables identified

indicated the interrelationships between teacher's knowledge of quality assurance in assessment and the assessment practices.

Further reading and investigation has indicated that educators are not quite conversant with an outcomes based approach with its relevant assessment methods and strategies as well as the terminology used in OBA. Educators constantly classify assessment forms as either formal or informal with no reference to the purpose of assessment, which is whether the assessment task is classified as assessment of learning or assessment for learning. DoE (2011) indicated that assessment involves generating and collecting evidence of achievement, evaluation of evidence, recording findings and using the information to understand and thereby assist the learner's development. In an outcomes based approach, assessment should always contribute to the goal of improving learning (Killen, 2010). The National Curriculum Statement requires educators to use a combination of formative and summative assessment, which is referred to as Continuous Assessment (CASS). For quality and accountability purposes, this system requires educators to continuously gather valid and reliable data about the performance of the learner. Wiliam (2000) suggests that for assessment to be formative, the information feed back to the learners must be used by the learner to improve performance. Therefore, educators' knowledge of assessment practices and its terminology is essential so that they can develop assessment tasks which are in line with the RNCS guidelines, appropriate to the level and assessment standards in order to maintain the quality of such tasks.

Research conducted by Reyneke (2008) found that there is a lack of understanding among teacher of the importance of the true role to be played by formative assessment and of giving timely feedback to learners. The educators interviews elucidates why the respondents demonstrate a restricted approach to assessment and practices, a national phenomenon, hence the current curriculum reform in South Africa which addresses assessment practices and particularly assessment for learning. Black and Wiliam (1998) indicated that for assessment to function formatively, the feedback information had to be used, and thus the differentially treatment be incorporated in response to the feedback are at the heart of effective learning.

Finally, assessment in the context of the language focused mainly on achieving the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards as the cornerstone for quality enhancement in EFAL assessment. Furthermore, the literature reiterates the respondents' understanding of the role of assessment as on-going and part of the learning process, not just something that takes place at the end of the learning process (Potgieter & Du Toit, 2004), hence the scope of the quality control mechanism is limited to Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. Tillema, Leenknecht and Segers (2011) indicated that total quality management of assessment construction and administration may be secured by differently attending to the relevant criteria, that is, by determining for the different steps whether the criteria relevant to each step have been taken into account for an overview of expected relevancy of criteria within the assessment cycle.

5.5 REFLECTION ON CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, the findings of the study in relation to the conceptual framework will be discussed. The conceptual framework of this study, as reflected in Section 2.7, was guided by the SABS ISO 9004-2 model in relation to the research question, where the emphasis was on quality objectives, quality management as well quality structures.

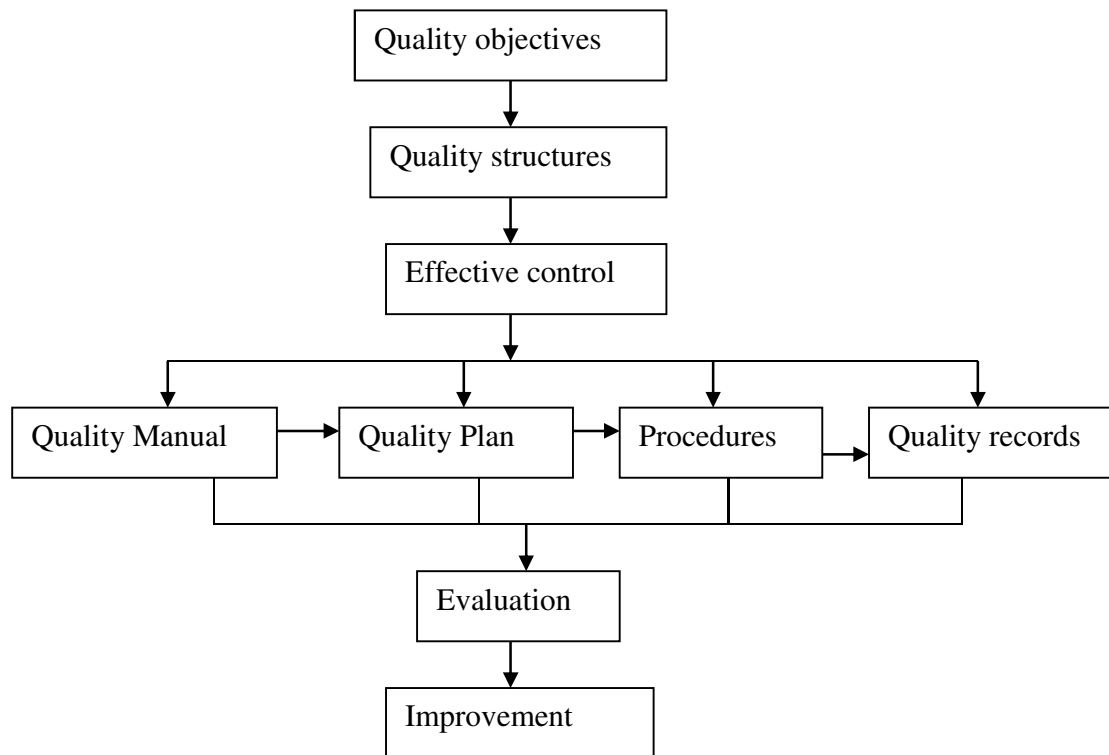


Figure 5.1. Conceptual framework of the study

This study revealed that quality structures which is responsible for effective control of quality was not adequate since the HoD is solely responsible for quality control of the assessment tasks designed by educators. However, quality objectives were clearly document in the RNCS and expressed in terms of LOs and ASS. The RNCS policy documents as a quality manual clearly explain the quality plan and procedures as the quality mechanisms in place, which includes internal moderation. The checklist used to ascertain whether assessment task meet the quality specification served as quality records. It is worth noting that there is limited evidence that evaluation of assessment occur regularly as there was little evidence in educators’ portfolio indicating how formal assessment tasks could be improved to reach the specified quality standard. According to DoE (2011) assessment should be both informal (Assessment for learning) and formal (Assessment of learning) .With the introduction of Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) educators have to adjust their assessment methods and strategies to

the requirements of CAPS as the primary purpose is to collect information on learners' improvement that can be used to improve their learning, whereas assessment of learning provides educators with a systematic way of evaluating how well are the learners progressing. Therefore educators would need to up their game and start providing regular feedback to learners to enhance learning experience.

Though the SABS ISO 9004-2 is used mainly in industries to ensure that products are of the specified condition or quality, in the light of this study, this model can also be applied in education to ensure that assessment tasks are of high quality. The model aimed at illustrating how quality can be maintained in assessment tasks from an industry quality-based model. In the educational environment, especially in OBA, the RNCS policy document serves as a quality manual where in the specifications and the quality of products (learners) is outlined but the interpretation thereof is limited as well as the application. Therefore, it is worth noting that the SABS ISO 9004-2 quality assurance model can also be applied to assessment policy in order to achieve the intended, implemented as well as the attained curriculum by ensuring that Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standard are properly incorporated when designing assessment tasks.

5.6 REFLECTION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research approach used in this study was that of a case study. The sample of the study included three respondents who were purposefully selected to explore and describe the quality assurance mechanisms in place, particularly in EFAL assessment tasks. Given the fact that the study adopted a qualitative research design with a very small sample of two EFAL educators and one HoD from the English Department at a public secondary school in the Mpumalanga province, its findings cannot be generalised to all schools in the province or other parts of the country. Therefore, results and conclusions that emerged from this study cannot be generalised (see Section 3.3.3).

The data collection instruments used in the study includes interviews, document analysis and research journal. Perhaps the observations could have been used to validate the data collected

through interviews. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) indicated that observation is a way for the researcher to see and hear what is occurring in the research site. Therefore a rich understanding of the phenomenon being studied can be gained; moreover observation sheet to record the notes during the observations could have come handy in generating a rich data. The notes could be later analysed to provide an understanding of assessment practices used by educators in their Grade 10 classes.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report presents recommendations that could be considered for improving the quality of EFAL assessments task especially in Grade 10. Based on the findings of the research the following recommendations can be made:

5.7.1 Recommendation for Educators

Recommendation 1: Educators should empower themselves with a thorough knowledge of all departmental documentation pertaining to assessment and quality mechanism in assessment. Educators should attend workshops on assessment to keep abreast with the changes in OBA practices. Educators should familiarise themselves to assessment and quality assurance guidelines as stipulated in the RNCS.

Recommendation 2: Educators should link all assessment tasks in a meaningful way to teaching and learning, and not only assessment tasks, the portfolio, test or examination. Assessment should be taken an integral part of teaching and learning. For educators to plan OBA thoroughly and meaningfully, assessment should not be viewed as something to be implemented to assess learners, but a cornerstone for improving teaching and learning.

Recommendation 3: Educators should have a clear understanding of the purpose of assessment, and not just assess for the sake of assessment or purpose of window dressing their portfolios. Educators should ensure that assessment provide indications of learners integrate and apply knowledge and skills.

Recommendation 4: Educators should maintain the quality of assessment by using various types and methods of assessment to accommodate learners with different learning abilities and also ensure that assessment is fair, valid reliable and meaningful.

5.7.2 Recommendation for Heads of Departments (HODs)

Recommendation 1: HoDs should empower themselves with a thorough knowledge of all departmental documentation pertaining to management and OBA in order to execute their supervisory and moderation duties effectively.

Recommendation 2: HoDs should consider moderating formal assessment task prior their implementation, so as to check the content of the assessment task against the specified standard in the LAAP and RNCS. HoDs should approve assessment tasks by checking if the task meets the specified quality criteria.

Recommendation 3: For the purpose of reliability, the HoD should adopt a double marking system for all formal assessment tasks. During internal moderation process, the HoD should randomly select copies of assessment task and remark them, to quality assure the scores allocated by the educator.

5.7.3 Recommendations for schools

Recommendation 1: In accordance with departmental directives and curriculum guidelines, the school must develop OBA policies that will guide all aspects of assessment quality in the school. These policies should be integrated in the SAP and LAAP to regulate the quality of assessment tasks and ensure that high quality assessment standards are upheld.

Recommendation 2: School Assessment Policy should be updated to keep it abreast with the developments in education, especially assessment practices and terminology. School Assessment Policy should be reviewed annually to ensure that it is still in line with the latest curriculum changes.

Recommendation 3: An assessment team should be appointed to provide in-service training to educators on issues pertaining to assessment. Since curriculum changes also affect teaching, learning as well as assessment practices, the HoD should constitute an assessment team which will be responsible for providing guidance pertaining to OBA and quality assurance of assessment tasks.

Recommendation 4: Assessment networks can be established with other schools in the area, so that teachers can share their knowledge and skills of quality mechanism in OBA. Schools which fall under the same cluster or circuit can also consider exchanging formal assessment tasks for moderation purpose. Inter-school moderation can be employed for quality assurance purpose.

5.7.4 Recommendation for Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Recommendation 1: Formal assessment tasks should be submitted to the HoD for quality moderation before they are given to learner. Educators should submit their formal assessment tasks to the HoD for quality approval before they implement the task to increase the reliability of the scores thereof.

Recommendation 2: Moderation emphases should be on the quality of the assessment task rather than the accuracy of the calculations (marks) on the mark sheet. However, accuracy in calculation of marks (scores) should be used as measure of increasing the reliability or scores allocated as part of internal moderation.

Recommendation 3: Moderation exercises should not be a mere comparison of the content of the educators' portfolios and the content of learners' portfolios but emphasis should be on the quality of the content.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The adoption of a qualitative research approach and case study method contributed immensely in the collection of rich descriptive data. The data collection methods used in this study also produced a significant data which shed the light in addressing the research questions. It was evident that quality control measures in EFAL are not effectively implemented in this school.

Therefore, this study confirmed the findings of the previous studies (Matshidiso 2007; Reyneke, 2008) that educators were ill-equipped in developing tasks of high quality and appropriate assessment tools.

The study also confirmed the findings of the study conducted by Govender (2005), DoE (2004) and Brommbacher (2004) that educators were not well equipped in designing assessment tasks of high quality which are appropriate to the target group as well as the purpose. Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and Marshall, and Wiliam (2004) indicated that assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. An assessment task serves the purpose of accountability if it can inform learning by providing information that educators and their learners can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and help in improving the teaching and learning activities.

The study further indicated that there was a need to capacitate both educators and the HoD in terms of OBA practices and the assessment terminology. The study further revealed that there were contextual factors within the school hindering effective implementation of high quality assessment tasks especially in EFAL. Furthermore, the study also revealed that both educators and the HoD require further training in terms of quality control mechanisms in EFAL assessment. Lastly, it was evident that the HoD also needs further training with regard to internal moderation, as the study showed that the emphasis was on the moderation of mark lists rather than the actual assessment tasks prior their implementation.

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APPENDIX A: CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER TO CIRCUIT MANAGER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

P.O.Box 11460

Hatfield

0028

23 July 2010

Ms MI Bashele

The Circuit Manager

Witbank II

1035

Dear Ms Bashele

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR CIRCUIT

I am a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. The title of my research project is "Quality and assessment models used for English First Additional Language in Grade 10". The research is being conducted to meet the requirements of my degree. The aims of the study are to explore the existing quality assurance models in Outcomes Based Assessment, explore the validity of assessments, and explore how educators ascertain validity as well as insuring internal moderation of assessment tasks. The research questions envisaged in the study are as follows: What quality

assurance models exists for educators to use, how do educators ensure valid assessment in teaching and learning? How do educators ensure the reliability of assessment? , and to what extent is internal moderation employed as quality assurance strategy?

I would like to request permission to undertake research at Phillip Ndimande Secondary School. I therefore seek to conduct interview with educators teaching English First Additional Language at FET band. I also request permission to have access to educators' curriculum documents, preparation files and assessment tools used during assessment. Educators will be interviewed to gather data on quality assurance mechanism used in assessment tasks. The educators will also be approached for them to give informed consent to participate in the study. Educators will also be informed that participation in the study is voluntary and their identity as well as the information they will provide will be treated confidentially.

Permission from the Mpumalanga Department of Education has been sought.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully



Mr.T.S Neluheni

Cell number: 082 693 4148

Email: tsneluheni@webmail.co.za

Dr V Scherman

Supervisor

Vanessa.scherman@up.ac.za

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

P.O.Box 11460

Hatfield

0028

03 March 2011

The Principal

Phillip Ndimande Secondary School

P.O.Box 17964

Witbank

1035

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. The title of my research project is "Quality and assessment models used for English First Additional Language in Grade 10". The research is being conducted to meet the requirements of my degree. The aims of the study are to explore the

existing quality assurance models in Outcomes Based Assessment, explore the validity of assessments, and explore how educators ascertain validity as well as insuring internal moderation of assessment tasks. The research questions envisaged in the study are as follows: What quality assurance models exists for educators to use, how do educators ensure valid assessment in teaching and learning? How do educators ensure the reliability of assessment? , and to what extent is internal moderation employed as quality assurance strategy?

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Educators will be interviewed to gather data on quality assurance mechanism used in assessment tasks. The educators will also be approached for them to give informed consent to participate in the study. Educators will also be informed that participation in the study is voluntary and their identity as well as the information they will provide will be treated confidentially.

Permission from the Mpumalanga Department of Education has been sought.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully



Mr.T.S Neluheni

Cell number: 082 693 4148

Email: tsneluheni@webmail.co.za

Dr V Scherman

Supervisor

Vanessa.scherman@up.ac.za

APPENDIX D: CONSENT LETTER TO EDUCATORS



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Dear Educators

I am a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. The title of my research project is "Quality and assessment models used for English First Additional Language in Grade 10". The research is being conducted to meet the requirements of my degree.

The aims of the study are to explore the existing quality assurance models in Outcomes Based Assessment, explore the validity of assessments, and explore how educators ascertain validity as well as insuring internal moderation of assessment tasks. The research questions envisaged in the study are as follows: What quality assurance models exists for educators to use, how do educators ensure valid assessment in teaching and learning? How do educators ensure the reliability of assessment? , and to what extent is internal moderation employed as quality assurance strategy?

I am conducting a research to explore the quality assurance models used by educators in English First Additional Language assessment. I would like to assess various quality assurance mechanisms you are putting in place when developing assessment tools. What I would like to request you to take part in interviews which will last approximately 45 minutes per interviews. The interviews will be recorded with your permission. The interviews will be transcribed and given back to you to ensure that what has been communicated has been captured correctly.

Your participation in this study is voluntary .The confidentiality of your identity and information provided will be upheld. Please be informed that information you provide will be used only for the purpose of this study and that you may withdraw from the study at any time.

I greatly appreciate your participation in this study.

Thank you for your interest and participation in this study.

Yours Sincerely



Mr.T.S Neluheni

Cell number: 082 693 4148

Email: tsneluheni@webmail.co.za

Dr V Scherman

Supervisor

Vanessa.scherman@up.ac.za

APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANTS' INFORMED CONSENT

Title: Quality and assessment models used for English First Additional Language (EFAL) in Grade 10.

The following information is provided to help you decide whether you wish to participate in the study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the researcher.

The purpose of this study is to explore the quality assurance mechanism used in English First Additional Language assessment to ensure that assessment task given to learners is of highest quality.

Data will be collected using semi structured interview which will last for 30 to 40 minutes.

Do not hesitate to ask questions about the study before participating or during the study. I would be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. Your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher will know your identity

There are no known risks and /or discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are information about the quality assurance models used for English First Additional Language in grade 11.

Please sign this consent form. You are signing it with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the procedures. A copy of this form will be given to you to keep.

I....., voluntarily am willing to take part in the study. I am fully aware of the implications of the study

Signed at..... On the Of 2010

Participant's signature

Mr T S Neluheni

Cell number: 082 693 4148

Email: tsneluheni@webmail.co.za

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

<p>EXPLORING QUALITY AND ASSESSMENT MODELS USED FOR ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN GRADE 10</p>

The purpose of this schedule is to explore the quality assurance measures and models used by English first additional language educators when designing and implementing assessment.

1. Tell me about the assessment practices in EFAL for your Grade 10 class.
2. Can you take me through the process you follow in order to ensure the quality of your assessment is good?
3. What circumstances or conditions get in the way of you undertaking high quality assessment?
4. How would you deal with obstacles preventing you from administering high quality assessment?
5. Educators often talk of valid assessment practices; can you take me through your understanding of valid assessment practices in your learning area?
6. Can you take me through the process of designing and developing your assessment tasks?
7. How do you ensure that the scores/ marks you assign a learner are a true reflection of the learner's ability?
8. How do you make sure that the content of your assessment really assess the intended outcome?
9. What criterion do you use to ensure that the assessment task accurately predicts learners' performance?

10. The DoE talks a lot about reliability of assessment, what does this mean to you?
11. There are times when assessment do not work as planned. How do you know when an assessment has not worked properly?
 - 11.1. What would you do to fix it?
12. What procedures do you put in place to ensure that the questions in the assessment are well-balanced?
13. How do you ensure that the assessment actually measures what you want to measure?
14. How is moderation conducted at your school in English first Additional Language?
15. How often is moderation conducted in your learning area (EFAL)?
16. What procedures are followed during the moderation process?
17. What is the role of the Head of Department in reviewing your assessments?
 - 18.1. How does the Head of Department provide feedback on moderation?
 - 18.2. Can you elaborate on the type of feedback you receive from your HoD?
19. How do you utilize the moderation feedback from your HoD?

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

<p>EXPLORING QUALITY AND ASSESSMENT MODELS USED FOR ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN GRADE 10</p>
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The purpose of this schedule is to explore the quality assurance measures and models used by English first additional language educators when designing and implementing assessment.

1. From a managerial perspective, how is Grade 10 EFAL assessment organized at this school?
2. How is the quality of the assessment tasks set by teachers monitored?
3. If you come across poor quality assessment tasks for Grade 10 EFAL, how would you deal with such cases?
4. Educators often talk of valid assessment practices; from a managerial perspective can you please take me through your understanding of valid assessment practice in EFAL?
5. How do you ensure that the scores/marks assigned to a learner by the Grade 10 educators are true reflections of the learner's ability?
6. When moderating EFAL assessments at Grade 10, how do you ensure that the assessment task is suitable for the grade it is aimed at assessing?
7. The DoE talks a lot about the reliability of assessment, what does this mean to you as a HoD?
8. How do you ensure that the tasks your teachers set actually measure what it is aimed to measure?
9. How do you ensure that the scores assigned to learner's work by educators is accurate?
10. What procedure is in place to ensure that questions in the assessment are well balanced?

11. Take me through the process of conducting internal moderation for English First Additional language assessment tasks?
12. How do you engage educators in the moderation process?
13. How do you provide moderation feedback to educators?
14. Can you elaborate on the type of feedback you give to your educators?
15. How do you ensure that educators utilize such feedback?
16. What kind of challenges do you encounter during the moderation process?
17. How do you address those challenges?

APPENDIX H: RUBRIC TO EVALUATE EDUCATORS' PORTFOLIO

This rubric will be used to evaluate the Grade 10 Educator portfolios for English First Additional Language.

CRITERIA	1	2	3	4
1.Planning of the Assessment Tasks	No evidence of assessment planning	Some evidence of assessment planning available	Substantial evidence of assessment planning available	Comprehensive evidence of assessment planning available
2. Subject assessment policy	No subject assessment policy available	Incomplete draft subject policy available	Draft subject policy available	Comprehensive subject assessment policy available
3.Content coverage: learning outcomes and assessment standards addressed per assessment task	Assessment task does not address learning outcomes and assessment standards	Assessment task address only one learning outcomes and assessment standards	Assessment covers at least two learning outcomes and assessment standards	Assessment task address more than two learning outcomes and assessment standards
4. Relevancy of content: Does the content address learning outcome & assessment Standards	Assessment content not relevant to learning outcomes and assessment standard	Content partially relevant to outcome and assessment standard addressed	Content mostly relevant to outcomes and assessment standards addressed	Content relevant to learning outcome and assessment standards addressed
5.Relevancy of the assessment tool used for formal	Assessment tool used do not match the	Assessment tool used partially appropriate for	Assessment tool used match most of the	Assessment tool is relevant to the assessment task

tasks	assessment task	the assessment task	sections in the assessment task	
6. Assessment task suitable to Grade 10 learner	Assessment task is not appropriate for Grade 10 learners	Assessment task partially appropriate for Grade 10 learners	Most section of the assessment task are appropriate for Grade 10 learners	Assessment task largely suitable for Grade 10 learners
7. Evidence of assessment tool used	No evidence of assessment tool used available	Some evidence of assessment tool available	Most evidence of assessment tool used available	Relevant evidence of assessment tool used available
8. Ability to develop high quality assessment tasks	Educators unable to craft a variety of assessment task	Educators attempt craft a variety of assessment task	Educators moderately craft a variety of assessment	Educators can craft a variety of assessment task
9. Evidence of assessment records	There is no evidence of assessment records	Some evidence of assessment record are available	substantial evidence of assessment records available	Properly organized records of all assessment task available
10. Evidence of assessment feedback to learners	No evidence of feedback given to learners	Some evidence of feedback available but is not developmental	Evidence of feedback provided to learners is too judgmental	Evidence of learner feedback to improve performance available
11. Evidence of internal moderation	No evidence of internal moderation	Internal moderation partially	Internal moderation conducted and	Internal moderation fully conducted and comments to improve

		conducted and no comments were made	some comments to improve the educator's assessment practice provided	educator's assessment practice provided
12. Evidence of cluster moderation	No evidence of cluster moderation	Cluster moderation partially conducted and no comments were made	Cluster moderation conducted and some comments to improve the educator's assessment practice provided	Cluster moderation fully conducted and comments to improve educator's assessment practice provided
13. Number of formal assessment tasks in the file	No file exists for formal assessment tasks	Only a quarter (4) of formal assessment copies available	Half of formal (8) assessment copies available	Copies of all (16) formal assessment tasks available.

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR EDUCATOR 1(TANYA)

The purpose of this interview is to explore the quality assurance measures and models used by English First Additional Language educators when designing and implementing assessment.

Interviewer: So looking at assessment, can you tell me about the assessment practices in English first Additional Language for your Grade 10 learner or for your Grade 10 classes?

Respondent: Eh, in my class the Grade 8, the Grade 10 for English we have different forms of assessment that we use. We have the creative writing, the functional and even where learners get to be assessed orally.

Interviewer: Ok, so still in assessment when you are dealing with the assessment, how do you ensure that the quality? What measures do you employ to ensure that any kind of assessment you are implementing is of high quality?

Respondent: For assessment task that I give to the learners, I first have to consider the assessment standard that should be used and the learning outcomes, so these learning outcomes and assessment standards are the guide to show or give a way forward on what to assess.

Interviewer: As you are assessing or you are undertaking assessment are there times when you are, are there any condition or circumstances that comes into your way or that hinders the implementation of the high quality assessment?

Respondent: Yah, one of the things that, eh, have negative effect on our assessment is the fact that our learners are not prepared to work. So knowing that is not their mother

tongue, they take advantage, eh, sometimes you find that you give them a task, they always want to do them at home where they will find someone helping them, so these are some of the things that are negative or that give the negative results because we know that the learners did not do the task on their own.

Interviewer: How do you then deal with such problem?

Respondent: Sometime I try to give them work that they have to do in class and I try to put them in groups so that they can help each other then it becomes a little easier.

Interviewer: So in a word, assessment which are done in class are of more quality than those which they do at home?

Respondent: Yah, that is my perception because now I know for sure that they did not get help or someone did not do it for them but they did it on their own even though they help each other in groups but is the true reflection of what the learner is capable of.

Interviewer: Then, educators often talk of valid assessment practice, can you please tell me or take me through your understanding of valid assessment practice in your learning area?

Respondent: By valid assessment I understand that what you assess is valid, meaning that when you want to assess may be reading, you will make sure that activity that you give to learners will assess their level of reading.

Interviewer: Ok, so how do you ensure that the scores you give or assign in a particular task really they are a true reflection of the learner's ability.

Respondent: Eh, unfortunately you can't have a true reflection of the learner's ability when you assess because sometimes you find that is done in short space of time so learner sometimes you find that they are scared of talking so it will be difficult to assess, but to cut to, to make sure that you get a reflection, at least a close reflection is by making them feel as if whatever they are doing is a sort of a play like you don't ask them to do things individually, try to assess them in group then later you change to individual activity, then it becomes a little easier because at least they are comfortable.

Interviewer: Ok but when we look at the scores or the marks that somehow, the marks we are saying maybe the learner got 20 or 10 we are saying maybe this learner is unable to do certain activity, how do we make sure that what the educator is saying is true about the learner's performance?

Respondent: This is where rubric becomes important because we give learners marks according to the scores in the rubric, so it becomes a little easier to ensure that the learners get what they deserve.

Interviewer: Ok, with regard to content, how do you make sure that the content of the assessment really measures what they are intended to, the intended outcomes?

Respondent: In language is difficult to assess the content because most of the time you find that learners have to recall what they have learnt, they do not practice like may be in content subject where you have to do practical activities but to try to measure their

level of understanding concerning the content you just have to give them a lot of class activities.

Interviewer: The last one here in this section, how do you we ensure that assessment task accurately predicts learner's performance?

Respondent: The only way is to give them lot of task to practice and where you find that they have problems give other learners extra classes then, by the end of the day you will see if the learners are able to apply what they are supposed to, but you ca not say you are accurate but at least most of the learners will be able to apply what they have learnt.

Interviewer: Ok then now let's look at the reliability of assessment. The department of education almost always talk about the reliability of assessment, what does this mean to you?

Respondent: Eh, reliability means that different people have scored same marks to a learner or even if they are not the same but they are not the same but they have to be close, so when you say is reliable it means that marks or scores that is given by different people are almost of the same quality.

Interviewer: Ok, eh, sometimes when we are administering assessment there are times when assessment does not work as planned. So how do you know when an assessment has not worked properly?

Respondent: The levels that the learners get sometimes reflect the true, eh, knowledge that the learner has. You find that when you do class activity most of the learners are

able to answer correctly because they are in a group, but once you give them individual task some will not do what they will do during group work. So I think to ensure that when the assessment is actually administered, you have to do prior activities with the learners before you give the final task that is going to be assigned marks to.

Interviewer: Ok, so, what you would, suppose you find that assessment task you gave to the learner did not work properly, what would you do to fix such kind of problem?

Respondent: Eh, to fix that, would mean that you have to give extra work so that learners who did not participate according to the expected level can get time to catch up and maybe before you can assign marks you go through the activities that they have done and then if there is still a need to check that you go further with that learner or individual learner.

Interviewer: Ok still on reliability we also look at the scores, how do you ensure that the scores that you assign /give to a particular learner in an activity are accurate?

Respondent: Eh, in our school we usually do group teaching, so most of the time when you do an activity you ask your colleagues to come and judge or to assess with you, so if we have two assessors it will be if they are there to see whether you gave the correct marks because your marks will be, will not have a lot of difference but sometimes it becomes difficult if you have to do your own assessment so that is where rubrics and memorandums come into hand.

Interviewer: Ok, the last one, No the second last one, how do we ensure that the questions in a particular assessment task are well balanced maybe to cater for your weak learner and your strong learners?

Respondent: Eh, the first thing we do in the early, maybe the first question we try to give activities that would require maybe their general knowledge and then later in that question paper you give questions that need them to apply their reasoning ability, so in those activities that requires general knowledge most of the learners will score at least to boost them where they have difficulty.

Interviewer: Then the last one in this section, how do you ensure that the assessment task actually measures what you want to measure? Suppose you want to measure reading skills, how do you make sure that it really measures what you want to measure?

Respondent: Eh, when you give learners activity, before they do the activity you must give them rubric that they must go through and then from the rubric you will be able to give the learners an idea of, what can I say? , what they will be assessed on and when they do the activity they already know that the educator will look for such thing from me and then to test them so that when they do their activity, the assessment standard and the assessment task, eh, are of the same level, and then learners can participate knowing exactly what is that will be needed from them.

Interviewer: Ok, then, let's look at issue of internal moderation, can you please take me through

how is internal moderation conducted in your school particularly in English First Additional language?

Respondent: Eh, we have meetings every Friday where our subject head will talk us through the the process of moderation and then once per term we come together with the Head of Department (HoD) and we try to analyse whether the methods are appropriate and discuss what should be done in the following, maybe the next term. So moderation is not only done by the HoD but we do our self-moderation as well as peer-moderation where we help each other as educators before we can meet with the HoD.

Interviewer: Ok then, what procedures do you follow during the moderation process?

Respondent: Eh, we have a check list that we have and we use it to see whether our moderation procedure is correct, like for instance we have to have the learner's portfolio where we use them with the teacher's portfolio. What is supposed to be done by the learners should appear in the learner's portfolio, then yah, I think that's all.

Interviewer: Then let's look at the role of your Head of Department in reviewing your assessment. What role does the HoD play in the internal moderation process?

Respondent: Eh, the HoD comes with a suggestion on how to moderate, to do our moderation, but he does not give a final say. We come up as group and discuss but usually the HoD has a final say where you find that we do not have may be as teachers, we different views so the HoD comes with a final say, but not that and we

discuss it not that because he is a HoD we take it, but we discuss what he come up with then later as a HoD he has the final word.

Interviewer: Still in moderation, how are educators engaged or how does the HoD engage or involve you throughout the moderation process?

Respondent: Eh, when we do moderation, the HoD will ask educator, different educators to say what problems they have experienced before he does the final moderation then from there we try to come with suggestion on how to assess learners in different ways or different method then the HoD together with individual teacher agree on the type of assessment and assessment standard or assessment task that they have to do and then in so doing the moderation would find that, when the moderation CI come the, the HoD and the teacher will have the same view on what is expected concerning moderation. Not that the educator has something else and later the HoD comes with something else then you find that there is a clash.

Interviewer: Ok, so after moderation, how does your HoD or the Head of Department provide feedback and perhaps what kind of feedback do you get from your HoD?

Respondent: Eh, After the HoD have consulted or has been with all the different teachers, we come together and highlight all the information that he got from different teachers and those that he find useful we assimilate it to other teachers so that they can also use them but he also give motivation on those who did not do well. So the feedback that we get is useful because if you have done something which was not

appropriate, you know that the in next activity you have been coached or helped on how to eliminate the problems that you had before.

Interviewer: So, how do you then utilize this kind of feedback you get from your HoD in your future assessment planning or when you are planning the lesson? So how do you utilize the moderation feedback?

Respondent: Eh, most of the activities that we do have to be moderated before you take them to the learners, so the feedback you get after moderation, maybe from the previous test you know that, eh. Let me state it like this, after the moderation you know that what I did previously was not appropriate then you are going to try to make sure that you implement what was given to you, but you can't do that on your own, the moderator, eh, the HoD also sometimes come to class. Sometimes they do class visit to help us, to show, to see whether what you are doing is in line with what is expected according to what, eh, to what the feedback was about.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR EDUCATOR 2 (BERVERLY)

The purpose of this interview is to explore the quality assurance measures and models used by English First Additional Language educators when designing and implementing assessment.

Interviewer: So tell me about the assessment practices in English First Additional Language in your Grade 10 class.

Respondent: When we give assessment task in Grade 10 class, first of all we must consider the type of assessment, that is the formal assessment, your daily activities as well as the formal assessment and that is the summative assessment and you must also at the beginning of the year consider your baseline assessment to determine knowledge that the learners have so that whatever assessment you are going to prepare you then base them on what they know in order to prepare them for the next assessment task and must also take into account all the forms of assessment. do not focus on one, for instance you will be having test, that is controlled test, project, assignments, creative writing, so all forms of assessment must be taken into account.

Interviewer: Ok, so in these assessments, what do you do to ensure that your assessments are of high quality? All these kind of assessment that you have mentioned, is of high quality?

Respondent: To ensure that they are of higher quality, our starting point will be to take the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) into account, we look at the learning outcome, we focus on the learning outcome and the assessment standard and what is important is do not rely on one source, that is one text book. You need to consult various sources. You also make use of other sources such as your newspaper, things that learners can get easy access and you also prepare worksheets in advance so as to make your learning and teaching easier by making use of practical examples because to rely on one source, it may limit the knowledge you are going to impart on learners because one source may lack somewhere but you may find that the other sources have got, eh, good information that can complement the main source that you are using with your learners.

Interviewer: So, as you are administering assessment are there any conditions or circumstances that gets in your way and prevents you from undertaking high quality assessment?

Respondent: Yeah, there are some challenges or conditions, for instance you will have overcrowding, like when you want learners to read, maybe to assess their reading skills, it may not be possible because there are so many learners in a class and it will take you take you time to make them read because of the number. Again the usage of computer, is practically impossible because maybe you want to use a laptop with the overhead projector, but because of vandalism that is going on in

our school. It becomes very difficult to give a good quality assessment at times. and again if we would have a TV room or a media centre where there would maybe some TV. Sometime we would have maybe an assessment activity on computers and then learners, individually or in pairs do that assessment on a computer, it becomes easy but lack of resources is a challenge in administering good quality assessment tasks.

Interviewer: So, how do we then deal with some of these obstacles?

Respondent: Now, when you deal with some of these obstacles I think it will be better to plan in advance, get sources for learners especially that we are in an informal settlement it gives some learners even a challenge to get a newspaper, a mere newspaper, so it is better if you as an educator you get a newspaper, if there is a magazine that you need you prepare in advance and another thing if you are going to assess learners, it is always best if you give them a programme of assessment either at the beginning of the year or at the beginning of the term, that will tell them that when we come to this time of the month or the year I am going to assess you may be on literature I am going to assess you maybe on creative writing so that they keep on preparing themselves and even when you treat a learning outcome what you tell them is that as I treat this outcome, say for instance is an assignment you tell them that today we are busy with this part of the assignment, eh, take it into account, so that bit by bit a learner start working on their assessment task.

Interviewer: Ok, now let's look at the validity of the assessment, so as educators we often talk of valid assessment practices, can you take me through your understanding of valid assessment practices in your learning area.

Respondent: Ok, eh, in order for an assessment to be valid, as educators we have to make sure that once you prepare an assessment task you look at the, your main focus will be on the learning outcome, but because the learning outcome is very broad. You then go down to the assessment standard so that once you set a task all the assessment or the assessment standard with all its sub topics, all the things are addressed so that you do not leave out any important part. Do not set a task for the sake of it, what is due, you must see to it that all the assessment standards are being addressed.

Interviewer: Can you take through the process of designing and developing an assessment task in your learning area? When developing and designing an assessment task what steps do you follow?

Respondent: Ok, when I design an assessment task I will take a topic, and that topic must be linked to a learning outcome and one or two assessment tasks, it will depend and then when I set a question I must accommodate three types of learners. We are going to have low order question, the medium order question and the high order question so that all learners are catered for, so that we do not have a very easy task that is not going to serve a purpose or else we have a very difficult task that would only suit gifted learners and the weaker learners are not accommodated, it

must be a balanced task.

Interviewer: Ok, so in a particular assessment task, after maybe you have marked it, how you ensure that the scores or the marks that you assign a learner's work is a true reflection of the learner's ability?

Respondent: Eh, first of all a task has to be done in a class under supervision because the you are sure that whatever marks you are going to allocate, it is a mark that is suitable for a particular learner. There is no learner who has gained marks because of an added advantage, maybe others have done a task, they have given him a task or they have discussed a task. And then again if it is a big task it is better to break a task into small pieces so that if may be it is a big task a learner have made a mistake i part one, then you are then able to say go and rectify this part so as to be able to link the next part. And then again see to it that you have your tool, the tool that you are going to use. They are also communicated to the learners, if you are going to use the rubric, the learner must see that rubric so that once the learner answer a question, a learner knows exactly what is expected of him, then the marks will be a true reflection of the learner's ability.

Interviewer: Ok, so with regard to the content, how do you make sure that the content of your assessment really assesses your intended outcome?

Respondent: The content should be linked with the learning outcome and the assessment standard, but that is a, it is a challenge because it means that once you set a task

do not rely on a text book, go back to the National Curriculum Statement, look at the outcome and once you set a question, then the question must address the assessment standard so that you make it a point that you, make it a point that the content is addressed because without taking into account the assessment standard you are not going to address the content.

Interviewer: Ok, let's look at, then, say, what criteria do you use to ensure that the assessment, your assessment accurately predicts the learner's performance?

Respondent: Eh, I think sometimes is best, if you, at the end of the assessment if you give the learners, your learners a check list with some criteria that you have tabulated where you ask them certain questions where the learner is going to perform self-assessment to say that after I have done this task have I mastered A, B, C so that a learner will know that I am weak in this section and this section I am, strong, then I have to go back on the weak section, I have to go back and see to it that I have to master those sections. And again when you prepare, when you prepare mark if you have, if a task is out of 60 you then convert the marks to levels, then a learner will see whether she is achieving at an elementary level or moderation or outstanding then the learner will be able to assess himself as well as you as a teacher you will see how your learners perform. Are they lacking or they performing well, sort of provide feedback on your task.

Interviewer: Let's also look at the issue of reliability of the assessment, so as the department or

as educator often talk of reliability of assessment, what does this mean to you?

Respondent: It means the that this task is going to be given at certain time and time will be communicated to learners. Again there will be duration for an assessment task, the task must be realistic and the task must produce or yield necessary results and as an educator your task must have a memo. You cannot prepare a task without a memo because once you prepare a task and memo, if you have allocated 30 minutes or an hour as an educator when you prepare the memo it should take you roughly 10minutes less and knowing that a learner will need that extra 10 minutes to prepare a task. Again your task must be done under supervision, and then the task will be reliable.

Interviewer: Ok, sometime there are times when assessments do not work as we planned, how do you know when your assessment has not worked properly?

Respondent: When most of the learners could not even obtain even the minimum, eh, mark and in other words most learners have underperformed. Most learners did not complete the task, maybe the task was too long or the question were not up to standard, they were difficult, then you will know that there was something wrong with my task.

Interviewer: So, in such cases, how do you fix such problems?

Respondent: First of all you need to do reflection on your lesson plan, maybe the presentation of of the lesson was not well done because the learners could not answer the questions or perhaps you need to rephrase some of the questions and give an alternative task.

Even the alternative task, the questions maybe rephrased but you are still addressing the assessment standard.

Interviewer: And the other thing, what procedures do you put in place to ensure that the questions are well balanced?

Respondent: Ok, the questions should accommodate different abilities. The question should be structured such that, eh, learners, weaker learners will be accommodated as well as your moderate learners and the gifted learners, so it must be a balanced assessment task and then, eh, another thing is that each learner must have a summary sheet where a learner will record his/her marks to say that for task number one I have obtained so many marks, task number two .And that in its own is going to indicate progression, if the learner is progressing or if there is no progression, and as a results it also assist you as an educator may be to give certain learners individual attention.

Interviewer: And then, the last one in this section, how do you ensure that assessment activity actually measures what you want to measure?

Respondent: When you prepare an assessment task you do not have to take into account your learners' ability. You must see to it that the task can be written by any learner who is doing that particular Grade because what you are looking at, you are looking at an assessment task .You are not looking at your class per se, because your class should also perform at the same level with learners from other competing schools

or learners in the same Grade in another school, so we must measure certain assessment standard or the content, certain content. We are not measuring the ability of our learners but learners in general.

Interviewer: Ok, then, let's also look at the issue of moderation, internal moderation, how is internal moderation conducted in your school, especially in English First Additional Language.

Respondent: Ok, eh, moderation is conducted by the HoD who will use a tool, moderation tool and moderation will be given to an educator in advance to see how the moderation will be done. It is not a secret, moderation is not secret so that the teacher prepares. It is actually discussed in a meeting before moderation can be done, so that every party knows the expectation from him so that you then prepare accordingly.

Interviewer: So, how often is moderation, internal moderation conducted in your learning area?

Respondent: It depend on the policy of the department but most often is once a month and the end of the term, at the end of the term after we have finished assessing for the whole term moderation must also take place.

Interviewer: Ok, can you also take me through the procedures that are followed during the moderation process?

Interviewer: Ok, first of all there will be a moderation programme for all the teachers in a department and you will be given your date on which you must submit your

portfolio, educator portfolio, learner portfolio, the work book or the class work book and then together with a tool and then you will sit down with your HoD who will go through your teacher's portfolio comparing your teacher portfolio with your learner's portfolio, and the HoD will also look at the sources that you are using. and then in as far as assessment is concern, before you administer any assessment task it must also be moderated by the HoD.

Interviewer: So, can you also elaborate on the role your HoD play in the moderation process.

Respondent: Ok, in the moderation process the HoD will check that, eh, if I have set an assessment task, that an assessment task comply with the NCS principles, with the NCS principle and again the HoD will also look at the type of questions that you have set. The HoD should check that all levels of questions are accommodated in the assessment task, so that you do not have a low standard, low quality assessment task and then if ever the HoD is not happy with the assessment task, then he will give the necessary guidance.

Interviewer: Ok, how the head of department, as educator does how are you involved or engaged in the process of moderation?

Respondent: The HoD will engage us in the process of moderation in the sense that he arrange with us the programme of moderation so as we know when to submit our stuff to be moderated and we also interact with our HoD to say that if ever there is something wrong with my assessment, then the HoD will advise me how to do it

and I have to go back again for moderation because to the whole purpose is to plan a high quality assessment task.

Interviewer: So, after the HoD has moderated your task, what kind of feedback or how does your HoD provides feedback?

Respondent: On the tool that the HoD use, there are comments and another thing on our moderation tool we have got certain criteria that the HoD will be looking at and the criteria will be allocated and the level in the form of a rubric. Level one, two, three like maybe he will look at the type of question that I have set, the marks and so on and then he will allocate me some marks to say that on these criteria you have obtained level three or level two, if I have obtained level two, it means there is something wrong I need to fix, but basically he is going to make a column and in that column he is also going to give it to me and we discuss it.

Interviewer: So, with regard to feedback can you elaborate, is it more development or judgmental feedback perhaps?

Respondent: The feedback is more developmental because it gives you advice on how to improve on my performance and learner performance and it identifies weaknesses and also indicate where I need to improve and when and how I can improve and if need be the HoD Can then prepare a sample task for me to show me how I have to do it.

Interviewer: So as an educator how do you then utilize this moderation feedback from your HoD

in future planning?

Respondent: Eh, feedback from HoD should only be seen as a sort of support system from the HoD so that in future I am in a better position to come up with better task to improve the results because the main thing about assessment is to improve learner performance. So the feedback will assist me in improving the performance of my learners. It should not be viewed as a fault finding mission, but it must be viewed as a form of development from the HoD.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT (HOD)

The purpose of this interview is to explore quality and assessment models used for English First Additional Language in Grade 10.

Interviewer: So, firstly from a managerial perspective, how is Grade 10 EFAL assessment organized in this school?

Respondent: All teachers are supposed to assess based on two assessment, two kinds of assessment, that is, formal assessment as well as informal assessment. Formal assessment always entails home works, class work and all the activities that happen in class just like activities that happen in class like for instance there is a debate and all that, and the informal assessment is where the learners are assessed and like in examination, and task that are going to be recorded for SBA (School Based Assessment).

Interviewer: So, in terms of quality, how do you monitor the quality of the assessment, how do you monitor the quality of the assessment?

Respondent: There are requirements when learners are going to be assessed, is that one, when you assess learners you must always follow the guidelines as per policy of the department which will entail that is, what is it that you need to assess based on the learning outcome, learning outcome as well as well as sub- skills. Sub-skills, they

differ from one subject, one grade to the next.

Interviewer: So, as you are checking the assessment are there times when you come across poor quality assessment?

Respondent: Most of the time, when look at most teachers' tasks in terms of the NATTED 5006 education system you will find that the questions that they still set are based on the old education system, so most of the time, they have to be assisted in terms of that.

Interviewer: The other thing we need to look at is the validity of the assessment. From a managerial perspective or as a HoD, what do you regard as a valid assessment practice?

Respondent: A valid assessment, they have to do with Grade, for instance at Grade 10 you do not set papers that are fit for a primary school learner that is not valid. Also in context you cannot set immoral kind of question that cannot have a particular impact on the moral development of the learner, may be they encourage them on doing drugs, than doing the things that are positive. There are quite a number of examples I can give. There is a kind of standard as well, standards can also validate or invalidate the question paper. Standards that is set for a Grade is supposed to be a home language and the question is set for the First Additional Language, so that can invalidate that particular question paper.

Interviewer: Then, when looking at issues of the marks or the grade which will be allocated by

the educators at a particular script you ensure that the assessment, marks in the script truly reflect the learner or student's ability?

Respondent: Well the question does show, number one, it indicates whether a question does affect, there are conditions in terms of standard, for example you might find that one learner in one assessment got very high marks in the same Grade and for the second time an assessment is put forth he gets a very low marks, that means that there is no kind of consistency, so we only consider an average of the learner, that could be one of the reasons.

Interviewer: When we also look at the issue of reliability, what does this mean to you when you say this assessment is reliable? What would you regard as a reliable assessment?

Respondent: Reliable, reliable assessment, let's talk of your reality. Say you will be doing Mathematical Literacy in Grade 12, Grade 10, eh, in your assessment you are dealing with, eh, I will give practical examples. You are dealing with cell phones and their charges. A question in an assessment that is based on that should be based on reality. Real life issues should be reflected in the assessment. The examples that are given should be that they are based on reality so that they are well vest with what is happening.

Interviewer: Still on reliability, how do you ensure that the assessment task or a test which is set by an educator actually measures what the educator want to measure?

Respondent: The educator when he set a task most of the time or all the time, it must be indicated as to that what is that the educator wants to assess, because an educator must know what that is he wants to assess, as well as the learners that are being assessed, they need to know or told, that is what is that they are going to be assessed on. The learning outcomes must be indicated; sub-skills, then everything must be indicated to show that this is what is aspirant, this is what I am defiantly going to assess.

Interviewer: In terms of questions in the assessment, how do you perhaps ensure that the questions in a particular task are well balanced to accommodate all learners from different ability groups?

Respondent: No, we use different kind of questions; number one there is this progressive kind of question where you find that the first question number, one is always simple, but they progresses with the questions until one that need an insight, so it will be a general questions that progresses that progresses in terms of the ability. From the easier to the difficult. The structure should be from the concrete to abstract. That how we do it to balance the assessment task.

Interviewer: Now let's also look at the issue of internal moderation. Can you please take me through the process of conducting moderation for English First Additional language assessment tasks?

Respondent: Ok, we, one, before the teacher goes to class the HoD must know what that is

going to be taught. Also there is a work schedule that should indicate from when at a particular time should you start teaching and until when? And when that particular arrangement is done, and then you must go back and see how far have you gone? So, internal moderation entails a number of things, number one, would be, is the work that is supposed to be covered by the work schedule covered and work that is covered at a particular time. Secondly the work that was given to the learners was it of the quality that is required or expected by the department at a particular grade that is Grade 10, just to give an example.

Interviewer: So, in terms of moderation how are educators engaged in the whole process?

Respondent: Educators always bring the work that they have done, the work schedule, the mark sheet to the moderator, the internal moderator which, most of the time is the HoD wherein we look at the marks and whilst they are here together with HoD, because when you moderate the educator must be with you and so that you will indicate that this is an essay and in this essay you marked as if you were marking for a home language learner and this is a First Additional Language, we are going to adjust the marks in such a way that if maybe you were too strict in terms of spelling, but the spelling that is written there when you actually pronounce it gives you the correct pronunciation in the First Additional Language and that's different so in an essay you can somehow afford to give marks on that basis, whilst they are here with you that is when you moderate that is the work of the learner as

well as the mark sheet, so they are part of the whole process of moderation.

Interviewer: So after a moderation process or when you moderate, how do you provide moderation feedback to the educator and also what kinds of feedback do you provide?

Respondent: The educator together with the HoD must formulate what we call a turn around strategy, the strategy which will be a working plan as to how is the work which was not done is going to be done and what has not been done correctly is going to be corrected. So in this plan that is where you must indicate that is the due dates when is this going to be done and how monitoring is going to be done entailing everything.

Interviewer: So is it written down somewhere?

Respondent Yeah, it is made as black and white plan with the educator.

Interviewer: So, once you have provided that feedback and the turnaround strategy how do you ensure that educators do really utilize such feedback?

Respondent: Monitoring, content monitoring is always done on the time table of a HoD there is always what we call managerial time table where in must be to say the educator, individual educator where in you monitor all grades.

Interviewer: Can we also look at the challenges you come across as you are busy with the moderation process, what challenges do you normally come across?

Respondent: There are quite a number of challenges that you might experience during the

moderation process. One, which is very basic when the work in the work schedule has not been covered especially in the languages where we have a the number of learners, lots of learners seventy per class, so work like the essay they do not get enough time, they need to be thoroughly marked and when they are thoroughly marked then that means that other tasks are not going to be covered on time.

Most of the time during moderation you find that the work that was supposed to be done in the work schedule is not covered to the learners, so that is one of the most and major problem at a particular grade.

Interviewer: So, how do we get to solve that how do you address such kind of challenges?

Respondent: Actually, it is a contextual factor; well extra classes to solve it do not mean that the actual time that you are given, tuition time, so it needs a lot of teacher commitment as well as the HoD commitment like extra time should be given so that the learners are able to be attended to and the work of the learner is marked properly and monitored as well and feed back is done on time.

Interviewer: Are there any other challenges perhaps you experience except that, fact that sometimes educators do not complete the work that they are supposed to complete?

Respondent: Definitely, there is very thin line which distinguish between one grade to the next hence the problem that we experience most is of the standard. Eh, at times you find that there are tasks that are the same for all Grades in your department. The

same task that which is being done in Grade 11 is done in Grade 10 we experience that, eh, you find that, eh, tasks are still the same because very rarely you will hear a person talking about the sub-skills because for each and every Grade, the Grade that will be, eh, the learning outcomes are still the same throughout the Grade, but the sub-skills are different, so throughout the year you won't hear educator talking about the sub-skills, as a results they do the same thing without differentiating the sub-skills.

Interviewer: So seemingly the educators are not familiar with different sub-skills that are practiced in different Grades

Respondent: Of course questions can be the same but the applications of the question are supposed to be different, if you are in the language, if it is a poem, you can do the same poem but the questioning is going to be different depending on the Grade at which the questions are set for.

Interviewer: So that will have to do with the quality and level of the work?

Respondent: Yes, of the work.

Interviewer: Thanks for your time.